



Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

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Summary record of the 243rd meeting

Held at the Palais Wilson, Geneva, on Tuesday, 5 April 2016, at 10 a.m.

Chair: Ms. Cisternas Reyes

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The meeting was called to order at 10 a.m.

Consideration of reports submitted by parties to the Convention under article 35

(continued)

Initial report of Slovakia (continued) (CRPD/C/SVK/1; CRPD/C/SVK/Q/1 and Add.1)

1. **Ms. Pietruchová** (Slovakia) said that the Anti-Discrimination Act referred explicitly to the right of persons with disabilities to reasonable accommodation only with respect to the labour market. Employers could be exempted from having to provide reasonable accommodation only if doing so constituted an unreasonable burden. Assessments of whether a given burden was unreasonable took into consideration such factors as the benefits to the employee concerned and the costs to the employer. On the other hand, employers could not be exempted from the requirements to provide reasonable accommodation established by other laws, such as the Building Act. In addition, the Constitution stated that women, minors and persons with disabilities were entitled to enhanced protection of their health at work, special working conditions, special protection in labour relations and assistance with vocational training. Slovakia was in no way opposed to amending the Anti-Discrimination Act to state explicitly that the denial of reasonable accommodation was an act of discrimination not only in the labour market but also in markets and the health, education and housing sectors.
2. **Mr. Gabura** (Slovakia) said that responsibilities for emergency preparedness and response plans were defined in a number of relevant laws. Recommendations, albeit without the force of law, had been issued to give priority to women, minors and persons with disabilities in the event of an evacuation. Units of the integrated rescue system provided instructions to persons with disabilities on what to do in an emergency, and the country's police forces and fire brigades had been duly informed of the specificities of communicating with them. The procedures for emergency responses involving persons with disabilities were reviewed and updated in consultation with their representative organizations.
3. By law, persons with disabilities who were in critical situations were eligible for humanitarian assistance subsidies to meet their basic needs. Applications for such assistance were reviewed on an individual basis. Slovak legislation relating to asylum matters, which reflected the provisions of the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and the relevant legislation of the European Union, had been amended in 2015 to transpose two European Union directives into domestic law and thus provide for a number of additional protections. Unaccompanied minors seeking asylum were entitled to social and legal protection and could not be moved to detention centres for adult migrants. The amendment had also introduced provisions stating that the needs of vulnerable persons, including persons with disabilities, had to be considered in the creation of suitable conditions for housing and care.
4. **Ms. Pietruchová** (Slovakia) said that all the identified cases of forced sterilization of Roma women had dated to the years before 2000, when patients' rights had not been as well recognized as they currently were. Those sterilizations had taken place in accordance with legislation that had since been amended. Currently, the informed consent of the patient was required for all medical procedures, including sterilization. Every effort was made to explain sterilization and its consequences, as well as alternative methods of family planning, to persons considering the procedure. Sterilization was available only on written application and after a 30-day waiting period. In the wake of allegations made by NGOs in 2003, the Ministry of Health had reviewed the medical records of some 3,500 women who had undergone sterilization and about 18,000 women who had had Caesarean sections between 1993 and 2003. It had found that only 0.1 per cent of the sterilized women had undergone

the procedure for what could have been questionable reasons. All the sterilizations had been performed in accordance with the legislation in force at the time. Nonetheless, gaps had been found in some medical records, which suggested that there had been administrative lapses in the hospitals where they had been drawn up. Measures had been taken to address those lapses.

5. In the case of *V.C. v. Slovakia*, in which the complainant had been a Roma woman, V.C., who had been sterilized in 2000, the European Court of Human Rights had identified shortcomings in Slovak law as it pertained to patients' autonomy. Those shortcomings had been remedied by an amendment adopted in 2004. However, the Court had stated that there was no indication that the medical staff had acted with the intention of ill-treating the complainant and that the evidence was not sufficiently strong to convince it that the sterilization without prior informed consent had been part of an organized policy. In its recently released concluding observations on the combined fifth and sixth periodic reports of Slovakia (CEDAW/C/SVK/CO/5-6), the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women had made no further recommendations to investigate allegations of forced sterilization of Roma women.

6. Although the Act on Health Care stated that informed consent to an abortion could be provided by a person's legal representative if she was herself unable to provide such consent, it also stipulated that the patient should be involved in the decision to the extent possible. Patients considering an abortion were duly informed of the possible consequences of the abortion and the alternatives available to them. No one could be compelled to have an abortion. Prenatal screenings were widely available in Slovakia, and the costs of such procedures were covered by health insurance. Amniotic fluid tests could be done, and if they indicated any chromosomal abnormalities, the woman could opt for an abortion. The decision was always hers.

7. **Mr. Krivošík** (Slovakia) said that the European Social Fund had provided €49 million over a three-year period to subsidize the provision of child-care services. It had provided €30 million over four years in support of municipal social services and €20 million, also over four years, in support of a range of low-threshold services for families and children. It had also provided €8 million to support deinstitutionalization. The priorities of the Integrated Regional Operational Programme included eliminating reliance on high-capacity institutions, supporting the construction of municipal facilities such as day-care centres and sheltered housing and providing a range of social services and facilities for children. Approximately €220 million had been allocated to the Programme's priority areas.

8. **Mr. Gabura** (Slovakia) said that the work of the Commissioner for Persons with Disabilities focused on legislation. The Commissioner's Office was fully independent, and its mandate included monitoring the country's fulfilment of its obligations under relevant international instruments, the situation of persons with disabilities and the enforcement of domestic legislation. The Commissioner could also visit places of detention.

9. **Ms. Pietruchová** (Slovakia) said that the Slovak National Human Rights Centre was entitled to act on behalf of victims of discrimination, including persons with disabilities, and to represent them in court. The Centre provided its services free of charge. Complaints of discrimination or other human rights violations could be submitted to the Centre or to the Office of the Public Ombudsman, which could provide legal counsel, also free of charge, and could seek redress. Persons with disabilities who were involved in civil disputes were entitled to free legal aid from the Ministry of Justice if their income did not exceed a certain threshold. Human rights NGOs could file class actions on behalf of groups of persons who were victims of discrimination.

10. Efforts to ensure that combating discrimination was an integral part of all programmes subsidized by the Structural Funds of the European Union had begun only

with the transition to the programming period 2014-2020. As a result, no penalties had yet been imposed for any failure to apply the so-called horizontal non-discrimination principle, which was aimed at harmonizing standards in combating discrimination. A unit of the Gender Equality and Equal Opportunities Department of the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family was responsible for overseeing the application of non-discrimination principles in all operational programmes. It currently had 12 staff members, and there were plans to increase that number to 15. The Department's aims were not only to ensure that programmes were evaluated on paper, but also to carry out spot checks and enable the general public to report aspects of any programme or product that were incompatible with equal rights, including the rights of persons with disabilities.

11. **Mr. Krivošík** (Slovakia) said that the National Strategy for Protecting Children from Violence had been adopted in 2014 to strengthen current policies and develop a strategic solution to the problem of violence against children. The coordinators responsible for implementing the strategy had been provided with training and guidelines on the institutional approaches to eradicate violence against children.

12. **Ms. Pietruchová** (Slovakia) said that, as part of Slovakia's ratification process of the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (the Istanbul Convention), a National Action Plan for the Prevention and Elimination of Violence against Women had been drafted and was being implemented. The parliament had also recently amended several laws in an attempt to improve the protection provided to victims of domestic violence. With the new amendments, if a second act of domestic violence was committed by the same person within one year of a first act, it would be prosecuted as a criminal offence. In the past, many instances of domestic violence had been considered to be minor offences. The period of time that a perpetrator could be evicted following an instance of domestic violence had also been increased from 48 hours to 10 days, thereby providing injured parties with an adequate opportunity to take legal action. Such evictions also included a prohibition on approaching the victims, which guaranteed their safety during the 10 day period. The Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family was currently preparing a new framework to provide protection and support to victims of domestic violence based on the Istanbul Convention and Directive 2012/29/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2012 establishing minimum standards on the rights, support and protection of victims of crime. A National Coordination Centre for Gender and Victims of Domestic Violence had also been set up to provide services and support to victims, to coordinate the efforts of all institutions involved in preventing domestic violence, to standardize the provision of services and to raise awareness of domestic violence issues among all stakeholders, in accordance with article 10 of the Istanbul Convention. A hotline for victims of domestic abuse received on average 600 calls a day, while the number of persons using shelters for victims of domestic violence had doubled in the last two years, reaching 200. Over 20 different institutions provided free-of-charge counselling to women victims of domestic violence. The budget for tackling domestic violence had been €10 million for the previous two years. The success of the approach in use was clear from the significant decrease in the number of domestic violence victims killed, which had declined from 15 in 2010 to 6 in 2016.

13. **Mr. Gabura** (Slovakia) said that it was mandatory to provide services of sign language interpreters in criminal proceedings involving persons requiring interpretation. The authorities had, however, sometimes encountered difficulties in sourcing interpreters, as only 16 sign language interpreters were certified for such work.

14. **Mr. Krivošík** (Slovakia) said that the Government was focusing on efforts to ensure that children were able to remain with their parents or guardians, through a process of deinstitutionalization. A number of legislative amendments had supported that objective. It was no longer possible, for example, to register new social service facilities with a capacity

exceeding 40 persons. Children could be placed in social service facilities only on a daily or weekly basis, not for longer periods. The Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family had drafted strategic documents detailing the ways in which community level support would be prioritized and strengthened and deinstitutionalization would be carried out. A national action plan on deinstitutionalization was also being prepared.

15. **Ms. Pietruchová** (Slovakia) said that there had been difficulties in collecting data on sexual orientation, ethnicity and disability as, in accordance with the laws on privacy and protection of personal data, public institutions were not permitted to ask individuals for details on those subjects. On the other hand, statistical data was collected on persons who held the certificate of severe disability, because they provided information when they applied for the certificate. It was essential to have accurate data on the situation of disadvantaged groups in order to implement effective temporary special measures for their benefit. There were therefore plans to amend the legislation on discrimination in order to facilitate the collection of such data.

16. **Mr. Krivošík** (Slovakia) said that approximately 38,000 persons were living in social service facilities on a long-term basis. Each year such facilities provided around 16,000 people with nursing care, 30,000 with transportation services, 8,000 with care at outpatient facilities, 20,000 with access to canteens and around 16,000 with access to washing facilities. The emergency housing shelters could accommodate about 7,000 people. Certain specific services were also provided for children. Around 14,000 children were thus covered, including children living in various different types of institutions, children's homes, foster families and family houses. Around 35 to 40 per cent of those children were in facilities which did not operate at the community level and which were therefore subject to deinstitutionalization.

17. **Mr. Gabura** (Slovakia) said that courts were required by law to issue their rulings in Braille or another accessible format, as appropriate. Blind or visually impaired persons were required to submit requests to receive such information in the format of their choice and to attach a copy of their certificates of severe disability. The websites of judicial bodies were also accessible to blind people. All court decisions were available online and in an accessible format. With the exception of three district courts, where transformation work should be completed in 2016, all court premises were accessible.

18. **Ms. Pietruchová** (Slovakia) said that the Constitution contained a general statement of the equality of all persons but did not specifically mention persons with disabilities. It also stated that international human rights conventions were given precedence over national legislation. The parliamentary system in Slovakia, which required a parliamentary majority vote in order to amend the Constitution, made it difficult to directly incorporate the provisions of the Convention into the Constitution. Amendment would therefore require action by the parliament, not the Government.

19. **Mr. Krivošík** (Slovakia) said that the use of restraints was prohibited by the Act on Social Services except where the health of the individual in question or other persons might be at risk, in which case non-physical or physical measures might be used. Non-physical measures included verbal communication, distracting the individual or active listening. Physical measures had to be approved by a psychiatrist and supported in writing by a social worker. Such measures might involve special handling techniques, removal to a designated room or medication. Any use of physical or non-physical restraints must be logged in a special register and required notification of the person's legal representative and the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family. In 2015, restraints had been used in 336 instances, 238 of which involved physical restraints. Of the total, 88 cases had been reported at State institutions and 248 at other facilities. The Act on the Social and Legal Protection of Children and Social Guardianship prohibited the use at all crisis centres and rehabilitation facilities of physical or degrading punishments that might cause physical or

psychological harm to a child. Any such incident must be reported to the social service authorities, who were responsible for taking steps to ensure there were no recurrences and to punish the guilty party, if necessary.

20. **Mr. Gabura** (Slovakia) said that during court proceedings, judges could order persons with a physical or mental disability who did not seem capable of understanding their situation or the proceedings to undergo an assessment by independent psychiatric specialists, with a view to assessing their legal capacity. The court could likewise order a period of psychiatric evaluation and observation of the individual at a medical facility or, in the case of an individual who was incarcerated, at the prison hospital. Persons deemed incapable of understanding the criminal nature of their actions were considered unfit to stand trial.

Articles 21-33

21. **Mr. Tatić** enquired whether updated data was available on the levels of funding for disabled students at mainstream schools, as opposed to funding for those at special schools. To what degree had election campaigns been made inclusive? Was information on candidates available in Braille, were televised debates broadcast with sign language interpretation and were campaign events accessible? To what extent were tourism facilities and sites accessible to the disabled?

22. **Ms. Quan-Chang** said that the subsidies and pensions available to persons with disabilities were reportedly inadequate and could also be provided on an intermittent rather than a continuous basis. Did the State Party plan to increase the level of assistance and make it more regular? She was particularly concerned that the assistance was inadequate for disabled persons, including senior citizens, living in poverty, especially those who became disabled late in life. She enquired whether the State party intended to remedy that situation by taking into account the additional financial burden imposed by a disability.

23. **Mr. Ruskus** noted that in 2014 there were some 20,000 children with disabilities in secondary education, of whom only 3,500 attended mainstream schools. That did not speak well of the State party's commitment to inclusive education. Although the State party currently referred to students with disabilities as special needs students, there had apparently not been any real change in their situation. There was a need for accurate assessment of disabilities. He welcomed the fact that the Schools Act provided for the integration of children with disabilities, but he emphasized that the goal was inclusive education and not integration. He asked to what extent school administrators were made aware of their obligation to promote accessibility and accommodation and whether the Government was truly committed to moving from segregated to inclusive education in public as well as private schools.

24. **Mr. Babu** asked what policies the State party was implementing to ensure full participation by persons with disabilities in political life and whether it intended to create a political system in which persons with disabilities and their representatives could participate fully in decision-making and policy development.

25. **Mr. Kim Hyung Shik**, noting the labour market measures intended for the benefit of persons with disabilities described in the State party's report, asked if any vocational or rehabilitation programmes existed and, if so, what results had been obtained. He would also welcome information on the sheltered workshops and workplaces mentioned by the State party in its replies to the list of issues (CRPD/C/SVK/Q/1/Add.1). He welcomed the fact that there were incentives for employers who hired persons with disabilities but asked whether there were penalties for those who did not do so. The State party should provide more data on the employment situation of persons with disabilities, in particular women.

26. **Mr. Buntan** asked about the availability of copyrighted reading material for persons with disabilities and whether the State party intended to ratify the Marrakesh Treaty to Facilitate Access to Published Works for Persons Who Are Blind, Visually Impaired, or Otherwise Print Disabled. To what extent were persons with disabilities able to participate in activities and decision-making relating to disability measures? Could they take part in the implementation and monitoring mechanisms under article 33 of the Convention? Did any formal mechanism exist to ensure their participation in such activities? He also asked whether any interministerial body existed to ensure full implementation of the Convention.

27. **Mr. You Liang** said that, notwithstanding privacy concerns relating for example to the gathering of information about sexual orientation, the State party should plan for the systematic collection of comprehensive and disaggregated statistics on education, health, employment, and social participation. That information was essential for the development of effective policies and programmes. He asked how the State party would implement the disability-related indicators included in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and which institutions would be responsible for implementation at the local level. Lastly, he requested information on any measures aimed at supporting artists with disabilities.

28. **Ms. Peláez Narváez** requested information on measures adopted by the State party to officially recognize Braille as a written language. She would welcome information on whether any measures had been put in place to support families that had children with disabilities and to help them cover the extra costs involved; to enable children to remain with their families rather than being placed in institutions; and to support persons with disabilities who had children so as to help them care for and raise their children at home.

29. **Ms. Degener** asked what portion of the State budget was devoted to the promotion of disability rights and what amounts were provided to the mainstream school system as opposed to special schools for children with disabilities. When would the Marrakesh Treaty be ratified and implemented? She also requested information on the roles played by national mechanisms, including the Slovak National Centre for Human Rights and the Committee for Persons with Disabilities, and on the level of participation by civil society organizations, in particular organizations of disabled persons, in their work.

30. **Mr. Pyaneandee** asked whether the State party intended to strengthen the powers of the Office of the Ombudsman and the Committee for Persons with Disabilities to increase their effectiveness and allow them to deal with complaints of discrimination.

31. **Mr. Langvad** requested confirmation that there were no laws or regulations that allowed the immigration authorities to detain immigrants with disabilities and their families. Was the gap between the standard of living of persons with and without disabilities closing, even taking into account the additional costs borne by persons with disabilities? He would welcome information on how the Statistical Office intended to address the challenge of collecting measurable statistics, both in general and specifically with regard to disabilities, especially in the context of the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, and how it would encourage the participation of organizations of persons with disabilities in its work. Lastly, he would welcome assurances that persons with disabilities could never be deprived of their legal capacity to vote or to be a candidate for office.

32. **Mr. Al-Tarawneh** likewise asked what steps would be taken to ensure that the Statistical Office and the periodic census would take full account of disability issues.

33. **Mr. Basharu** asked what measures were envisaged to ensure full access to information for deaf and blind persons and to make television and radio programming accessible. He asked for information on steps taken to protect the rights of deaf and blind persons in the health-care system, for example in relation to the use of Braille, audio information and sign language interpretation. Lastly, to what extent could persons with

disabilities participate in politics? Were polling stations fully accessible, and had any persons with disabilities been elected to public office at any level?

34. **Mr. Parra Dussan** asked for information on the participation of persons with disabilities in the labour market and on any quotas, subsidies or measures aimed at encouraging their employment. The State party seemed to be giving more attention to subsidies and incentives than to fostering a culture of inclusion.

35. **Ms. Kingston** (Country Rapporteur) requested information on the types of restraints that could be used in psychiatric institutions. She had received information that caged beds could be used and asked whether they would be banned. Did the State party intend to ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment? She asked whether health and social service staff received training on the rights of persons with disabilities under the Convention. The delegation should report on the quality and availability of funding for rehabilitation and indicate whether public libraries had adequate stocks of easy-to-read audio or Braille books.

The meeting was suspended at noon and resumed at 12.15 p.m.

36. **Ms. Tekelová** (Slovakia), in response to questions on the funding of measures to promote the inclusion of students with disabilities, said that the levels for funding were governed by the Act on the Financing of Elementary Schools, Secondary Schools and School Facilities. Funding was allocated using a coefficient that was applied to the budget, which varied. For students in special schools, the funding was lower than for students with disabilities in mainstream schools. For example, for students with hearing impairments, the coefficients for special schools and mainstream schools were respectively 1.8 and 2.27. For students with severe disabilities in special schools the coefficient was 1.25, as opposed to 4.25 for those in mainstream schools. The funds allotted to each school were not earmarked for particular programmes; administrators allocated them as they saw fit. As a result, no specific information was available to compare funding levels in concrete terms.

37. **Mr. Gabura** (Slovakia) said that, under the national legislation, persons with disabilities could vote directly from their homes or from a social care facility. They could also request electoral officials to place their votes in a portable ballot box for them. The public had access to information on the details of campaign funding of political parties and independent candidates.

38. **Mr. Krivošík** (Slovakia) said that financial assistance was paid either in the form of continuous or lump-sum benefits to persons with physical or mental disabilities in order to support independent living, mobility and communication. Under that scheme, in 2015, the Government had allocated €231 million to help cover expenditure for transportation, dietary requirements, the modification of vehicles and garages, clothing, accommodation and the purchase of assistive devices. Mothers caring for a child diagnosed with a serious medical condition received parenting benefits for the first six years of the child's life. Personal assistance benefits were provided for persons with serious physical disabilities aged from 6 to 65 years, and payments could be extended beyond that age for persons who had already been awarded such benefits before reaching the age of 65. Persons with serious physical disabilities were issued with cards entitling them to discounted entry to cultural events and travel on public transport, free parking and toll-free road travel. Families with children with disabilities could receive housing loans from the State at advantageous rates.

39. **Ms. Tekelová** (Slovakia) said that, under a programme on the education of persons with disabilities, the Government and local and regional bodies had a duty to take steps to improve the conditions of learning of children with disabilities, in line with the Convention.

40. **Mr. Gabura** (Slovakia) said that, under the Constitution, all citizens who had reached the age of 21 years on a given election day could stand as candidates in that

election. The Slovak Republic was a parliamentary democracy and its citizens freely elected their own representatives.

41. **Ms. Vargová** (Slovakia) said that all citizens had the right to employment, without any restrictions. Discrimination on the grounds of disability and marital status was prohibited. Complaints of discrimination or mistreatment could be filed with the Central Office of Labour, Social Affairs and Family, which processed them and subsequently took any necessary action. The Office also covered up to 100 per cent of course fees and additional costs for persons undergoing vocational retraining, including freely chosen sector-specific retraining, and provided additional benefits for families with young children. Successful job applicants who could prove that they had been recruited on the basis of retraining that they had paid for themselves were entitled to up to €600 in compensation. In 2015, almost 17,000 persons, 62 per cent of whom had been women, had completed such courses. The Government had taken various measures to promote the employment of persons with disabilities and to set up sheltered workplaces and encourage self-employment for them, as outlined in the State party report. Enterprises having more than 25 staff members with disabilities could apply for sheltered workplace status, which gave them funding to cover the cost of an employee specifically responsible for assisting those members of their staff. In total, 74 per cent of employers employing at least 20 persons had complied with the law by ensuring that 3.2 per cent of their workforce was comprised of persons with disabilities, in line with the Act on Employment Services. About 16 per cent had opted to comply with the Act for example by placing orders with self-employed persons with disabilities, and another 10 per cent had paid financial fees for each person with disabilities that they failed to recruit under the scheme.

42. **Mr. Slovák** (Slovakia) said that once the European Union and its member States had reached a decision on the issue of shared competence in terms of the ratification of the Marrakesh Treaty, Slovakia would be in a position to move forward with ratification and to eventually transpose the relevant European Union legislation into national law.

43. **Mr. Krivošík** (Slovakia) said that work was ongoing to ensure that the various statistical data collection systems in Slovakia were interconnected. A 2015 report containing indicators relating to the living conditions of persons with disabilities and their families, in particular in the fields of education, employment, social protection and health, was available from the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family.

44. **Ms. Tekelová** (Slovakia) said that the Slovak language could easily be written using the current form of Braille. A number of journals, documents and textbooks had been produced in that format, and Braille books could be borrowed from libraries across the country. In 2015, there had been 31,173 students with disabilities enrolled in mainstream schools, 25,611 in special schools and 10,185 in special classes at mainstream schools.

45. **Mr. Gabura** (Slovakia) said that asylum seekers were placed in specific facilities, unless they had committed a criminal offence, in which case they were transferred to detention centres for short periods pending the outcome of the corresponding investigations. Upon admittance to a facility, asylum seekers underwent a medical examination. Civil society stakeholders, including persons with disabilities, had been involved in the drafting of policies and strategies relating to the implementation of the Convention, including the National Programme for the Development of Living Conditions of Persons with Disabilities and the Act on the Commissioner for Children and on the Commissioner for Persons with Disabilities.

46. **Ms. Tekelová** (Slovakia), turning to the issue of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, said that Slovakia was a member of the Development Assistance Committee of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. The Slovak Official Development Assistance agency (SlovakAid) and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs were the

competent bodies for development assistance. A new law on development aid had recently been enacted. The Ministry of Culture provided support for persons with disabilities to ensure that they had access to culture, and a number of theatre companies employed actors with disabilities. There was currently one Slovak parliamentarian with disabilities, and there had been a number of others in the past.

47. **Mr. Rosocha** (Slovakia) said that the dialogue with the Committee had allowed for the exchange of opinions and knowledge relating to best practices for meeting the needs of persons with disabilities and safeguarding their rights. Slovakia valued the passion, dedication and professionalism of the Committee members. The Government would take their comments and recommendations into account when implementing the Convention, including through the adoption of additional measures where required, and was committed to the continued promotion of equal opportunities for persons with disabilities.

48. **The Chair** said that she was grateful to the Slovak delegation for the information it had provided to the Committee.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.