



ngo group for the crc

## STATE PARTY EXAMINATION OF THE SEYCHELLES' SECOND AND FOURTH PERIODIC REPORT

58<sup>TH</sup> SESSION OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

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*The Seychelles ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) on 7 September 1990. On 28 September 2011, the Committee on the Rights of the Child (the Committee) examined the second and fourth periodic reports of the Seychelles. It was last examined on 23 September 2002.*

### Opening Comments

The delegation of the Seychelles was led by Mr. Bernard Shamlaye, Minister of Social Development and Culture. He was supported by a small delegation consisting of representatives from the Ministry of Social Development and Culture.

In the opening remarks, Mr. Shamlaye thanked the Committee for its work and continued commitment to advancing children's rights. He noted that the Seychelles was a small island state where children comprised 28 per cent of the total population. While the Ministry of Social Development and Culture had the main responsibility for running and coordinating children's rights-related programmes, such services were also carried out by civil society groups and NGOs. He noted that the report under the review of the Committee was a product of broad consultations between various governmental bodies and the civil society sector. Mr. Shamlaye noted that in 2005, the Seychelles had adopted a national theme focused on children titled "Our Children- our treasure, our future". The National Plan of Action for Children 2005-2009 had also been produced during 2005, which was founded on the principles of the CRC and built on earlier work undertaken under the Seychelles Programme of Action for Children, which had been adopted in 1995.

Mr. Shamlaye stated that the combined second, third and fourth periodic report served as an indication of the state of children in the Seychelles, identified various challenges and proposed solutions to the issues. As challenges, Mr. Shamlaye identified issues of drug and

alcohol abuse by the youth, physical and mental abuse of children in schools and families, financial resource constraints of the government, and a lack of human resources and trained staff in the field of children's rights issues.

Mr. Shamlaye noted that the financial crisis of 2008 had been one of the causes for government cuts in some social programmes and public spending. However, he noted that the government had tried its best to ensure that investment in vital services for children and their families, such as health and education, had remained intact. He noted that assistance had been extended to needy families, along with programmes to educate families on how to cope with the consequences of the financial crisis. Assistance had also been provided to those students whose parents were unable to afford schooling fees.

Mr. Shamlaye noted that education was free and compulsory for the first ten years of schooling. In 2009, the Ministry of Education had embarked on restructuring the education sector to provide for diversity of educational needs and national development priorities; enhance educational quality; improve the quality of teaching; improve the governance of educational institutions; and create responsible and empowered students. He noted that new codes of conduct for primary and secondary schools had been launched in 2010. Regarding budgetary issues, Mr. Shamlaye noted that the Seychelles economy was relatively stable with the previous macroeconomic imbalances addressed and public debt at a more manageable level. He stated that the country's attention was firmly focused on social reform and promoting social cohesion, solidarity and human development. A series of inclusive dialogues in educational institutions, workplaces and all the districts of the country had been planned to start in October 2011 and finish in March 2012, culminating in a plan of action. He stated that children, youth and family issues would feature prominently in the dialogue and the plan. Mr. Shamlaye noted that despite some financial and security challenges, the Seychelles was committed to what had already been achieved and to create synergies with all development partners in order to make further progress in the protection and promotion of the rights of all children in the Seychelles.

The Rapporteur, Mrs Agnes Aidoo, warmly welcomed the delegation and noted that the country had already attained a considerable number of the Millennium Development Goals and consolidating the country's commitment to uphold and advance human rights. Among the challenges being faced by the Seychelles, Mrs Aidoo mentioned the problematic traditional social attitudes that did not view children as rights holders, in particular regarding the problems of implementing the right to be heard in schools and at home, overall attitude towards children seen by some parents as hampering their authority and undermining family unit and as challenging the authority of schools and other figures in society. Mrs Aidoo also pointed out institutional weakness, resulting from frequent changes and high turnover rates among staff; limited skilled human resources; increased rate of single parents, high number of teenage parents; and drug and alcohol abuse by youth.

Sexual exploitation and abuse was also a major concern for the Committee and Mrs Aidoo pointed out the long delays in the judicial system for those charged with crimes of sexual assault. She wished to know what specific measures were in place to protect child witnesses, to assist child victims and to find and punish perpetrators in a timely and appropriate manner. Mrs Aidoo also expressed her concern about the issue of early marriage noting that girls, with parental consent, could marry between 15-17 years of age, but for boys the legal age was always 18. She wished to know what was being done to amend the Civil Status Act and raise the minimum age for marriage to be 18 for both sexes.

Regarding coordination of children's rights activities at national level, Mrs Aidoo inquired whether the system of coordination headed by the Ministry of Social Development and

Culture was effective. She inquired whether the Ministry had adequate human, financial and technical resources to implement policies at national level and in 25 districts of the three main islands. Concerning the tourism industry, Mrs Aidoo noted the country's disproportionate dependence on this particular industry and asked what the government was doing to ensure that children's rights were protected in this regard and inquired whether the government intended to draft a Code of Conduct for all stakeholders involved in the tourism industry.

Rapporteur Ms Nores thanked the delegation for its report and commended it for the measures adopted with regards to the welfare of children. She inquired about the 18,696 cases reportedly resolved by the family court in a state that had 25,000 children and questioned whether the majority of children in the country truly had had dealings with the court. She was concerned about the discrepancy with regards to the difference in age of marriage between boys and girls and wished to know the state's view on this issue and its justification for the discrepancy between the ages of marriage. Ms Nores noted the difference between the age of sexual consent, which is 16 years of age, and when a person can access contraceptives, which is 18 years of age, noting that the two year gap could have direct effects on the rates of teenage pregnancy and, consequently, abortion.

Ms Nores noted the inconsistency between the concept of the child as a subject of law and the principle of the best interests of the child. In particular, she was concerned about the child's right to know his/her biological parents. She wished to know whether the state party planned to revisit this issue. Regarding labour, Ms Nores cited the ILO recommendations, which had pointed out that there should be clear legislation on what kind of work was considered to be dangerous for children less than 18 years of age. Regarding resources, Ms Nores wished to know whether the state party would draft budgetary spending in a way to clearly show expenditure on children in all areas. Ms Nores also asked what campaigns the state party had initiated to raise public awareness on the negative effects of corporal punishment and whether children had any opportunities to report such abuse.

## **General Measures of Implementation**

### **Dissemination and Training**

The Committee wished to know whether there were any training programmes for parents and groups of professionals working with and for children, to ensure that children were treated in conformity with the principles of the CRC. The Committee also wished to know whether there was any training available for foreigners who worked in sectors concerned with children. The delegation said that social workers followed a certain programme and that within teacher training, the CRC was covered. The delegation affirmed that currently there were no programmes that specifically targeted foreigners' training on children's rights issues.

### **Legislation**

The Committee wished to know what had delayed the ratification of the OPSC, which was signed by the Seychelles in January 2001. It noted that while the Commission for Children's Rights had been formed, no one had been appointed as a head. It wished to know whether the Commission could receive complaints and transmit the cases to family tribunals or other judicial institutions. It also wished to receive more information on the National Council on Child Protection. The delegation said that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was working on mapping out the further steps required to ratify various conventions and protocols that the Seychelles had signed but not yet ratified. Regarding OPSC, the delegation said that there was no particular obstacle why it had not yet been ratified. The government needed to study the protocol and all its implications for the national legislation before ratifying it.

The delegation informed the Committee that the National Council on Child Protection consisted of various individuals from a diverse range of ministries. It confirmed that the body had not met since August 2009 and said that the mandate and working methods of the National Council had to be reviewed. Regarding the Commission for Children's Rights, the delegation said that several years ago, the government had considered setting up such a Commission, but it had not been carried out. Currently, the Human Rights Commission was responsible for oversight and implementation of all rights, including children's rights. The Committee wished to confirm whether the idea of establishing the Commission for Children's Rights had been abandoned completely, and noted that in such a case there was a need to spell out a clear mandate for children within the Human Rights Commission. The delegation noted the point. Regarding legislation on the age of marriage, the delegation confirmed that it was still 18 years of age for males, while girls between 15 and 17 years could marry with parental consent. The delegation noted that the government would need to consider this matter to a greater degree.

### **Budget**

The Committee noted that it was difficult to obtain information regarding budgetary allocations for children's issues. It said that more information on services and programmes for children would be necessary to determine the breakdown for the different sectors that implement programmes for children and their families. The delegation agreed that there was a need for more disaggregated data on what the country was spending on children. The delegation said that the Ministry of Finance was revising its monitoring protocol to include a more concrete breakdown of spending on issues related to children.

### **Data disaggregation**

The Committee noted that there was a need for data disaggregation according to the most vulnerable groups, including children in vulnerable situations, children with disabilities, abused and neglected children, and children using drugs and other forms of illegal substances. The delegation responded that significant efforts would be made with the Bureau of Statistics to gather such data.

### **Civil society**

The Committee noted that there was a close working relationship between government and civil society. However, given the lack of human resources, it was also clear that the state party depended heavily on civil society to carry out certain activities and programmes. The Committee wondered whether this had created a situation of dependency on the part of the government. The Committee also wished to know how the civil society organisations could maintain and promote a rights-based approach instead of focusing purely on aid and service delivery.

The delegation responded stating that the Seychelles was a very small country and the question of human resources was of paramount importance. The delegation noted that government had a tradition to provide many services, which might have produced a certain dependency on the part of the population. It noted that currently the government was trying to divert itself away from providing certain services and allow for other stakeholders to become providers. It also said that the Department of Social Development and other departments in various ministries retained oversight of certain programmes carried out by civil society partners. The delegation noted that codes of good practice would be a good idea in order to ensure adequate service provision and accountability by all involved partners.

### **General Principles**

## **Non-discrimination**

The Committee noted that the Seychelles ranked as the fourth best country among OECD countries for a girl child to be born. However, there were still some cultural paradigms that perpetuated traditional gender disparities. The Committee noted that according to information received, there was discrimination towards girls interested in pursuing technical careers, who were encouraged in the direction of more “traditional” female roles. The Committee suggested that the government should launch sensitisation campaigns through media, schools and teacher training to overcome such barriers to girls’ realisation of their rights. It also wished to know whether there was any discrimination based on ethnic origin. In particular, the Committee wished to know whether the children of Chagossian parents had access to free education and health facilities. The delegation confirmed that all children in the Seychelles, regardless of their origin, could access educational and health facilities.

The delegation replied stating that while technical schools were more often attended by male students, girls had been afforded the same opportunities to enter the technical schools. Regarding discrimination based on ethnic origin, the delegation did not believe that there were any such cases of discrimination in the country; however, it noted the need to remain vigilant with regards to this issue.

## **Best interests of the child**

The Committee noted that the Law on Family Relations and Family Court Section 78 stipulated that the tribunal would take into account ‘interests of the child’. The Committee wished to know why the specific provision did not contain reference to ‘best interests of the child’ instead. It also noted that it was not compulsory for the court to take into account the best interests of the child, but instead the law stipulated that the court would do so where it could. The Committee was concerned about this ambiguity and said it was not in conformity with the provisions of the CRC. The Committee also noted that there was no adequate impact assessment evaluation to ensure that all provisions of the CRC were respected and implemented. It wished to know what the government planned to do to include such evaluation assessments in all relevant areas. The Committee also wished to know what tools were in place to ensure non-derogation from the principles of the CRC. It also noted that there had been cases where this principle had taken precedence and there were good initiatives in place to promote consideration of best interests of child, including the development of statutory checklist and Chief Justice best practice directives.

## **Right of the Child to be heard**

The Committee wished to know about any legislation in place to cover the right of a child to be heard at home and at school; to ensure the collection of children’s opinions; and to establish a dialogue with children. The delegation stated that adults needed to develop respect and appropriate attitudes to encourage children to practice their right to be heard. It noted that school councils were being revived and children could run and participate in such associations. The delegation also said that a National Youth Assembly had been established 2005, which was comprised of one young person from each district. The recommendations made by the National Youth Assembly were passed on to various ministries and administrative bodies concerned with children’s issues.

## **Civil Rights and Freedoms**

### **Name and nationality**

The Committee wished to know whether a Seychellan mother getting married to a foreigner had a right to transfer her nationality to her child. It inquired about what kind of measures were in place to ensure that a child could attain nationality even when he/she was born out of

wedlock. Furthermore, the Committee asked about the status of the children of Chagossian parents, who themselves might not have acquired the Seychelles nationality. The Committee also wished to know why the Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness had not yet been ratified by the state party. The delegation responded saying that all children born in the Seychelles automatically acquired Seychellian nationality. It also noted that there did not seem to be a problem regarding nationality for people of Chagossian origin or their children.

The Committee inquired whether dual nationality was allowed for children born in Seychelles of foreign parents. The delegation confirmed that it does recognise dual nationality and that in the case of a child born in the Seychelles to foreign parents, he/she would automatically be granted dual nationality if the country of the parents' origin admitted such policy.

The Committee inquired about the possibility of the child to keep his/her paternal surname in cases where parents were divorced, and also about the right of the child to know his/her biological parents. It wished to know of any efforts undertaken to ensure these rights. The delegation noted that the majority of children born are not in wedlock but that more and more fathers were acknowledging their children. While the delegation accepted the principle that the child had a right to know his/her biological father, the issue had to be further considered, the law currently favoured the right of the father not to recognise the child as his own. The Committee noted that even in situations where mothers did not want to release the name of the biological father, the government needed to make sure that the best interests of the child were always upheld.

#### **Access to appropriate information**

The Committee wished to know more on the current reform of the media and its impact on children's rights. It wondered whether the state party would consider implementing a code of conduct for all media, including private media. It wished to know what the state party was doing to ensure that the right to receive appropriate information was fully implemented. The Committee noted that media was predominantly privately owned and that the industry should be encouraged to produce codes of conduct to observe children's rights. The Committee expressed its concern about the implementation of child's right to privacy of identity, the right to receive appropriate information, and the effect of propaganda through mass media, such as unhealthy food, toxic substance (alcohol and tobacco). The delegation noted that a media commission had been formed and agreed that the private sector interests were not always in line with the principle of best interests of the child. It confirmed that the main daily newspaper and national broadcaster did not carry any advertising of tobacco and alcohol. The delegation noted the possibility to make private media carry less of such advertising and potentially establishing a voluntary code of conduct for all media.

#### **Protection from abuse and neglect**

The Committee noted that corporal punishment was widely used against women and girls and was not prohibited by the legislation. It asked whether the state party was planning to make it illegal. The delegation noted that corporal punishment was not allowed in schools, but that no law prevented it from being applied at home. The delegation stated that many sensitisation campaigns were carried out by the National Council on Children to raise awareness of the negative impacts of the use of corporal punishment. The Committee noted that there was a need for significant efforts to change society's attitudes towards corporal punishment and encouraged the state party to ban corporal punishment in all settings.

The Committee wished to know what was being done with regards to children suffering from abuse. It noted that some cultural paradigms and stereotypes perpetuated violence and noted that there had been 25 cases of rape in 2010. It wished to know what awareness raising

campaigns had been carried out about violence against children and what complaints mechanisms were available to children. The delegation stated that there was sensitisation work being done by social services and the Ministry of Education and the National Council for Education to help children recognise various types of abuse; learn how to protect themselves; and how to report such abuse. It noted that two 24-hour telephone lines had been established, which provided children with advice and in serious cases of abuse, referred the cases to social services. The Committee inquired whether the helplines were just for sexual abuse or for all abuse. The delegation confirmed that the helplines were open for children suffering from all forms of abuse.

The Committee was concerned about the potential confusion if there were two such helplines. The delegation noted the Committee's concern and said that good and effective cooperation between the two bodies providing the service would avoid potential confusion. The Committee also noted that because of the small size of the country, steps should be taken to ensure that the privacy of the child was protected. The delegation noted that the question of confidentiality was an important one, but that the staff employed at these help lines were professionals whose practice was to maintain confidentiality of any person seeking their advice.

## **Family environment and alternative care**

### **Illicit transfer and non-return**

The Committee wished to know what proactive measures had been taken in the area of illicit transfer and whether the state planned to ratify the Hague Convention on Civil Aspects of Child Abduction.

### **Parental responsibilities**

The Committee noted that the number of divorces of foreign marriages had increased in recent years, resulting in a higher number of single parent households. The Committee wished to know what was being done to support such families and ensure greater care of children coming from single parent families. It inquired about measures to create alternative temporary shelters for such families in case of need and what measures were in place to attempt to prevent such family breakdown. The Committee also inquired about the high rate of teenage pregnancies and what was being done to address the needs of teenage mothers and their babies. Furthermore, the Committee asked what was being done to make teenage and adult fathers more aware of their responsibilities towards their children. The delegation replied that some NGOs and churches were assisting families that were about to break up. There were skills trainings and television programmes on child development and single parents also received assistance from social welfare agencies.

The delegation noted that some father's groups had been organised in schools and workplaces to educate fathers of responsibilities towards their children and increase the participation of fathers in the upbringing and development of their children. The delegation mentioned that educational activities had been undertaken by the government to raise awareness about this issue. Some NGOs carried out parenting education sessions for the young parents and especially young fathers. Regarding assistance to teenage mothers, the Ministry of Employment financed a number of skills training programmes to help the young mothers to acquire certain skills. The delegation admitted that the number of pregnant mothers that returned to school after they had a baby was low, and the government would look into how to provide more financial support and counselling to such girls to enable them to continue their education.

### **Adoption**

The Committee wished to know why the report mentioned potential modifications on the law of adoption. The delegation responded that because the country had ratified the Hague Convention on Intercountry Adoption, there was a need to incorporate certain provisions from the Convention into the domestic legislation.

## **Basic health and welfare**

### **Children with disabilities**

The Committee wished to know whether there was any discrimination against children with disabilities and about the steps taken to raise awareness and sensitise the public about non-discrimination and social stigma attached to children with disabilities. The Committee inquired what steps the government had taken to provide for inclusive education for children with different types of disabilities and special needs and to what extent teachers were receiving training for working with such children. It also wished to know how children with disabilities were educated about their sexual and reproductive rights.

The delegation responded saying that according to its knowledge, no child had been abandoned by their parents because of a disability. The delegation said that there had been more focus on inclusive education and there was a current programme for training teachers on inclusive education. The delegation noted that since 2010 children with hearing impairments were able to attend a new primary school equipped with appropriate facilities.

### **Health and Health Services**

The Committee was concerned about the two-year age gap between when a young person could consent to a sexual relationship and when he/she was allowed to access contraception. The Committee was also concerned that the age limit of 15 for a young person to have sexual relationships was too low. The Committee inquired about sexual education in schools and access to contraceptives, as well as advice offered to teenagers about these issues who could not turn to their parents.

The delegation responded that the law stipulated that a person who has had sexual relationships with a child under the age of 15 could not use the defence that the child had agreed to the act. The delegation noted that it was not aware whether there was indeed a law that stipulated the access of contraceptives only from the age of 18, but rather suggested that it was a common understanding that children under 18 should not be given contraceptives as it was perceived as encouraging them to have sexual relations. The delegation added that the Ministry of Health was working on a national Sexual and Reproductive Health policy that was being finalised to address sexual and reproductive health of the whole population in a holistic manner.

The Committee wished to know more about HIV/AIDS education campaigns, noting that the figures of HIV/AIDS prevalence were relatively high for such a small country. The delegation responded that there were many sensitisation campaigns being run by the government on HIV/AIDS, but that it required behavioural changes of the individuals within the society. The Committee responded that it required more than sensitisation campaigns and that a much more comprehensive prevention programme was needed, particularly for young people, and that a multi-sectoral approach had to be taken. The Committee wished to know whether a national HIV/AIDS plan had been developed and whether the former one had been evaluated. The delegation responded that a new HIV/AIDS national plan was being drafted and that a few areas would be further strengthened.

The Committee also wished to know more about breastfeeding campaigns that had been developed in the country. The delegation responded that a campaign to promote breastfeeding

had been undertaken by the main hospital. The Committee noted that the emphasis should not just be placed on the mother regarding breastfeeding, but also on commercial distributors that were giving out free samples of baby formula and campaigning to promote their products.

## **Education, leisure and cultural activities**

### **Education**

The Committee wished to receive more information on vocational educational programmes and educational planning policies. It also inquired about the environment in the educational institutions. The Committee wished to know whether children that needed additional support, such as private lessons, but whose parents could not afford it, were able to receive them. The Committee also wished to know what was being done to prevent drop-outs from schools and identify early intervention programmes to identify children with learning difficulties at an early age. The Committee also inquired about the diversity of the curriculum.

The delegation responded stating that there was a dedicated fund set up that assisted children whose parents had difficulties to pay for tuition or provide children with school-related equipment. The delegation added that it recognised that school curriculum did not respond adequately to the diverse needs of the students, noting that in the Education Plan there was an initiative to address this matter and assist students that clearly did not respond well to the regular curriculum. It would provide them with an opportunity to spend part of their week in a training institution. The delegation said it hoped the curriculum would be revised to provide more technical studies and ultimately a more diversified curriculum.

Regarding the educational environment, the delegation noted that many parents pressured their children to achieve high exam results in order to get a good job. It also noted that education should be for life and not solely for career purposes, adding that it was about finding the balance between education as a factor of human development and education as a tool to achieve a good career standing. Regarding children who needed additional support, the delegation noted that if a child needed extra tutoring, parents had to pay for it.

### **Leisure, recreation and cultural activities**

The Committee wished to know what the state party was doing to promote parents' awareness about the child's right to leisure and play. The delegation noted that this topic had been discussed in the government's work with social workers. It noted that such societal changes would be encouraged through the new 'Social Renaissance' project. The delegation also noted that the Department of Culture had developed a strategic plan for 2011-2015, which included a reference to cultural and artistic activities for children and youth.

## **Special protection measures**

### **Child labour**

The Committee noted that child labour above the age of 15 appeared to be tolerated and even allowed by the law in the country. It wished to receive more clarification on this issue. The Committee also noted that the government had not specified what it considered to be 'hazardous work' and ways to measure if children were participating in this type of work. The delegation noted that hazardous work had not yet been defined, but that the Employment Act was being amended and the government would incorporate the definition in the new Act. The law stipulated that no children could work under the age of 15. A potential employer of a child between 15 and 18 years of age would have to seek permission from the Department of Employment. It noted that last year, 18 applications had been submitted and all had been approved. The Committee noted that most of these applications had come from the tourism

industry and wished to know what special protection measures the relevant department used to ensure that children were not involved in any harmful activities through their employment. The delegation noted the Committee's concern and said it would monitor closely the tourism industry to ensure there were no violations of children's rights.

### **Drug abuse**

The Committee wished to know the number of children who were abusing drugs and alcohol. It also noted that the Seychelles only had one adult rehabilitation centre and was wondering what the state party was doing to provide help to teenagers who were using various substances. The delegation noted that there was another rehabilitation centre run by an NGO and supported by the state. It noted the Committee's suggestion that having separate facilities for children and adults would be desirable, but assured the Committee that staff in the adult rehabilitation centre were adequately trained to respond to the needs of young people who required help.

### **Child Victims of Sexual Abuse**

The Committee wished to know what legal measures were in place to protect child victims in legal proceedings. The delegation responded that a child who had to appear in a court received assistance from social services. It noted that the child was briefed on the workings of the court. The child was taken to the courthouse in advance in order to familiarise him/her in order to avoid the child feeling excessively stressed during the actual proceeding. The delegation also said that a social worker was allowed to accompany a child in the court.

### **Sale, trafficking and abduction**

The Committee wished to know why there was no law explicitly prohibiting trafficking and what measures were in place to assist child victims. The delegation noted that there was child prostitution in the country, particularly in the tourism industry. It said the government would consider working with the tourism industry to develop a code of conduct to avoid any abuse of children's rights within the industry and to combat child prostitution.

### **Army**

The Committee wished to know how many of the 200 people conscripted for the army were children. It also was concerned about the fact that children under 18 years of age could enter the army, with parental consent. The delegation responded that even if children under 18 entered the army, they would be close to 18 years of age at the time of entry and by the time they graduated from the training programme, they would be of full legal age. The Committee was concerned that legally there was no age limit for conscription and said it was in contradiction with the signed and ratified OPAC. The delegation took note of the Committee's concern and said that new provisions in an amendment for the Children's Act were underway that would address this issue.

### **Administration of Juvenile Justice**

The Committee was concerned about the low age of criminal responsibility (12 years of age; but the law allows for children of age 7 to have criminal responsibility). The delegation noted that it did not think there had ever been a case of a seven-year-old child being held criminally responsible. The Committee noted that if this provision had never been practiced, it should be removed from the laws of the country. It noted that there should be no criminal responsibility before the age of 12.

The Committee asked about the relationship between the family tribunal and ordinary courts. The delegation explained that the family tribunal dealt with issues of family violence, custody

over children, child alimony and violence against children, while the ordinary courts judged the rest of the cases.

## **Concluding Remarks**

Ms Nores thanked the delegation for its patience in responding to the questions from the Committee. She noted that a stronger connection between the national legislation with the basic principles of the CRC was lacking in some areas, including the definition of a child, as well as the need to perceive the child as a rights holder and therefore a subject of law. She noted that all forms of violence had to be prohibited in the legislation. Ms Nores pointed out that institutionalising these principles would provide an instrument that would guarantee the development of national policies in accordance with the principles outlined in the CRC.

Mrs Aidoo thanked the delegation for its frank and constructive dialogue. She noted that much more energetic efforts were needed in some areas, particularly legislation, so that various revisions and amendments of law could be fully integrated and incorporated into the domestic legal system. She noted that training of national and foreign professionals on the rights of children had to be systematised and sustained and socio-cultural root causes of the violations of children's rights needed to be tackled in a more serious manner. She noted that the country had great potential to become an example of the implementation of the CRC in the region, provided that areas of concern were seriously addressed by the government. Mrs Aidoo thanked the delegation and affirmed that technical support from the UN institutions and the Committee was available to the government of The Seychelles in case of need.

Mr. Shamlaye thanked all the members of the Committee and the Rapporteurs. He noted that there were areas where attention was needed, and confirmed that the government would undertake the uncompleted tasks and issues raised by the Committee in collaboration with all relevant partners. He noted that the process of reporting to the Committee helped to identify such issues and provided focus on areas of concern. Mr. Shamlaye thanked the Committee for its advice and suggestions and for helping the Seychelles in its journey to remain a successful and positive example of a country that was upholding and advancing children's rights in all areas.