



Convention on the Rights of the Child

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COMMITTEE ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

Thirty-eighth session

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 1002nd MEETING

Held at the Palais Wilson, Geneva,
on Tuesday, 11 January 2005, at 3 p.m.

Chairperson: Mr. DOEK

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The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

CONSIDERATION OF REPORTS OF STATES PARTIES (continued)

Third periodic report of Sweden (continued) (CRC/C/125/Add.1; CRC/C/Q/SWE/3; CRC/C/RESP/74; HRI/CORE/1/Add.4/Rev.1)

1. At the invitation of the Chairperson, Ms. Berglund, Ms. Björklund, Ms. Bonnier, Ms. Jahn, Mr. Stenström, Mr. Stoican, Ms. Sundberg and Ms. Wiman (Sweden) took places at the Committee table.
2. Ms. SUNDBERG (Sweden), replying to a question concerning the incorporation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child into Swedish law, said that, prior to the ratification of an international instrument, Swedish legislation was reviewed in order to ascertain whether or not it was in conformity with the instrument in question. Where necessary, legislation was amended or new laws were adopted. Once an international instrument was incorporated into Swedish law, it could be invoked by the courts and other authorities. Domestic legislation must always be interpreted in the light of Sweden's international obligations, and priority must always be given to human rights instruments. That principle had been adopted by both the Supreme Court and the Supreme Administrative Court.
3. A question had been raised concerning official statistics. Like many other European countries, Sweden did not compile statistics along ethnic or religious lines, because that kind of statistics was open to abuse and considered by many to be discriminatory. That was why Sweden produced only estimates. The Government was not willing to reconsider its position on the provision of disaggregated data.
4. With regard to the question concerning stateless children, she said that paragraph 244 of the report (CRC/C/125/Add.1) explained what amendments had been made to the Swedish Citizenship Act to avoid such cases.
5. Mr. STOICAN (Sweden), replying to a question on the child rights perspective, said that there was a common understanding that children were full-fledged members of society and that they had specific human rights that must be protected. That approach had been taken as early as 1999, when the Swedish Government and Parliament had introduced a national strategy to implement the Convention at all levels of society.
6. Sweden's municipalities had wide-ranging autonomy. The Government could not interfere in local politics but could only try to persuade the local authorities to implement the Convention. For example, while 70 billion kronor had been made available over a three-year period to local authorities that wished to employ more pre-school teachers, the local authorities were under no obligation to do so. The autonomy of the local authorities did not affect the rights of children. In fact, Sweden's form of local government encouraged children's involvement in society and gave them a say at the municipal level. For example, a pilot project was planned in 20 Swedish municipalities to support initiatives to involve young people in environmental planning at the community level.

7. Mr. FILALI requested further information on action to incorporate the Convention into municipal law.
8. Mr. STOICAN (Sweden) said that municipal law made no specific reference to the Convention. The Government encouraged the municipalities to incorporate the Convention and the national strategy into political programmes at the community level. In that connection, the Children's Ombudsman planned to hold five regional conferences throughout Sweden, involving all 290 municipalities and 20 county councils, in order to consider the best way of implementing the Convention.
9. Mr. STENSTRÖM (Sweden) said that Sweden had been one of the first countries to establish a government body to deal with integration issues, counteract structural discrimination and promote diversity. Owing partly to the efforts of that government body, discrimination in Sweden was rare. Attitudes towards asylum-seekers were generally positive. Unlike the situation 10 years earlier, there was no longer a xenophobic party in Parliament. The Government had been successful in funding an initiative to help individuals break with Nazi organizations.
10. The Government had established anti-discrimination offices in many Swedish municipalities. An action plan to combat racism, xenophobia, homophobia and discrimination had been adopted in February 2001. New legislation to counteract ethnic discrimination had entered into force on 1 July 2003. Two commissions monitored legislation on preventing discrimination in schools on grounds of gender, ethnic origin, religious or other beliefs, sexual orientation or disability. Another commission compiled and analysed information on structural discrimination on grounds of ethnic origin or religion. With government funding, a centre against racism had recently been established by more than 100 Swedish non-governmental organizations (NGOs).
11. A bill was currently being drafted to improve the organizational aspects of dealing with new immigrants, and would be submitted to Parliament in the spring of 2005.
12. Ms. VUCKOVIC-SAHOVIC asked whether Sweden's efforts to combat discrimination had been successful.
13. Mr. STENSTRÖM (Sweden) said that, while there was still a certain degree of discrimination in the labour market and in the treatment of customers in restaurants, the situation had by and large been improving.
14. Ms. JAHN (Sweden), replying to questions concerning discrimination in education, said that all school staff were responsible for counteracting negative attitudes and prejudices and promoting mutual understanding. That approach was reflected in both school curricula and national legislation. Sweden was a multicultural society: some 20 per cent of its population were either foreign-born or had one parent from another country. More than 120 languages were taught in Swedish schools. One of the objectives of education was to inculcate democratic ideals, tolerance and respect for others in order to promote social and gender equality and prevent bullying, sexual harassment, violence and xenophobia. The Ministry of Education had launched a year of fundamental values and a project that focused on democracy in school and society.

15. According to surveys conducted in 1997, 2 per cent of pupils had reported that they had been harassed or bullied in school. In 2000, that figure had increased to 4 per cent, before falling to 3 per cent in 2003. Thus, efforts to overcome such problems and promote tolerance had had a positive impact.

16. A working group composed of representatives from all Nordic countries had prepared strategies to combat bullying and had reviewed research in the field. The national education authorities had compiled material on best practices for dealing with harassment and bullying. Every school was expected to have an action programme to address such behaviour. A booklet containing general guidelines for counteracting all forms of abusive treatment and discrimination had been distributed to all schools. One guideline stated that pupils, parents and school staff must be involved in such efforts.

17. The CHAIRPERSON asked why independent schools existed, whether the Government subsidized them in the same way as public schools, and what purpose they served.

18. Ms. JAHN (Sweden) said that independent schools, which were established at State level, were very similar to municipality schools but did not have the same constraints on their curricula, teaching approaches or methods. There was no fee for attending independent schools.

19. The CHAIRPERSON said that the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights had expressed concern about a commercial tendency in Sweden's independent schools, which were reportedly issuing what appeared to be stocks or bonds.

20. Ms. JAHN (Sweden) said that, while the Government was aware of that situation, it had not yet taken a decision on the matter.

21. Ms. BJÖRKLUND (Sweden) said that the Government was concerned about children exposed to poverty and social exclusion. An investigation to determine how widespread the problem was and what children were affected had revealed that, while the number of children in poor families had declined in recent years, the economic gap in society had widened. The children most at risk were those from migrant families and single-parent families. Under the Social Services Act, unemployed persons and persons with low incomes were entitled to allowances for living expenses, including housing. The risk of social exclusion was greatest for children from such families. The Government had allocated 1 billion kronor in additional support for families with little or no income and would give priority to finding other ways of assisting children from poor families.

22. Mr. CITARELLA asked whether the criteria for granting assistance to low-income families and the amount of benefits varied between municipalities and whether the system of financial assistance applied to all families and children residing in Sweden, regardless of nationality.

23. Ms. JAHN (Sweden) said that financial assistance for families in need was guaranteed by law and that the same system applied throughout the country, although certain municipalities might offer additional benefits. All low-income families residing in Sweden were eligible for assistance, but a different system applied during the asylum application process.

24. Although 75 per cent of all children in Sweden lived in traditional nuclear families, the emergence of new family constellations required additional safeguards to ensure that the principle of non-discrimination was observed in all circumstances.
25. Sweden had a long-standing tradition of non-authoritarian education. In most families, children's views were respected and children participated actively in family decision-making. Parents were supported at all stages of their children's upbringing by a system of parental guidance and training programmes. In order to strengthen that system, the National Institute of Public Health had been allocated additional resources to evaluate different models and disseminate best practices.
26. Although the report stated that children did not have the right to request legal or medical advice without a parent's consent, in practice children were not denied medical assistance when they did not have such consent. Children had access to school nurses and youth clinics, and medical staff was bound by confidentiality. Surgical intervention, however, required parental consent.
27. The CHAIRPERSON asked whether a minor in Sweden could request a prescription for an oral contraceptive without parental consent.
28. Ms. JAHN (Sweden) said that the staff of youth clinics was trained to advise and support children on such matters. Children were also encouraged to discuss the issue with their parents.
29. The CHAIRPERSON wished to know whether or not it was legal to prescribe an oral contraceptive for a minor without parental consent.
30. Ms. BJÖRKLUND (Sweden) said that, while there were no legal provisions concerning that particular situation, there had been very few lawsuits against doctors or medical staff for providing services to children without parental consent.
31. Ms. BERGLUND (Sweden) said that Sweden intended to ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography in 2005. A number of legal amendments had been necessary to ensure compliance with Sweden's obligations under that instrument, including legislation declaring trafficking in human beings to be a criminal offence, which had entered into force on 1 July 2004.
32. A question had been raised regarding the conduct of law enforcement officials and the detention of minors during the riots that had occurred during the European Council summit in Gothenburg in 2001. While nothing justified excessive use of force by police officers, the circumstances had been exceptional. Proceedings had been instituted against the police chief in command, who had been acquitted in the first and second instances. No other official had been convicted in connection with the events. A joint proposal by the Ombudsman and Parliament to review the Police Act in the light of certain issues raised in the courts had been submitted to the Ministry of Justice for consideration.

33. Persons under 18 years of age might be liable for prison sentences if the nature or seriousness of the crime warranted such measures. However, such sentences could be commuted to placement in closed juvenile care.

34. Judges received training in child-related issues, including the Convention on the Rights of the Child; additional seminars were offered on matters pertaining to children's rights and juvenile justice. In 2004, members of the National Police Board had participated in training in the investigation of crimes involving the sexual exploitation of children, and a relevant handbook was currently being prepared. In 2004, the Prosecutor-General had organized a five-day workshop for all Swedish prosecutors; the workshop had dealt with such issues as the sexual exploitation of children. A special meeting, in which prosecutors and members of Parliament had participated, had been held on crimes involving the sexual abuse of women and children.

35. A study commissioned by the Prosecutor-General had revealed the unsatisfactory quality of investigations into cases of sexual abuse of children, and the small number of cases resulting in criminal proceedings. A bill currently before Parliament provided for the imposition of heavier sentences for the sexual assault of children, particularly rape. The exploitation of other people's vulnerability or inability to protect themselves was considered aggravating circumstances and entailed more severe penalties.

36. For the purposes of child pornography legislation, a child was defined as a person whose pubertal development was not complete or whose photograph and attendant circumstances suggested that he or she was under 18 years of age. The provisions on child pornography also applied to persons over the age of 18 whose pubertal development had not been completed. Swedish legislation provided additional safeguards against sexual abuse and molestation.

37. Ms. LEE asked whether there were any known cases of offenders being acquitted because the victim had appeared to have completed his or her pubertal development.

38. Ms. BERGLUND (Sweden) said that, in one case, the offender had been acquitted of charges of child pornography because the victims' appearance had suggested that they had been over 18 years of age. The Prosecutor-General had appealed against the verdict, and a Supreme Court decision was pending. However, the offender in question had subsequently been charged and convicted for sexual molestation.

39. The CHAIRPERSON asked whether the training of prosecutors and judges in children's rights and juvenile justice was mandatory or voluntary.

40. Ms. BERGLUND (Sweden) said that such training was not mandatory. However, only properly qualified judges were authorized to preside over cases involving children or young offenders.

41. Ms. VUCKOVIC-SAHOVIC requested information on the expertise and professional training of lay members of courts.

42. Ms. BERGLUND (Sweden) said that lay members of courts were persons with diverse professional backgrounds who represented their communities. They had no expertise in child-related issues.

43. Ms. BJÖRKLUND (Sweden) said that a working group had been set up with a two-year mandate to collect information on the frequency of and circumstances surrounding the sexual exploitation of children in Sweden. The information obtained would be used by social services in their efforts to protect children. The working group had commissioned the National Council for Crime Prevention to conduct a review of convictions for sexual offences against children. In addition, a study on 18-year-old secondary school students who provided sexual services in exchange for money had been carried out by the Council of the Baltic Sea States. An edited version of the working group's report would be distributed to professionals who came in contact with children who had been sexually exploited. Four regional conferences on the subject would be held in 2005.

44. In the social services, quality control was ensured through the relevant legislation, which regulated the activities of social services and set national standards for the provision of such services, and through the supervisory functions of county administrative boards and the National Board of Health and Welfare.

45. The National Board of Institutional Care had conducted an investigation into the reasons for the increasing number of foreign children who were being taken into care; however, the investigation referred to the Board's institutions only. Forty per cent of the children admitted to care institutions were foreigners who had had traumatic experiences. The care provided by such institutions was intended to meet the needs of individual families; there was still room for improving the quality of such care.

46. In an effort to raise the general standard of care, the National Board of Health and Welfare had issued recommendations on the qualifications of the staff and management of such institutions. In December 2004, the Government had appointed a committee to develop stricter methods of supervising the social services; the committee's report would be available in December 2006. At the same time, a parliamentary committee was working on a national plan of action for social services and young people. The overall aim was to make better use of limited resources by analysing current working, organizational and staffing methods. The committee would issue its findings in September 2005.

47. Ms. KHATTAB enquired how a national plan of action could be drawn up before the findings of both committees were issued.

48. Ms. BJÖRKLUND (Sweden) said that the two committees had different mandates: the committee established in December 2004 would focus on improving the supervision of all social services.

49. The CHAIRPERSON asked whether closed juvenile care was a type of institution under the supervision of the National Board of Institutional Care.

50. Ms. BJÖRKLUND (Sweden) said that closed juvenile institutions were under the supervision of the National Board of Institutional Care. Moreover, one of the objectives of the committee established in December 2004 was to ensure the more independent supervision of such institutions.

51. Under the Social Services Act, the decision to place children in care was usually taken on a voluntary basis. In some cases, however, when children required protection, the Care of Young Persons Act was applied. All placements in institutions or foster families were closely monitored, and municipal social workers had to report on the children's progress every six months. The municipalities recommended that children who were still in care institutions when they reached the age of 18, should be allowed to remain there until they completed their education. According to legislation adopted in July 2003, after a child had lived with the same foster family for more than three years, consideration should be given to granting the foster family custody of the child in order to ensure that the child was raised in a stable environment.

52. It was too early to evaluate the impact of the social services' greater reporting obligations. That issue would be taken up in connection with efforts to improve the supervision of social services. The National Board of Health and Welfare had issued recommendations and handbooks for social service professionals.

53. Ms. WIMAN (Sweden) said that Sweden attached great importance to protecting children against harmful content in the media, including the Internet, and had established a special committee for that purpose. Parents and other adults were responsible for monitoring children's use of the media, and teachers were required to instruct children in the ethical use of the Internet. Service providers bore responsibility for how their services were used. For 13 years, Sweden had been participating in the European Union SAFT (Safety, Awareness, Facts and Tools) Project, which had issued 10 recommendations on children's use of the Internet.

54. Ms. CHUTIKUL asked what measures existed to protect children against pornographic material on the Internet, and whether there was any cooperation with service providers in that area.

55. Ms. KHATTAB enquired whether Sweden had adopted any legislation that made the provision of pornographic material a criminal offence. Raising awareness of the problem was not enough, since some of the methods used by providers were so sophisticated that it was difficult for parents to exercise control.

56. Ms. WIMAN (Sweden) said that, in providing instruction in the use of the Internet, schools placed emphasis on ethics; for example, children were encouraged to shut down the computer when they came across unsuitable sites. There was no specific legislation to combat pornography on the Internet. Although Sweden was making every effort to apply the relevant European Union regulations and to cooperate with Internet providers, many pornographic web sites were operated by worldwide concerns.

57. Ms. SUNDBERG (Sweden), replying to a question concerning Sweden's efforts to promote a children's rights perspective in its policies, drew attention to a bill put forward in 2003 entitled "Shared responsibility - Sweden's policy for global development". The ultimate aim of

the bill was to achieve the Millennium Goals, which placed particular emphasis on children's rights. The process leading up to the adoption of the bill would require considerable time and effort, and the recommendations of the Committee and other treaty bodies would be useful in that connection.

58. With regard to the status of minorities, she referred the Committee to the detailed information contained in Sweden's sixteenth periodic report to the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD/C/45/Add.4), which had been considered in November 2004. Five minorities and their respective languages were now recognized in Sweden: the Sami, the Swedish Finns, the Tornedalers, the Roma and the Jews. Additional information on the subject of minorities was available on request.

59. Mr. STENSTRÖM said that illegal immigrants were not entitled to free education. Sweden's migration policy was based on the principle of controlled migration, the fact that illegal immigrants did not enjoy the same rights as legal immigrants was not a violation of the Convention. The word "all" in the context of "free education for all" did not necessarily include everyone on the territory of a State party. That interpretation was shared by other States members and legal experts of the European Union, and was reflected in Council Directive 2003/9/EC laying down minimum standards for the reception of asylum-seekers.

60. Ms. SMITH said that, in Norway, all children were entitled to health care and education, regardless of whether they were legal or illegal immigrants.

61. Mr. STENSTRÖM said that children in hiding in Sweden also had access to health care. However, the education of such children posed certain problems; for example, it was difficult for a child to remain in hiding and attend school, unless the school decided not to cooperate with the authorities.

62. With regard to the treatment of unaccompanied minors, he said that in December 2004 a report had been published recommending a clearer division of responsibilities between the Swedish Migration Board and the municipalities. While the Board bore responsibility for the children and had to provide accommodation on its premises when there was a major influx of immigrants, under normal circumstances the municipalities were responsible for practical arrangements regarding care and accommodation.

63. The trustee for unaccompanied children, who had been the target of criticism, was the subject of a bill put forward in December 2004. The proposed legislation would give the trustee greater financial and legal powers and responsibilities, including custody and the authority to prevent relatives from removing children from institutions.

64. Mr. LIWSKI requested additional information on the agreement between the State and the Federation of County Councils to provide health care for children in hiding. In particular, he wished to know whether the agreement covered long-term treatment.

65. Mr. STENSTRÖM said that, under the agreement, children in hiding were entitled to the same health care as other Swedish children. The parents of such children were eligible for long-term therapy, for example for the treatment of mental illness. More comprehensive legislation on the subject would soon be introduced in accordance with the Council Directive 2003/9/EC laying down minimum standards for the reception of asylum-seekers.

66. An information campaign involving the Swedish Migration Board and the Children's Ombudsman had been launched to ensure that all decision makers in cases concerning children had appropriate training. Under new regulations, the presence of one specialist in each of the Swedish Migration Board's institutions was required. Considerable efforts had been made to resolve the problem of the disappearance of children, in particular by consulting the children's trustees. It was very rare that the professionals concerned had no information as to the whereabouts of children who had disappeared.

67. Mr. CITARELLA said that, according to the written replies, the number of children seeking asylum in Sweden was very high. Perhaps the disappearance of children might be connected with the lengthy procedures involved. In that connection, he requested data on the success rate of applications.

68. Mr. STENSTRÖM said that not many unaccompanied children were granted refugee status, although they were sometimes allowed to stay in Sweden on humanitarian grounds. For a number of reasons, including the improved situation in Iraq, fewer applications from asylum-seekers were being accepted. When applications were rejected, there were strict requirements concerning conditions for expulsion, which meant that, more often than not, the expulsion did not take place. The deadline for processing applications was three months for unaccompanied minors and six months for families. While it was not always possible to meet those deadlines, it was important to ensure that the right decision was taken. The Swedish Migration Board always gave priority to applications concerning children.

69. Mr. STOICAN (Sweden) said that the National Board of Health and Welfare had proposed that a survey of about 20,000 young people aged 13 and 16 should be conducted every three years in order to assess their mental health. According to a pilot study, the number of children and young people who sought professional advice on mental health problems had risen over the past three years. However, the Board considered that that increase might be more indicative of better awareness of the availability of such assistance than of an increase in mental health problems as such. The Board had therefore concluded that there was currently not enough data to provide an accurate picture of the mental health situation of children and young people in Sweden. While some children were still unsure about how to obtain assistance, the number of children requesting assistance had risen, which indicated that county councils' efforts to raise awareness of the availability of treatment for mental health problems had been successful.

70. According to the 2003 European School Survey Project on Alcohol and Other Drugs, only 18 to 25 per cent of children and young people in Sweden smoked. Alcohol consumption was a much more serious problem. Measures to reduce that phenomenon had focused on helping parents to support their children and encourage them to drink less alcohol, or at least not to

become intoxicated. While only 7 per cent of Swedish schoolchildren used illicit drugs, the Government was aware of the problems associated with children's use of alcohol and other drugs, and had drawn up a national plan to address the issue.

71. Ms. BJÖRKLUND (Sweden) said that about 70 per cent of children with disabilities attended special classes in mainstream schools, and 20 to 30 per cent of such children had been fully integrated into mainstream classes. There were some special schools for children who were deaf or had hearing problems. A report would be submitted to Parliament on an action plan for a national disability policy in 2006.

72. While legislation stipulated that there should be equal provision of services throughout the country, municipalities complied with such legislation in different ways. The Government was considering the conduct of a study on the unequal provision of services. Measures were under way to improve coordination between providers of social services, health care and education for children with disabilities. Steps had been taken to increase the availability of rehabilitation programmes for children with disabilities.

73. Mr. STOICAN (Sweden) said that the Government provided significant support for cultural and sporting activities for children with disabilities. Many cultural and sports associations for such children were thriving.

74. Ms. AL-THANI said that, while the success of such associations was commendable, children with disabilities should also be integrated into mainstream sporting activities.

75. Ms. BERGLUND (Sweden) said that the principal aim of the legislative reform on the minimum marriage age had been to ensure that foreign minimum marriage ages were not applicable in Sweden. Current legislation did not permit the recognition of child marriages or forced marriages contracted abroad.

76. A review of the Act concerning Recognition and Enforcement of Foreign Custodial Decisions etc., and of the Act concerning Transfer of Children was under way, and relevant amendments were currently being considered by the Ministry of Justice.

77. Ms. JAHN (Sweden) said that legislation on intercountry adoption had been amended with effect from 1 January 2005, and a National Board for Intercountry Adoptions had been established to supervise such adoptions. Those measures aimed to ensure that all financial transactions involved in such adoptions were in accordance with the provisions of the 1993 Hague Convention on Protection of Children and Cooperation in respect of Intercountry Adoption.

78. With the exception of cases in which a child was a relative of the adoptive parents, or was already known to them, all intercountry adoptions were mediated by special associations. The criteria regulating those associations included: a proven capacity to act as an intermediary; the need for intercountry adoption to be an activity conducted independently of any other work done by the association; and the requirement that the association should accept all prospective adoptive parents who had been deemed suitable by the Swedish social services. Sweden

conducted intercountry adoptions only with countries that had adoption legislation, or other reliable regulations, that incorporated the relevant principles contained in the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Hague Convention on Protection of Children and Cooperation in respect of Intercountry Adoption. Sweden also required that partner countries should have a functional intercountry adoption administration, and that all costs should be transparent.

79. Mr. LIWSKI asked whether, once an association had been authorized to organize intercountry adoptions, there was any supervision of the practices that that association adopted abroad.

80. Ms. JAHN (Sweden) said that the National Board for Intercountry Adoptions had the authority to supervise all such practices. The authorization of associations involved in intercountry adoptions could be withdrawn at any time.

81. If information on an adopted child's biological parents could be found, the associations mediating the adoption were obliged to give it to the adopted child, upon request.

82. Ms. KHATTAB asked whether biological parents had the right to visit their children, once the children had been adopted.

83. Ms. JAHN (Sweden) said that, if both the child and the biological parents wished to meet, there was nothing to prevent them from doing so.

84. Since most intercountry adoptions involved children who had not acquired a language before arriving in Sweden, the right to education in the mother tongue did not apply. However, any adopted child who spoke a foreign language upon arrival in Sweden was granted that right.

85. While there had been no cases of an adoptive parent marrying an adopted child, legislation had been introduced to prohibit that practice.

86. About 100 individual adoptions took place a year, and there were about 1,000 intercountry adoptions a year. Legislative amendments had been introduced to allow homosexual couples to adopt children in accordance with the same criteria used to decide on the suitability of heterosexual couples.

87. Ms. BERGLUND (Sweden) said that the provisions in the Education Act and the national curriculum concerning the influence and responsibility of children had been drawn from the Convention. Surveys had shown that head teachers set the parameters for the degree of influence children could exercise and the way in which dialogue was conducted in individual schools. A recent report from the Ministry of Education and Science had proposed that all schools should set up school councils, that involved both parents and pupils. Draft amendments to the Education Act included proposals for increasing children's involvement in and their influence on their education.

88. Ms. VUCKOVIC-SAHOVIC, Country Rapporteur, said that the Committee would recommend that the reporting State should continue its efforts to ensure implementation of all legislation relevant to the Convention, particularly its efforts to disseminate the Convention and promote the rights of the child. Further measures would be recommended with a view to

preventing discrimination and eliminating corporal punishment and bullying in schools. The aims of education and access to education would also be highlighted. The Committee would recommend that special protection measures should be strengthened, particularly for children in the juvenile justice system and children at risk of sexual exploitation.

89. Ms. KHATTAB, Alternate Country Rapporteur, said that the Committee's recommendations would focus on child asylum-seekers and illegal immigrants, racism and xenophobia, and the mandate of the Children's Ombudsman.

90. Ms. JAHN (Sweden) said that the Government would study the Committee's recommendations and take them into account in its efforts to improve the situation of all children in Sweden.

The meeting rose at 6 p.m.