



# International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights

Distr.: General  
12 July 2017

Original: English

---

## Human Rights Committee 120th session

### Summary record of the 3378th meeting

Held at the Palais Wilson, Geneva, on Wednesday, 5 July 2017, at 3 p.m.

*Chair:* Mr. Iwasawa

## Contents

Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under article 40 of the Covenant  
(*continued*)

*Second periodic report of Honduras*

---

This record is subject to correction. Corrections should be set forth in a memorandum and also incorporated in a copy of the record. They should be sent within one week of the date of the present record to the Documents Management Section (DMS-DCM@un.org).

Any corrected records of the public meetings of the Committee at this session will be reissued for technical reasons after the end of the session.

GE.17-11385 (E) 100717 120717



\* 1 7 1 1 3 8 5 \*

Please recycle The recycling symbol, consisting of three chasing arrows forming a triangle.



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

**Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under article 40 of the Covenant**  
(continued)

*Second periodic report of Honduras (CCPR/C/HND/2; CCPR/C/HND/Q/2 and Add.1)*

1. *At the invitation of the Chair, the delegation of Honduras took places at the Committee table.*

2. **Mr. Argueta Pérez** (Honduras), introducing his country's second periodic report (CCPR/C/HND/2), said that social peace and economic, social and environmental justice were prerequisites to the full enjoyment of human rights. Various social phenomena had, however, given rise to dramatic changes in the country in the previous decade, exacerbating the violence already present. Human rights violations had become rife as a result, and certain groups — women and girls, in particular, but also journalists and justice officials — were especially vulnerable to the consequences of the surge in crime that had taken place. As of 2013, however, the implementation of a number of structural reforms had begun, with a view to restoring peace by strengthening the justice system and overhauling the national police force. One of the changes introduced had been the establishment of the Technical Agency for Criminal Investigation. The efforts made had borne fruit: the number of murders in Honduras had fallen significantly, to 53.5 per 100,000 inhabitants.

3. An important series of reforms to the prison system had been undertaken. To reduce overcrowding and improve the living conditions of persons deprived of their liberty, three new prisons had been built and existing ones had been renovated. In addition, the National Institute for Juvenile Offenders, the focus of which was rehabilitation, had been created.

4. Discrimination and violence against women and girls could be eradicated only by addressing their structural causes through the economic empowerment of females. Several programmes had been established to ensure such empowerment, benefiting some 112,000 women from especially vulnerable communities, including indigenous women and women of African descent. A unit investigating the violent deaths and murders of women had also been created.

5. Children and young people faced particular pressures, which the Government had taken steps to address. In order to deal with the extremely high rate of teenage pregnancy in the country, efforts had been redoubled to ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health services. The Directorate for Children, Adolescents and the Family, meanwhile, had been created to take a human rights- and gender-based approach to assisting children and teenagers.

6. Legislative measures based on the International Labour Organization (ILO) Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182) and Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138) had been adopted to address the issues of child labour and the commercial sexual exploitation of children. In 2016, there had been 10 prosecutions in cases of such exploitation, which had led to 4 convictions. As part of its commitment to ending the commercial sexual exploitation of both children and adults, and human trafficking in general, Honduras had participated in an international operation involving eight Latin American countries, as a result of which a human trafficking and smuggling network had been broken up and 33 people, including 9 Hondurans, had been arrested. Prosecutions had followed in 14 cases and 8 convictions had been obtained. The budget of the Inter-Agency Commission against Commercial Sexual Exploitation and Trafficking in Persons had been doubled in 2017, with 40 per cent of the increase being earmarked to provide for care for victims.

7. Along with criminal gang activity, corruption was one of the main scourges affecting Honduran society. To tackle the problem, the Government had signed an agreement with the Organization of American States to help in the fight against corruption and impunity. That and other measures taken to combat corruption and restore public trust had proved effective: according to the Justice Studies Center of the Americas, Honduras had moved from fourteenth to eighth position on its judicial transparency index.

8. Human rights defenders played a crucial role in guaranteeing the rule of law in a democracy. In recognition of the importance of their work and that of other key actors, including journalists and justice officials, the Supreme Court and the Public Prosecution Service were creating a mechanism to ensure their protection. Moreover, the Office of the Under-Secretary for Human Rights and Justice had been elevated to a full ministry.

9. Although there were still many challenges to overcome on the path towards ensuring the full enjoyment of human rights by all Honduran citizens, the Government reiterated its commitment to safeguarding the fundamental freedoms of its people by working to comply with the provisions of the Covenant. In the spirit of cooperation and transparency, it remained open to constructive dialogue towards that end.

10. **Ms. Cleveland**, after noting with pleasure that there was a considerable number of women in the delegation, said that, in Honduras, the Covenant was part of domestic law and prevailed where there was conflict between its provisions and those of domestic legislation. In the replies to the list of issues, however, the State party had cited only one case in which the Covenant had been invoked. It would be interesting to hear about other examples of such invocation. It would also be helpful to learn what steps had been taken to educate judges, prosecutors, lawyers and human rights defenders about the protections afforded under the Covenant. Given that the Committee had never received any individual communications concerning the State party, it would be useful to know what methods were used to educate the public about the communications procedure under the Optional Protocol. In its 2006 concluding observations, the Committee had found that the State party had provided insufficient information on the follow-up process. It would be helpful to know what intragovernmental mechanism was in place to ensure the implementation of the recommendations of the Committee and those of other treaty bodies.

11. The Constitutional Division of the Supreme Court had recently dismissed an appeal in a case of discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation. In view of that decision, it would be helpful to learn about existing legal protection against discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity. In a similar vein, the Family Code had recently been amended to prohibit the union of same-sex couples; details on the application of the relevant provisions would be appreciated, as would information on any plans to reform the law in order to ensure equality for same-sex couples. Under article 321 of the Criminal Code, discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity had been made a hate crime, which was a positive development. It would be useful to learn whether reports that there had been proposals to revoke that article were accurate and, if so, what the Executive branch's stance was on the matter. Furthermore, it would be interesting to know whether any charges had been brought under the article. Details of the training dispensed to prosecutors and judges on the relevant provisions would be appreciated. Transgender persons could be detained by police for up to 24 hours for violation of public morals and it would be helpful to have an account of the number of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) persons detained under the Act on Policing and Harmonious Social Relations during the reporting period. Under current regulations, name-change requests made by transgender persons were denied; it would be helpful to know whether the Government had any plans to implement recommendations to fully recognize the identity of transgender persons.

12. Given that the State party had some of the most restrictive abortion laws in the world, it would be helpful to know the maximum criminal penalty for seeking an abortion and the number of criminal charges brought against women and their physicians in the previous five years, as well as the corresponding sentences handed down. Furthermore, it would be useful to hear whether there were any circumstances under which a woman could obtain an abortion by legal means. In that connection, it was important to make clear that article 6 of the Covenant protected the life of the pregnant woman and not of the fetus; the current situation in the State party violated several articles, including article 6. It would be helpful if the delegation could clarify whether the statistics that it had provided on the number of abortions that had taken place in recent years referred to illegal abortions or to miscarriages. It would also be interesting to know whether women who sought post-abortion care risked prosecution. In view of the increase in clandestine abortions performed as a result of the Zika virus, it would be useful to hear about the number of clandestine abortions performed

annually and the resultant maternal mortality rate. It would also be helpful to know whether there were any proposals for legislative reform not only to respond to the new circumstances stemming from Zika but also to ensure compliance with international standards.

13. It would be useful to learn how the Government intended to ensure that adolescents received comprehensive sexual health education and had ready access to contraception and whether there were any plans to reconsider the existing ban on emergency contraception. Lastly, in the light of reports that HIV-positive women had been sterilized either without their informed consent or upon receiving misinformation, the delegation should indicate the measures that Honduras had taken to investigate, remedy and prevent such practices.

14. **Mr. Santos Pais** said that the Committee would welcome additional details on the transparent and participatory process used to select the Ombudsman. Had civil society organizations participated in the process? What kind of public hearings had taken place, how many had there been and where had they been held?

15. It would be helpful to learn about the financial resources provided to the Office of the National Commissioner for Human Rights between 2009 and 2017.

16. In 2016, a forum for dialogue had been established between the State and 28 human rights organizations to ensure the participation of civil society organizations in the implementation of the National Human Rights Action Plan. It would be helpful to have an account of the results of the plan's 345 indicators, which were mentioned in the State party's report. It would also be interesting to hear about the implementation status of the plan. Specifically, it would be useful to learn how many projects had been completed, what subject areas they had covered, how many people had been trained, in what subjects and in what parts of the country. With regard to the human rights-based approach taken towards local planning in 12 municipalities, it would also be useful to know how many other municipalities would be taking that approach before the end of the Plan.

17. Given that the replies to the list of issues (CCPR/C/HND/Q/2/Add.1) provided no information on the National Commission against Racial Discrimination, Racism, Xenophobia and Related Forms of Intolerance, the Committee would welcome details of the Commission's objectives, achievements, main areas of operation and powers. In addition, it would be interesting to learn how many people had turned to the Commission for assistance and what the outcome of their petitions had been.

18. He would be grateful for an update on the implementation of the National Policy on Women and the Second Gender Equality and Equity Plan. With reference to the period following that covered by annex I of the State party report, he wished in particular to know how many of the activities planned in that context had been completed; how many were ongoing; what level of implementation had been recorded; what the activities had consisted of; how many individuals had received training; what their training had entailed; and in which municipalities of Honduras their training had taken place. Moreover, it was currently unclear how many women's shelters were available, what their capacity was and where they were located; how many specialized domestic violence courts existed, where they were located and how many judges they had; and how many people, including judges, prosecutors and law enforcement officials, had received training in gender-based violence. In addition, it would be helpful if the delegation could indicate what measures were planned to guarantee more effective protection for women victims of domestic and sexual violence, whether adequate support and compensation were provided for those victims and what measures were planned to ensure that perpetrators were dealt with appropriately and that prosecutors and judges received the appropriate training.

19. It would be useful to learn how many of the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission had been implemented, how many were currently being implemented and how many not yet seen progress. Although the State party had indicated that the Amnesty Decree had not hindered the conduct of investigations or prosecutions in relation to human rights violations, the Committee had been informed that human rights defenders faced many challenges, that many had been killed in recent years and that, in some cases, including that of Berta Cáceres, their killers continued to enjoy impunity. It

would be helpful to learn what measures would be taken to safeguard the right to life of human rights defenders more effectively.

20. The Committee urged the State party to investigate, prosecute and punish all human rights violations connected with the events of 28 June 2009. In that connection, he wished to know whether a national plan had been developed to compensate the victims of human rights violations connected with those events and would be grateful for confirmation that efforts would continue to be made to ensure strict compliance with article 1 of the Amnesty Decree.

21. **Ms. Abdo Rocholl** said that she would appreciate clarification regarding the mechanism for alternation in the political participation of women and men in electoral processes, as article 7 of the relevant regulations seemed to set limits on its full application. She would be grateful if the delegation could comment on the likelihood of the introduction of an amendment to that article and indicate the current gender balance among elected officials. The State party was to be commended for the efforts that had been made to bring the Equal Opportunities for Women Act and the Family Code into line with international standards, and it would be useful if the delegation could inform the Committee of any specific legislative steps taken to amend the provisions of the Civil Code and the Labour Code to eliminate stereotypes of women.

22. While the State party was to be commended for the various programmes that had been developed to combat violence against women, she would be grateful for evaluations of the effectiveness of those programmes and an explanation of how the State party had arrived at the figures provided on the prevalence of femicide in its replies to the list of issues (CCPR/C/HND/Q/2/Add.1, para. 17). Moreover, she wished to know what measures were planned to combat violence against women and to prevent femicide and would be grateful both for statistics on femicide disaggregated by origin and by sexual orientation or identity of the victim and for information on the mechanisms in place for awarding compensation to the families of victims.

23. It would be useful to learn what steps had been taken to improve the access of rural, indigenous and Afro-descendent women to education, employment, health, social security and land, since such women reportedly continued to suffer from multiple forms of discrimination. Lastly, she wished to commend the State party for the establishment of the new Ministry for Human Rights.

24. **Ms. Kran** said that the Committee would appreciate specific information on the measures taken to implement the Public Policy against Racism and Racial Discrimination for the Comprehensive Development of Indigenous and Afro-Honduran Peoples, the results that had been achieved in that regard, what measures had been taken to disseminate the Policy and how its impact was being measured. Moreover, it would be helpful if the delegation could indicate what measures had been taken to protect sex workers from violence and to train police officers to handle cases of violence against sex workers, how many such cases had led to prosecution, how the phenomenon was monitored and whether any special programmes had been developed to reduce its prevalence.

25. With regard to the safety and security of indigenous and Afro-Honduran peoples, she wished to know what measures had been taken to investigate, prosecute and punish those responsible for the murders of indigenous Tolupan, Garifuna, Chorti, Pech and Lenca leaders, including those responsible for the murder of Berta Cáceres, how many prosecutions had taken place, what the outcomes of those prosecutions had been and whether regional or international support would be requested to facilitate the investigation of the murder of Ms. Cáceres. More generally, the delegation should indicate what processes had been put in place to guarantee access to justice for indigenous peoples and what specific measures had been taken to ensure that indigenous and Afro-Honduran peoples had access to social services such as education and health.

26. With regard to the rights of persons with disabilities, it would be helpful to learn what measures were being taken to address the concerns expressed in the concluding observations of the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities on the initial report of Honduras with regard to legal terminology and institutions such as guardianship and substituted decision-making (CRPD/C/HND/CO/1, paras. 5 and 27), whether

consultations with persons with disabilities had been held in connection with the proposed bill on inclusive development for persons with disabilities and what the current status of that bill was.

27. She invited the delegation to indicate how many of the cases of torture, ill-treatment and excessive use of force that had been investigated in 2016 and 2017 had led to prosecution and what sanctions, if any, had been imposed on those convicted. Moreover, further information on the sanctions imposed and the reparations awarded to victims and to their families in the cases recorded between 2010 and 2015 would be appreciated. The Committee would be grateful for an update on the 13 of the 70 individual and collective complaints received by the National Committee for the Prevention of Torture that had been referred to the Public Prosecution Service, including information on any sanctions imposed and any compensation awarded. In addition, it would be helpful to learn whether any steps had been taken to implement the recommendation made by the Committee against Torture in its concluding observations on the second periodic report of Honduras that criminal legislation should be amended so as to ensure that all acts of torture were punishable by appropriate penalties (CAT/C/HND/CO/2, para. 10), whether that amendment would be incorporated into criminal law and whether consultations on the content of any new provisions concerning torture and cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment had been held with civil society.

28. She would be grateful for an explanation of the procedure for granting licences to private security companies and wished to know how their employees were monitored and whether they were required to pass criminal record checks. It would be helpful if the delegation could update the Committee on the progress made in introducing human rights training for the employees of private security companies and indicate how the impact of such training programmes would be assessed.

29. It was unclear what action had been taken to hand over the management of prisons to the National Prison Institute, what benchmarks had been set for that process and what plans had been developed to ensure that the rehabilitation of prisoners received adequate attention. In addition, the delegation was invited to indicate whether the recommendations of the Human Rights Protection Unit of the National Prison Institute, which conducted supervisory visits to places of detention, had been implemented, what action was taken in response to non-compliance with its recommendations and what resources had been allocated for the implementation of its recommendations.

30. She would be grateful for more information on the measures taken to ensure that the Office of the Special Prosecutor for Human Rights and the National Committee for the Prevention of Torture had adequate resources and on the size of their budgets for 2017 and 2018. It would be helpful to learn how many complaints of torture had been reported by the National Committee since its establishment, how many of those cases had been resolved and how they had been resolved, what sanctions or other measures had been imposed in cases of non-compliance with its recommendations and what follow-up had been conducted on its recommendations.

31. With regard to allegations of human rights violations associated with the coup d'état of 2009, she wished to know why the Office of the Special Prosecutor for Human Rights had brought proceedings in so few cases, what offences those prosecuted had been charged with, what the current status of those cases was, whether they had resulted in any convictions and, if so, what sentences had been imposed on those convicted, whether victims and their families had been awarded reparations and what steps had been taken to inform victims and their families of the status of proceedings.

32. **Mr. Shany** said that, while commendable, the various projects organized to protect children and adolescents from involvement in gang violence were unlikely to have a major impact; the funding for such projects was reportedly decreasing and their continuation was dependent on international assistance. The Committee would appreciate more information on the principal frameworks in place to reduce the high prevalence of criminal violence in Honduras, including information on the role of the Xatruch II joint task force and on the application of counter-terrorism legislation in that context. In addition, clarification was needed regarding the low number of complaints against the police that were passed on to

the Attorney General's Office and the low number of convictions that had resulted from those complaints. More information on the work of the National Anti-Extortion Force in the fight against impunity and criminality would also be appreciated. He wished to know what programmes and frameworks were in place to protect young men and boys who refused to join gangs, whether law enforcement officials received sufficient training to allow them to identify and protect victims and whether procedures had been established to facilitate the participation of victims in legal proceedings and to ensure that they had access to effective and gender-sensitive remedies.

33. With regard to the work of private security companies, it would be useful to learn whether measures had been taken to increase the funding made available to the Control Unit of Private Security Services and what efforts would be made to ensure that members of the public were able to differentiate clearly between registered and unregistered private security companies. The Committee would appreciate an update on the status of the proposal to reduce the number of firearms that a registered user could own, as well as explanations of the criteria for registering firearms and of the measures taken to ensure that firearms did not fall into the hands of unregistered users, in particular underage users.

34. Lastly, he wished to know whether measures had been taken in response to concerns that had been expressed regarding the recruitment of children into the armed forces, in particular following the coup d'état of 2009, and would appreciate more information on the Guardians of the Fatherland programme, under which, it had been claimed, young children were required to live in military units.

35. As impunity and forced disappearances involving the police continued to pose a problem, he asked whether the delegation could corroborate the claim by a non-governmental organization (NGO) that 300 women had disappeared in 2014 and whether it could confirm that the figures provided in paragraph 34 of the replies to the list of issues were exhaustive.

36. In his report on his mission to Honduras in 2016 (A/HRC/35/23/Add.1), the former Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions alleged that members of the police and military had been involved in the extrajudicial killing of five minors involved in gangs. He asked whether the failure by the Government to contest the findings implied that they were correct. He asked whether the murders of Zenia Maritza and Ramón Eduardo Rodríguez by members of the armed forces in 2014 reflected the return of social cleansing. The Special Rapporteur's report also claimed that the State had failed to take basic steps to investigate crimes in the Lower Aguán Valley. He enquired whether the State had the capacity to conduct those investigations.

37. He asked why the process of police certification had not yet been completed. Given that new military units had recently been introduced into law enforcement roles, it would be useful to know what timeline the State had in mind for transferring law enforcement activities from the military back to the police.

38. The Committee would welcome more information on the legal framework for protection that was being developed to implement the recommendations of the former Special Rapporteur on the human rights of internally displaced persons. He asked whether urgent protective measures had been introduced, in particular to protect vulnerable persons and to prevent young persons from being forcibly recruited into gangs. He would also appreciate clarification on the number of internally displaced persons. In addition, he asked whether any steps had been taken to comply with the recommendation by the Special Rapporteur that the operational functions of the Inter-Agency Commission for the Protection of Persons Displaced by Violence should be strengthened.

39. **Mr. Muhumuza** said that he wished to know what percentage of the population in Honduras were black, how they were represented in public life and what programmes had been introduced to address their underrepresentation.

40. **Mr. Heyns** said that he would like to know whether the bill on the use of force by the national police would be explicitly applicable to the law enforcement functions of the military. He asked whether the Government was committed to transferring the dominant

role in policing from the military to the police and, if so, what steps were being taken and when the transfer was scheduled to occur.

*The meeting was suspended at 5.30 p.m. and resumed at 5.45 p.m.*

41. **Mr. Argueta Pérez** (Honduras) said that the judiciary had invoked article 26 of the Covenant in the judgment issued on 31 January 2017 in case No. 253/2016 of the Labour Division of the Supreme Court of Justice. In addition, in 2013, the Attorney General of the Republic had issued written instructions to prosecutors calling on them to invoke the standards set out in the Covenant where applicable. Examples of compliance with those instructions included case No. 1995/2014 and case No. 1771/2017. As part of his strategic plans for 2017, the Attorney General had introduced training requirements for judges on how to cite the standards contained in the Covenant and how to apply the observations and recommendations specific to those standards.

42. **Ms. Cerrato** (Honduras) said that the Government had worked with Paraguay to launch the online Sistema de Monitoreo de Recomendaciones de Honduras (SIMOREH) platform, through which the Government could monitor compliance by institutions with all recommendations presented to Honduras.

43. The Ministry of Human Rights, Justice, the Interior and Decentralization was providing training on LGBTI rights; between 2014 and 2016, 31,712 individuals, primarily civil servants and law enforcement officials, had received training. In addition, since 2013, 40 per cent of civil servants had received training on respect for sexual diversity. Additional resources had been allocated to the National Directorate of Intelligence and Investigation to ensure that it was able to conduct prompt, suitable and transparent investigations into serious crimes committed against LGBTI individuals. Civil servants found to have committed human rights violations, in particular concerning sexual orientation and gender identity, were subject to administrative and penal sanctions. The topic of human rights was included on the educational curriculum and efforts were being made to bring national legislation into line with international standards in that field.

44. Discrimination was listed under possible aggravating circumstances in the Criminal Code, which also explicitly criminalized certain hate crimes and sanctioned the denial of social services, the denial of labour rights and incitement to commit acts of discrimination.

45. The European Union had conducted an evaluation of the Public Policy and National Plan of Action on Human Rights. Significant progress had been made with regard to human rights legislation. For example, the Act on the Protection of Human Rights Defenders, Journalists, Social Communicators and Justice Officials had been passed; an amendment to article 182 of the Constitution had been approved to strengthen the guarantee of habeas data; and a comprehensive reform of the Code on Children and Adolescents had been carried out. The methods of implementation had also been improved through the development of human rights programmes with stronger links to sectoral policies. In place of the usual approach based on the implementation of national laws, the programmes were designed to encourage organizations to develop their own human rights initiatives, taking into account the level of access to rights enjoyed by rights holders. A forum for dialogue between the Government and civil society organizations had also been established with the aim of facilitating the application of public policies and developing measures to ensure that the State met its human rights obligations.

46. The National Commission against Racial Discrimination, Racism, Xenophobia and Related Forms of Intolerance was being revived. The Government was working with the indigenous and Afro-Honduran populations in that area.

47. The budget of the Office of the National Commissioner for Human Rights had been increased. The Office enjoyed constitutional status, operated independently, received an allocated budget and was authorized to conduct investigations. It worked with civil society organizations and other human rights entities and it operated in line with the principles relating to the status of national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights (Paris Principles).

48. The Inter-Agency Commission for the Protection of Persons Displaced by Violence had developed strategic partnerships with international organizations to identify returning



migrants who remained at risk from violence. Additional funding had been allocated to the Commission for the provision of emergency protection to persons displaced by violence. A legal framework had also been proposed with the aim of establishing national mechanisms to prevent internal displacement and provide humanitarian aid. The Commission was working in particular with the municipalities having the highest rates of internally displaced persons to draw up local response plans. A mechanism of direct consultation with internally displaced persons had also been developed to ensure that the measures taken met their needs.

49. **Ms. Madrid** (Honduras) said that measures had been taken to advance the National Policy on Women. In 2017, public-sector institutions had been included in the inter-institutional mechanism for implementing the Second Gender Equality and Equity Plan and, in 2015, a gender-based approach had been adopted for planning and budget activities. The National Institute for Women evaluated the compliance of public institutions with those measures and monitored the use of funds allocated to the promotion of women's rights and gender equality. The level of investment in activities to improve gender equality had increased significantly in recent years. Efforts had also been made to increase political participation among women, in particular through the provision of training for female parliamentary candidates.

50. The Family Code had been amended to include provisions on marital capital. The Wage Equality Act had been adopted in 2015 and an annual Wage Equality and Work Day had been introduced. Consultations were ongoing to bring national legislation into line with international standards on women's rights, in particular by reforming the Equal Opportunities for Women Act and the Family Code. A national plan to combat violence against women was being implemented through the provision of training, the assessment of protocols to provide assistance to victims, the development of municipal action plans and the creation of municipal observatories on coexistence and citizen security in areas with the highest levels of violence against women. Campaigns were being run to combat violence against women, with a particular focus on domestic violence, sexual assault and human trafficking.

51. The Domestic Violence Act provided for various measures to protect the physical, mental, proprietary and sexual integrity of women. Honduras had seven shelters for female victims of domestic violence, four of which received Government funding. Programmes had been introduced with a special focus on upholding the rights of female survivors of violence. In particular, the "Ciudad Mujer" (women's city) programme provided quality services through dedicated centres in the areas of sexual and reproductive health, economic empowerment, violence against women, adolescent health, childcare and collective education. The first centre had opened in 2017 and three other centres were under construction across the country.

52. Through the Teen Pregnancy Prevention Programme, strategies had been developed to provide care to pregnant adolescents and to implement the multisectoral plan to prevent teen pregnancies, which had a budget of US\$ 10,000. Honduras had 66 adolescent health clinics, 12 of which were in secondary schools.

53. In the previous five years, one woman had been sentenced to 3 years' imprisonment for having an abortion, but her sentence had been commuted. Statistics were not collected on clandestine abortions, only on abortions for ectopic pregnancies, of which there had been one in 2013 and one in 2015, and spontaneous abortions, of which there had been one in 2003. No statistics were held on maternal mortality or clandestine abortions. The Government had launched a campaign to prevent the spread of the Zika virus.

54. **Ms. Salas Montes** (Honduras) said that the Directorate for Children, Adolescents and the Family coordinated public-sector efforts in support of those sectors of the population. It had six regional offices, some 260 staff members and a budget of 70 million lempiras, nearly half of which was earmarked for specific projects. The Directorate worked with local authorities to protect and promote children's rights and well-being. A particular concern was how to assist children outside the reach of public programmes, including street children. The Directorate had submitted a proposal for a project to put in place immediate and long-term protection for such children. To understand their particular needs, it was

necessary to strengthen partnerships with relevant State entities and NGOs, with a focus on outsourcing and public-private partnerships. Agreements were in place with nine NGOs and the Directorate had established an inventory of NGOs in Honduras, which was available on its website.

55. **Ms. Cruz** (Honduras) said that her Government ran a range of programmes to detect, prevent and address situations of vulnerability affecting women, children and persons with disabilities. The “Live Better” programme, for example, aimed to provide the poor with a guaranteed minimum wage, food security, decent housing, skills training and other forms of support. It operated with a budget of 1.5 million lempiras. Over the past four years it had directly assisted some 2.6 million people. The Government also worked with local authorities and civil society to assist older people and persons with disabilities through a programme that, with a budget of 156 million lempiras, currently reached some 22,000 people. It also operated an office for the inclusion in the labour market of persons with disabilities. A draft law on inclusive development in the area of disability was being examined by the National Congress. More efforts were needed to assist persons at risk or in vulnerable situations and her Government, in collaboration with Oxford University, had developed a multidimensional poverty index aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals to measure the impact of such efforts.

56. **Ms. Urbina** (Honduras) said that she had led an investigation into allegations that children had been recruited into the armed forces during the coup d'état of 2009. A thorough investigation had shown that the complaint had been a hoax. A decision on the matter had been submitted to the Inter-American Court for Human Rights. The delegation would be happy to provide a copy to the Committee.

57. Regarding the lack of action to resolve crimes against human rights defenders committed in Baja Juan, she said that, at the urging of the National Protection Council, her country's protective mechanism for human rights defenders, journalists, social communicators and justice officials, the authorities had recently assigned 27 investigators to resolve pending cases in that region. A total of 103 cases were being processed under the mechanism. The 67 cases involving human rights defenders related to environmental and land protection, the rights of LGBTI persons, labour rights, student rights and miscellaneous other human rights. Describing the process used to register and assess cases, she said that when the risk to a potential victim was deemed high, urgent protection measures were implemented. Of the more than 60 cases assessed to date, 35 had been found to involve high risk. In addition to police measures, preventive measures such as street lighting, metal doors, solar panels and panic buttons, as well as the public recognition of human rights defenders, were used.

58. **Ms. Gudiel Ardón** (Honduras) said that the recommendations of the Human Rights Protection Unit of the National Prison Institute had been implemented with the involvement of the Subsecretariat of Justice and Human Rights, enforcement judges and other public officials responsible for implementing sentences. To support the transition from military to civilian oversight of the prison system, efforts had been made to appoint civilians to key positions in the system. To upgrade the system, nine new prisons had been opened and budgetary funding increased. Steps had been taken to reduce overcrowding and detainees were provided with educational and work opportunities to foster their rehabilitation.

59. **Mr. Barahona Uriarte** (Honduras) said that, as described in the report and the replies to the list of issues, the military police received training in how to comply with the law in their work so as to avoid committing human rights violations. His country had established a joint task force with El Salvador and Guatemala to tackle criminal activity in shared border regions.

60. **Mr. Osavas Olibera** (Honduras), outlining measures to reform the police force, said that an entrance exam had been instituted for admission to the National Police Academy, and there was a certification process for newly trained candidates. Steps were being taken to combat corruption in the police force and reduce the proportion of military personnel engaging in police duties. The mandate of the special commission to transform the police force had been extended through to the end of 2017.

61. The Committee would be provided with information on the requirements for licensing security companies. Companies meeting the requirements were granted a two-year licence. Their staff were required to undergo yearly checks including drug tests, criminal background checks and the like.

62. The procedure for registering firearms involved a number of requirements. There was a separate procedure for transferring firearms from one person to another. Draft legislation pertaining to the use of force by military personnel performing police duties was in the pipeline.

63. **Ms. Morales** (Honduras) said that public prosecutors throughout Honduras had been asked to examine their working methods in the light of the Covenant's provisions. The comprehensive care model for victims had been in use since 2015. Numerous training sessions for the Office of the Special Prosecutor for Women had been held throughout the country. The Office handled a significant volume of cases, of which some resulted in convictions.

*The meeting rose at 6.05 p.m.*