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## Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
**Fifty-fifth session**

**Summary record of the first part (public)* of the 44th meeting****
Held at the Palais Wilson, Geneva, on Tuesday, 16 June 2015, at 3 p.m.

*Chairperson:* Mr. Sadi
*later:* Mr. Abashidze (Vice-Chairperson)

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* No summary record was prepared for the rest of the meeting.
** No summary records were issued for the 39th to 43rd meetings.



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*The meeting was called to order at 3 p.m.*

**Substantive issues arising in the implementation of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights**

*Day of general discussion on the right to just and favourable conditions of work*

1. **The Chairperson** said that the right to just and favourable conditions of work was central to the Covenant and an issue to which the Committee had devoted considerable attention. The time was therefore right for the Committee to hold a discussion on a draft general comment on article 7. Two rounds of oral statements would follow the introductory remarks of the Rapporteurs, the first round of oral interventions would be heard; after a short break, there would be a second round of interventions.

2. **Ms. Bras Gomes** (Rapporteur for the formulation of a general comment on the right to just and favourable conditions of work) said that over 30 written contributions had been received, and all of them would be taken into consideration by the Committee. Article 7 covered an important set of labour rights, and the present draft general comment should be read in conjunction with the Committee's general comment No. 18 on the right to work and general comment No. 19 on the right to social security. Although the right to form and join a trade union, the right to strike and the right to engage in collective bargaining were fundamental to the enjoyment of just and favourable conditions of work, it had been decided to separate the examination of articles 6, 7 and 8 for the sake of clarity and to focus solely on the right to work in the present draft general comment. However, there were clearly areas in which those articles overlapped.

3. Recent years had seen strong economic growth, but there had not been a strong link between growth and job creation. Austerity measures had further undermined labour relations and had led to the proliferation of non-standard forms of employment that were associated with weakened protection of labour rights and fewer social benefits. It was therefore an appropriate time for the Committee to review article 7. In addition to covering many rights that were of paramount importance for all, an examination of article 7 also called for a balanced consideration of the rights of different groups of workers since, in addition to the cross-cutting issues that it addressed, it also had implications for the distinct challenges faced by specific groups. The article dealt with the relationship between employers and employees as it had been viewed in 1976 when the Covenant had entered into force, but the general comment would address the situation of new categories of workers, such as the self-employed. The article also had extensive implications in respect of gender equality. She looked forward to hearing the views of speakers and any proposals on the draft general comment. The Rapporteurs hoped to present a second draft for consideration by the Committee by September 2015 with a view to its adoption in 2016.

4. **Mr. Ribeiro Leão** (Rapporteur for the formulation of a general comment on the right to just and favourable conditions of work) said that he would like to draw attention to the structure of the draft general comment (E/C.12/54/R.2), which was composed of an introduction and sections on normative content, the obligations of States and non-State actors, and violations. He looked forward to working with the meeting participants.

5. **Mr. Vogt** (International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC)) said that the issues addressed in the draft general comment were of central importance for the international trade union movement. His organization hoped that the comment would make reference to "a minimum living wage", in accordance with the International Labour Organization (ILO) Minimum Wage Fixing Convention, 1970 (No. 131), that

would allow workers and their families to attain a socially acceptable standard of living. Clarification of the concept of a "fair wage", which would be set above the minimum wage, would also be a positive step. It would be helpful to define "remuneration", a term that was open to a broader interpretation than "minimum living wage". It would be preferable to refer to "appropriate" rather than "realistic" wages in paragraph 23 of the draft general comment, since the latter term could be used to justify the exertion of downward pressure on wage levels. Non-standard forms of employment had been the focus of an ILO tripartite meeting of experts in 2015, and the report on that meeting could provide useful inputs for an evaluation of the ways in which the employment relationship was changing: the use of indirect forms of employment, short-term contracts, subcontracting and other unstable forms of employment had an impact on each of the rights covered in article 7.

6. **Mr. Kofmel** (Autistic Minority International) said that Autistic Minority International was the only autism self-advocacy organization run by and for autistic people at the global, political level. Autism was a genetic, hereditary lifelong neurological difference for which there was no cure. Since it was an invisible condition, no adjustments or accommodations were made for people with autism and, consequently, they encountered barriers that were not apparent to non-autistics. Fear of discrimination in the workplace was the primary reason why autistics chose not to be open about their autism, and that situation often led to burnout when coping strategies failed. Obstacles at work included an over-reliance on teamwork, overly stimulating work environments, and difficulties with multitasking and in dealing with colleagues or customers. He therefore welcomed the statement made in paragraph 29 of the draft comment that denial of reasonable accommodation amounted to discrimination, but wished to urge the Committee to expand the scope of that statement to go beyond health and safety provisions. He further welcomed the statement in paragraph 12 on equal remuneration for work of equal value for persons with disabilities but remained concerned about the many instances in which autistic persons were not paid for their work at all or were paid much less because of their disability. The scope of paragraph 11 should be expanded to cover mental health institutions, as well as prisons. Sheltered workshops should also be required to pay a fair wage to persons with disabilities. Since a lack of sufficient vocational training opportunities, job placement services and inclusive recruitment processes had been identified as barriers to employment, they should be mentioned in paragraph 16. Without fair and equal wages, persons with disabilities, including autistics, could often not live independently in their community. Autistic persons greatly appreciated the Committee's recognition of the fact that a lack of social links should not bar a person from promotion.

7. Mention should be made in paragraph 48 of the possible advantages of flexible work arrangements for persons with disabilities. The public sector should be encouraged to set an example when it came to inclusiveness, accessibility and reasonable accommodation, and the general comment should use strong, unequivocal language regarding the importance of ensuring that all public-sector jobs were open to persons with disabilities and that States parties passed legislation requiring the private sector to follow suit. Temporary special measures might need to be introduced in order to enable persons with disabilities to reach high-level posts. As the United Nations Secretary-General had said in April 2015, recognizing the talents of persons on the autism spectrum was essential in order to create a truly inclusive society. It was important for employers to provide work environments where they could excel.

8. **Mr. Caudron** (Clean Clothes Campaign) said that the Clean Clothes Campaign was a global network that sought to improve working conditions in the garment industry. Over the past 26 years, Campaign members had witnessed a deterioration in working conditions in the industry. The draft general comment covered issues of great

importance to the Campaign, and he hoped that it would highlight the right to "just and favourable remuneration" so that workers and their families could have an existence worthy of human dignity, as defined in article 23 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

9. In view of the Rana Plaza collapse in Bangladesh and deadly factory fires in Bangladesh, Italy, Pakistan and the Philippines, it would be helpful if an explicit reference were made in paragraph 30 to the importance of fire and building safety and to the Bangladesh Accord. The Committee might also consider including a reference to the limitations of private auditing and the need to strengthen labour inspections, mentioning, in particular, the ILO Labour Inspection Convention, 1947 (No. 81). With respect to compensation, the Committee might consider a reference to the ILO Employment Injury Benefits Convention, 1964 (No. 121) and to the Rana Plaza Arrangement, which set an important precedent on compensation for workers who were part of a global supply chain. It might also consider the addition of a paragraph that underlined the obligation of States to require private companies to respect the rights of workers throughout the global supply chain. Global buyers and multinational companies should be included in the list in paragraph 51 of non-State actors that had a role in securing just and favourable conditions of work.

10. **Mr. Boudouris** (Permanent Mission of Greece to the United Nations Office at Geneva) said that, for years before the financial and economic crisis, many stakeholders in Europe had believed that compliance with international labour standards could be taken for granted. Yet in Greece, since the crisis had erupted, the fundamental pillars of labour protection had been called into question. Although pay levels, living standards and actual working hours had all been impacted since 2010, the Government of Greece maintained that protecting labour rights did not hinder fiscal stability and competitiveness but rather was a necessary precondition for sustainable growth, and it was promoting the restoration of collective bargaining and dispute settlement mechanisms through social dialogue. The principle of equal pay for work of equal value was enshrined in his country's Constitution. Greece had been part of a core group of countries along with Egypt, Indonesia, Mexico and Romania that had introduced a resolution on the right to work at the twenty-eighth session of the Human Rights Council. His Government stood ready to support the Committee in the drafting of the present general comment.

*The meeting was suspended at 3.40 p.m. and resumed at 3.50 p.m.*

*Mr. Abashidze, Vice-Chairperson, took the Chair.*

11. **Ms. Ratjen** (International Commission of Jurists), highlighting some of the points made in her written submission, said that it seemed best either to delete paragraph 1 of the draft or revise its wording in order to make it clear that the purpose of the general comment was not limited to helping States to fulfil their reporting obligations. The general comment would need to reflect existing ILO and other standards and adapt them to the specific legal framework of the Covenant. It should also be made clear that the degree of enjoyment of the right to just and favourable conditions of work did not depend on whether a worker was employed in the public or the private sector. In particular, paragraphs 15 and 16 seemed to draw a distinction between workers in different sectors in that regard. She was concerned about the use of the term "incentives" in paragraphs 60, 61 and 63, as it might give the impression that some important aspects of article 7 were subject to good will and to voluntary commitments on the part of private actors. Furthermore, in paragraphs 28 to 32, the draft seemed to restrict the core obligations in respect of safe and healthful working conditions to the adoption of a national policy, rather than reaffirming the obligation of the State to protect the life and health of workers. She would like to encourage the Committee to strengthen the section on States' obligations in respect of international

cooperation and assistance by adding a reference to the Maastricht Principles on Extraterritorial Obligations of States in the Area of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

12. While welcoming the references made to Special Economic Zones or Export Processing Zones in paragraph 52, she did not believe that they employed retrogressive measures, since in most States they were subject to the same labour laws as the rest of the country. It was rather a question, in many cases, of a failure to enforce the laws that protected rights under article 7. In paragraph 48 (iv), the term "workers in informal employment" would be preferable to "workers in the informal sector" because that way the emphasis would be placed on the situation of individuals who did not benefit from protection, rather than on the informality of the economic activity in question.

13. The increasing complexity of the employment relationship placed workers in highly vulnerable positions. She would like to urge the Committee to highlight the State's obligation to ensure the same level of protection for all workers, regardless of the nature of their contractual status. The general comment should underscore States' obligations to enforce labour laws and to provide an effective remedy for victims of violations of labour rights. Explicit reference should be made to the applicability of criminal law in the event of serious breaches of certain types of labour laws and to the importance of ensuring that labour inspectors were suitably equipped and empowered.

14. **Ms. Tripodi** (Research and Right to Development Division, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)) said that the gender pay gap, which was referred to in paragraph 3 of the draft general comment, had narrowed in recent years, but primarily because men's wages had been depressed by the economic crisis and subsequent austerity measures, rather than because women had finally begun to earn more. She therefore wished to urge the Committee to consider adding a sentence that would acknowledge the fact that, in many parts of the world, the vast majority of workers' wages were too low. In her view, equal remuneration for work of equal value should be an immediate obligation rather than, as stated in the draft general comment, an objective to be worked towards. In its written submission, OHCHR had made specific suggestions on wording regarding the steps that States should be encouraged to take to address the particular challenges faced by migrant workers. Lastly, the general comment should acknowledge that the burden of providing unpaid care, borne disproportionately by women, was a gender-specific obstacle to the enjoyment of the right to just and favourable conditions of work.

15. **Ms. Darooka** (Programme on Women's Economic, Social and Cultural Rights) said that much of the work performed by women, including care-giving, cooking, cleaning, fetching water, gathering fuel or subsistence farming, was not regarded as economically significant. Even when they were in paid employment (access to which often depended on the availability of affordable childcare) women were perceived as secondary wage-earners. For those reasons, the general comment should focus more on substantive equality. In addition, it should make it clear that States parties were under an obligation to recognize that the unpaid care provided by women was work, reduce the burden imposed on them — by ensuring the availability of childcare facilities or energy resources, for instance — and ensure that such tasks were redistributed more equitably between men and women, for example, or from the individual household to the State. The general comment should acknowledge the increase in inequality that was occurring worldwide as the purchasing power of minimum or "living" wages fell, private companies' profits skyrocketed and Governments tended to overlook their human rights obligations in their pursuit of economic growth. The text should also contribute to the effort to mainstream a gender perspective into the provisions dealing with labour rights. The Committee, unlike ILO,

on whose work it had drawn heavily, had an opportunity to broaden the concept of work and to foster an understanding of the fact that working conditions were an issue that was not limited to economic rights alone. That opportunity should not be passed up.

16. **Ms. Lee** (International Disability Alliance (IDA)) said that IDA welcomed, in particular, the Committee's explicit reference in the general comment to a non-derogable minimum wage, as exemptions from minimum wage rules often allowed employers to underpay persons with disabilities. A direct reference to the role that public procurement procedures played in promoting accessible workplaces and environments would be welcome. General comment No. 2 of the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, for example, had stated that it was unacceptable to use public funds to create or perpetuate the inequality that inevitably resulted from inaccessible services and facilities. The Committee's reference to the obligation to provide reasonable accommodation was commendable; nonetheless, it was not always clearly understood that, although accessibility could be realized progressively, the obligation to provide such accommodation, which was less costly than many employers assumed, had immediate effect. To correct those misconceptions, the general comment could stress States' obligations to inform employers that providing reasonable accommodation was not a mere option, raise awareness of the concept and provide relevant technical assistance.

17. Social welfare systems in which all benefits, including disability-related ones, were bundled in a single package sometimes penalized persons with disabilities who entered the labour market. Workers with disabilities whose earnings could make them ineligible for a subsistence allowance should still be entitled to any benefits that they received to offset the costs of having to pay, for example, for accessible transport. The Committee would therefore do well to encourage States to establish welfare systems under which persons with disabilities had every incentive to work. Lastly, IDA would appreciate a reference to discrimination against the workers, usually women, who were the primary caregivers to a family member with a disability and to the working conditions to which such workers should be entitled.

18. **Ms. Bichelmeier** (Make Mothers Matter) said that the "motherhood penalty" associated with discrimination against mothers in hiring and promotion and the "motherhood pay gap" should be addressed specifically in the general comment. It would be useful for the Committee to endorse a life-cycle approach that would allow both men and women to pursue discontinuous career paths. It was crucial to address the fact that women often devoted so much time to unpaid work that they were unable to engage fully in income-generating activities. The development of public infrastructure and services was essential to the enjoyment of the right to just and favourable conditions of work. Women's participation in the workforce had been increasing, but there had been no parallel reduction in the workload represented by the provision of unpaid family care. Sharing that workload more equally would contribute to the establishment of safe and healthy working conditions. Lastly, she would like to suggest that the general comment should refer to a recent resolution of the International Conference of Labour Statisticians which said that, for statistical purposes, the definition of work should be expanded to include "own-use production work comprising production of goods and services for own final use".

19. **Ms. Shin**, addressing Ms. Tripodi and Mr. Vogt, in particular, said that in dialogues with States parties she often raised the issue of equal pay for equal work and equal remuneration for work of equal value, but that it appeared that the distinction was not always well understood. In that connection, she wondered whether trade unions were developing means of making the necessary comparisons and whether it was really possible to demand that the principle of equal remuneration for work of

equal value should apply immediately, before it was entirely clear exactly what constituted work of equal value across different kinds of jobs.

20. **Mr. Schrijver** said that when Governments raised the issue of equal pay in international negotiations, they were sometimes accused — perhaps not always unfairly — of having ulterior motives for advancing that ostensibly noble cause, namely, to raise protectionist barriers. He therefore wondered how they might best respond to those charges of protectionism.

21. **Mr. Vogt** (International Trade Union Confederation) said that, in some countries, such as the Republic of Korea and Japan, many of the differences in pay for identical work were the result of the differing contractual regimes under which workers were hired.

22. **Ms. Tripodi** (Research and Right to Development Division, OHCHR), replying to Ms. Shin's question, said that although she understood the dilemma faced by the Committee, and although in practice it was likely to take time for States to fulfil certain obligations, it would not do to suggest that, legally, the obligations were any less immediate.

23. **Ms. Ratjen** (International Commission of Jurists) said that it was her impression that the general comment, as currently worded, suggested that the principle of equal pay for equal work could be realized progressively. Nonetheless, it would be better to describe the application of that principle as an immediate obligation. That did not mean that it had to be achieved immediately but rather that measures to achieve it had to be taken immediately. Claims that Governments were "hiding behind" demands for equal remuneration for work of equal value as a means of raising barriers to trade did not strike her as a major concern. The courts of various countries had developed methods of comparing different kinds of work; the Committee could draw on those legal precedents.

24. **Ms. Shin** said that she was well aware of the prevalence of unequal pay for equal work in the Republic of Korea, which was primarily due to the differing contractual regimes governing the work of men and women, given that most women were engaged in non-regular employment. With regard to determining what constituted "equal value", it would beuseful if trade unions helped to develop systematic methods of determining the comparable values of different forms of work, especially since very few court cases had dealt with that concept.

25. **Mr. Abdel-Moneim** said that the enjoyment of the rights enumerated in article 7 of the Covenant depended entirely on the implementation of article 6. It was therefore necessary to do much more work on article 6 and the right to work, in particular given the current economic situation. Although the term "social equality" did not appear in the Covenant, he wondered whether the overpayment of some people was not the result of the underpayment of others, a situation that would constitute a breach of the provision which stated that all workers should be provided with fair wages. In its discussions of the meaning of the phrase "work of equal value", the Committee should keep in mind the imbalance that currently existed among the four factors of production and particularly the stark difference between the earning power of capital and that of labour.

26. **Ms. Bras Gomes** said that the references in article 7 to both "equal remuneration for work of equal value" and "equal pay for equal work" had given the Committee a good deal of trouble. The slightly different wordings suggested slightly different concepts. As a result, following extensive discussions in the Committee, it had agreed that a balanced approach that dealt with the two concepts as a whole, yet did service to each, could help to overcome the problem. . She concurred with Ms. Shin's suggestion that States parties were willing to implement the concept of equal pay for equal work

but did not always have the technical tools to do so. The issue of a "living" or minimum wage was less complex. That term referred to a wage that assured a person of an adequate standard of living. Determining what wages were "fair wages" — an issue that the Committee had never considered at great length — would require more study and discussion. She wondered whether it would be better to discuss issues relating to subsistence farming in a paragraph to be devoted to agricultural work or in the paragraph on unpaid workers. Clarification regarding Ms. Ratjen's comments about the obligations of States and those of the private sector would be appreciated.

27. With regard to Ms. Ratjen's comment on paragraph 1, she believed that it was now a standard introductory paragraph for all general comments; she did not believe they could deviate from it. With respect to disability issues, it was important to realize that the general comment on article 7 dealt with just and favourable conditions of work; it could never fully cover what each specific group of workers might wish and need to have or integrate all proposals in that respect. The drafters welcomed contributions from States, which could help them to understand and refine important concepts. They had also sought contributions from employers, but none had chosen to participate.

28. **Mr. Uprimny Yepes** said he saw no reference to socioeconomic inequality in the draft general comment, yet he felt that it might well be related to decent conditions of work. The Covenant spoke of "fair wages". Since many workers had decent wages, but their employers had extraordinarily high wages, the question arose as to whether a decent wage was a fair wage. As for equal opportunity for promotion, recent economic analyses showed that socioeconomic inequality had increased enormously in the past 30 years and had resulted in very limited social mobility. In socially unequal societies, wealth was essentially inherited, while the children of the poor remained poor. He would be interested in hearing other people's views as to whether there was a place for those theoretical considerations in the general comment on article 7.

29. **Mr. Ribeiro Leão** said he had done a number of comparative legislative studies on the question of fair pay. In Latin America, the Organization of American States used the term "*salarios justos*" (fair pay); Mexico used the term "*salario decente*" (decent wage). Each Constitution contained an explicit definition of what was meant by fair pay. There was a great deal of material that would need to be compared and considered.

30. **Mr. Abdel-Moneim**, with reference to the definition of "remuneration" in paragraph 8 and the definition of "minimum" in paragraph 9, said that the "'minimum' requirements of remuneration" must never be invoked to justify austerity measures. The Covenant made no mention of austerity policies. Article 7 set out the right of all workers to "a decent living for themselves and their families" and to "equal opportunity". It was impossible to consider the implementation of article 7 in isolation from the concomitant implementation of articles 9, 10, and 11. States parties must work progressively towards the fulfilment of their obligations under the Covenant. It should, however, be possible to establish a universal standard for determining wages and salaries, and he hoped that further thought would be given to that matter.

31. **Mr. Kedzia** said that the matter of equal pay for equal work was relatively clear when considered within the bounds of any given country. In the globalized world, however, many people were under contract in their own countries but were also working abroad on a temporary basis. It would be interesting to explore what point of reference might be used in respect of a determination of equal pay for equal work under those circumstances. To cite one example, Germany had recently introduced a law requiring that drivers passing through that country must be paid at a rate equivalent to that of German drivers. For the Eastern European transport companies which dominated the transport market in that part of the world, that law was ruinous.

32. **Ms. Darooka** (Programme on Women's Economic, Social and Cultural Rights) said that article 7 was not solely about economic rights but also about social rights as they applied to the principle of just and favourable conditions of work. The general comment should also make reference to such livelihoods as farming, artisanry, forestry and fishing, which were practised on a small scale in many developing countries. Environmental sustainability should not be seen as simply an economic concern either.

33. **Mr. Boudouris** (Permanent Mission of Greece to the United Nations Office at Geneva) said that it was probable that the reason why the Covenant made no reference to austerity was that it had been drafted in the 1960s, a time of prosperity. The European Union had imposed an austerity regime on Greece, and the minimum wage had been reduced by 22 per cent for the general population and by 32 percent for persons under the age of 25, which placed them below the poverty line. That was a paradox: a minimum wage that was not a decent wage.

34. **Ms. Ratjen** (International Commission of Jurists) said that paragraph 1 of the draft stated that general comments were prepared to assist States parties in fulfilling their reporting obligations but, in fact, general comments were clearly drafted to help States comply with the provisions of the Covenant, which was something quite different.

35. She wished to point out that paragraph 15 of the draft general comment suggested that States had different obligations, vis-à-vis the public and private sectors, in terms of ensuring that people received equal pay for equal work. Although different means and measures might be necessary, and different legal remedies might apply, the State nevertheless had the obligation to ensure equal protection in all sectors. In her view, it might be possible to reflect some of those theoretical considerations in the general comment. States were required to adopt measures to achieve the realization of Covenant rights, but those measures might be very different from country to country. For instance, in some countries it might even be possible for the Government to place a cap on salaries. The question of workers who were temporarily employed in foreign countries was complex. It could be argued that purchasing power was more important than nominal wage levels, so, if a worker were paid his or her usual wage in a different country with a higher cost of living, that amounted to a loss of income.

36. **Ms. Bras Gomes** said that a general comment could only do so much; it could not solve all the social and economic inequalities addressed by the Covenant. The Committee had sent a letter to States parties in which it set out four conditions with respect to the imposition of an austerity regime: (1) that the policy must be temporary; (2) that it must be necessary and proportionate; (3) that it must not be discriminatory; and (4) that the minimum core content of rights must be protected at all times.

37. **Ms. Hodges** (United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD)) said that there had been no discussion of sexual harassment or violence in the workplace. ILO was formulating the text of a convention and a recommendation on gender violence at work, and it might soon have a document ready for review by member States. Therefore, paragraph 49 of the draft general comment on article 7, if strengthened, could well have an impact on the development of a new labour standard. The reference to training made in that paragraph was quite brief, however, with only supervisors and managers being mentioned specifically in that regard. That passage should be expanded to include judges, attorneys and other court officials. In addition, paragraph 64 (b), on the establishment of a system for combating gender discrimination at work, could be expanded to provide greater clarity to States parties about ways of going about fulfilling that obligation. The problems experienced by women in the workplace were not theoretical: there were countless cases in which women were paid less than men for the same jobs, and in most sexual harassment

cases, the plaintiffs were women. The dignity of the worker was a crucial aspect of article 7.

38. **Ms. Nolan** (International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association) said that she welcomed the references to LGBTI persons in the draft general comment. She wondered, however, whether consideration had been given to devoting a special paragraph to LGBTI persons in the section on the right to just and favourable conditions for specific groups, as had been done for migrant workers, domestic workers, unpaid workers and others. Discrimination against LGBTI persons was rife all over the world. She also wished to draw the Committee's attention to the ILO Gender Identity and Sexual Orientation: Promoting Rights, Diversity and Equality in the World of Work Project (the PRIDE Project), which analysed the situation of LGBTI workers in a number of countries.

39. **Ms. Bras Gomes** said that the drafters had pondered the question as to whether or not to include a separate paragraph on LGBTI workers in the section on specific groups. They had decided that, since LGBTI persons were present in every one of the specific groups that were mentioned, it was preferable to integrate references to them throughout the text in a cross-cutting manner.

40. **Mr. Ribeiro Leão** said that he wished to thank all those who had participated in the discussion for their contributions. The Committee would do its best to delve into all the different matters that had been raised. Ideals, of course, had to be accompanied by strategies; there was much work to be done.

41. **The Chairperson**, thanking all participants, said that their contributions would greatly enrich the text of the general comment on article 7.

*The discussion covered in the summary record ended at 5.40 p.m.*