



International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination

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Summary record of the 3172nd meeting

Held at the Palais Wilson, Geneva, on Thursday, 20 November 2025, at 10 a.m.

Chair: Mr. Balcerzak

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

Consideration of reports, comments and information submitted by States Parties under article 9 of the Convention (continued)

Combined eighteenth to twentieth periodic reports of Guatemala (continued)
(CERD/C/GTM/18-20; CERD/C/GTM/Q/18-20)

1. *At the invitation of the Chair, the delegation of Guatemala joined the meeting.*
2. **A representative of Guatemala**, resuming his delegation's replies to the questions raised at the previous meeting, said that the concerns that the Committee had expressed regarding the criminalization of Indigenous Peoples and the evictions of Indigenous communities had also been highlighted by multiple international human rights mechanisms. That criminalization had been driven by the Public Prosecution Service, which had taken it upon itself to prosecute human rights defenders, including Indigenous authorities who defended democracy. In addition, there was a special office within the Public Prosecution Service to address what was referred to as the unauthorized occupation of property, and it had sought to persecute Indigenous communities through questionable eviction orders. The Government did not support the actions of that body.
3. **A representative of Guatemala** said that, in order to prevent the criminalization that was being driven by the Public Prosecution Service, together with the powerful shadow groups that continued to dominate the country, an overhaul of the justice system and the Public Prosecution Service (Organization) Act was needed. Her own legislative caucus was promoting a legislative agenda to defend the collective rights of Indigenous Peoples and address the structural causes of the racism and discrimination that continued to prevail in Guatemala.
4. **A representative of Guatemala** said that the State acknowledged the historical debt arising from the lack of legal certainty in land ownership. The current Government had signed an agreement with campesino organizations on the restoration of the agrarian institutions dismantled by previous Governments. The agreement constituted an inter-institutional coordination mechanism for addressing evictions, including through the coordination of humanitarian assistance. On 2 June 2025, the Government had established a presidential commission for resolving conflicts.
5. **A representative of Guatemala** said that article 203 of the Constitution stated that judges were independent in the performance of their duties and subject only to the Constitution and the laws of the country and that anyone attempting to undermine the independence of the judiciary would be liable to punishment under the Criminal Code and disqualified from public office. The judicial branch had allocated more than 27 million quetzales to the Secretariat for Indigenous Peoples for training programmes for judges and staff.
6. **Ms. Shepherd** (Country Task Force) said that she would like to know what steps the State Party was taking to guarantee the equal political participation of Indigenous Peoples, the Garifuna people and people of African descent, to collect data on the representation of those groups in Congress and local governments, to eliminate barriers to their political participation, including the political participation of women from those groups, that were rooted in racial and gender stereotypes and to improve their representation in decision-making positions in both the public and private sectors. She would be grateful for information on any measures being taken to prevent, punish and provide compensation to victims for the excessive use of force by law enforcement officials and the use of violence by private security companies during demonstrations organized by Indigenous Peoples to protect their rights, lands and territories; to ensure that the use of states of emergency was in line with international human rights standards; to put an end to prosecutions of Indigenous Peoples on charges of terrorism and for their exercise of their right to peaceful assembly; to eradicate hate speech; and to ensure that the judicial authorities investigated, punished and redressed the reported human rights violations in the case of the Alaska summit massacre.
7. She would like to know what the State Party was doing to comply with the judgment of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights in *Maya Kaqchikel Indigenous Peoples of*

Sumpango et al. v. Guatemala, to ensure inclusive and equitable practices in the management of the radio frequency spectrum, to annul criminal convictions against and to stop the prosecution of staff of Indigenous community radio stations, pass a community media bill and prevent the use of telecommunication laws to silence Indigenous community radio stations. She wondered what steps were being taken to stop and punish reprisals against journalists, human rights defenders and leaders and members of Indigenous Peoples and Afrodescendent communities and to adopt a public policy on the protection of human rights defenders. She would appreciate a list of all sacred sites that were officially protected and information on any measures to support the enactment of a law on sacred sites; to safeguard the right to freedom of religion of Indigenous Peoples, the Garifuna people and people of African descent; and to protect and ensure their access to their sacred sites.

8. She wished to know what steps had been taken to adopt specific procedures for obtaining the free, prior and informed consent of Indigenous Peoples in relation to legislative or administrative measures and infrastructure or natural resource exploitation projects that might affect their rights; to protect Indigenous lands and territories from the impact of extractive activities and agribusinesses; and to provide adequate reparations to Indigenous communities harmed by development projects. She would also like to know what the State Party was doing to recognize and protect community ownership of traditional lands and, with respect to communal lands that had been recognized, what the legal nature was of the title granted. She wondered what measures the State Party had taken to prevent the forcible eviction of Indigenous Peoples from their traditional territories, whether it had considered declaring a moratorium on such evictions and what it was doing to prevent, investigate, punish and provide reparations for the excessive use of force and violence by law enforcement officials and private security companies in the context of evictions and land disputes. In the light of reports of evictions that had taken place in national parks, sometimes despite existing agreements or involving lethal force, she wished to know whether the State Party had a plan to break the cycle of violence, provide reparations to all affected communities and resolve the underlying land and territorial conflicts in protected areas in a manner that respected the rights of Indigenous Peoples.

9. **A representative of Guatemala** said that, although Indigenous Peoples had the support of some members of Congress, it was proving challenging to secure the support of a majority of the members of Congress to pass specific bills on sacred sites, Indigenous courts and community radio stations.

10. **A representative of Guatemala** said that the Presidential Secretariat for Women had provided training to 751 women leaders, including 427 Indigenous women, on the law on urban and rural development councils; 1,312 women leaders, including 765 Indigenous women, had been involved in updating the National Policy for the Advancement and Comprehensive Development of Women. One Cabinet minister was an Indigenous woman; four Indigenous women were serving as vice-ministers across the 14 ministries; and four government secretariats were headed by women, one of whom was an Indigenous woman. There were 11 women governors, 5 of whom were Indigenous, and 12 women mayors, 1 of whom was Indigenous. A total of 32 of the 160 seats in Congress were held by women, 1 of whom was an Indigenous woman.

11. **A representative of Guatemala** said that the training sessions conducted by the Office of the Ombudsman for Indigenous Women's Rights between 2020 and 2025 to increase the political participation of Indigenous women had attracted 2,096 participants. In 2025, 14 dialogues had been held to provide a mechanism for political participation and allow participants' demands to be heard and taken into account both in the updating of the coordinated agenda of Maya, Garifuna and Xinka women and in the national policy for the advancement of women. The dialogues had involved 345 women's organizations and committees and drawn participants, including 728 Indigenous women, from 106 municipalities across 13 departments and from 21 linguistic communities, including Garifuna, Xinka, and Maya communities.

12. **A representative of Guatemala** said that, in compliance with the reparation measures ordered by the Inter-American Court of Human Rights in its judgment in *Maya Kaqchikel Indigenous Peoples of Sumpango et al. v. Guatemala*, the Government had published the judgment in the Mam, Achi, Kaqchikel and Spanish languages, in major newspapers, in the

Official Gazette and on the website of the judicial branch. The judgment had also been included in training courses on Indigenous Peoples' rights for judges. The final payment to the Maya Mam community, the last community awaiting compensation under the judgment, had been made in 2025. Bills had been introduced to recognize community radio stations as differentiated means of communication, but the victims' representatives, with whom a working group had been formed, had been of the view that they did not meet the requirements set by the Court. It was hoped that in the future there would be sufficient political will in Congress to overhaul the telecommunications legislation. With respect to the awarding of frequencies to community radio stations, a technical committee had met, and efforts were under way with the Directorate General for National Radio and Television Broadcasting. Favourable opinions had been received in 2025 for the granting of usufruct title for two frequencies to two community radio stations.

13. **A representative of Guatemala** said that there were economic forces in the country that were opposed to legislation regarding community radio stations. To pass such legislation, 81 legislators would need to vote in favour of it – a challenge given the current make-up of Congress, where Indigenous men and women were a minority.

14. **A representative of Guatemala** said that, to promote the use of strategic litigation to defend individuals facing criminal charges because of their work in defending human rights, the Public Criminal Defence Institute had, in recent years, organized strategic litigation workshops, legal clinics with public defenders and meetings of public defenders for case analysis and had prepared a strategic litigation manual. In addition, the Institute had a protocol for the defence of human rights defenders.

15. **A representative of Guatemala** said that, since 2024, the Government had declared no states of emergency. The dialogues held between the President and ancestral authorities were attended by ministers, secretaries and other government officials and involved the participation of some 85 ancestral authority councils. The Ministry of the Interior and the President had reviewed protocols for evictions and crowd dispersal and had modified them to include risk analysis by the National Civil Police and to prohibit the involvement of private security companies in eviction operations.

16. **A representative of Guatemala** said that Indigenous Peoples had asked for State recognition of their cosmovision and spirituality through bills submitted to Congress and the dialogues introduced by the President.

17. **A representative of Guatemala** said that the Ministry of Energy and Mining was preparing a procedural manual for determining whether Indigenous Peoples were present in areas directly or indirectly affected by extractive, energy and hydrocarbon projects in order to ensure that their right to free, prior and informed consultation was respected. The International Labour Organization Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention, 1989 (No. 169), as complemented by the standards set forth in national court judgments, provided the framework for interpreting the right to consultation. In 2017, the Ministry had concluded consultations ordered by the Constitutional Court, during which the representatives of the 11 communities in the affected area had asked for bilateral agreements that had been entered into by companies and communities in 2012 and that involved transfers of funds to support construction projects in the communities to remain in force. The Vice-Ministry for Sustainable Development, together with the Ministry's Socioenvironmental Management Unit, had issued recommendations stressing the need to require social impact assessments for the construction and operation of electricity projects.

18. **A representative of Guatemala** said that, in 2025, a government committee for economic and social development had provided support to Ixil authorities in San Juan Cotzal throughout the various phases of the consultations, during which there had been eight meetings of the Governmental Consultation Commission and seven meetings held locally with Indigenous authorities.

19. **Ms. Shepherd** said that she wished to know what steps the State Party was taking to address the legacy of colonialism, one of the manifestations of which – as it had acknowledged in the core document forming part of its reports ([HRI/CORE/GTM/2012](#)) – was the racism and discrimination suffered by Indigenous Peoples.

20. **Mr. Tlemçani** (Country Rapporteur) said that he would be curious to know to what extent the political will existed to amend the election laws so as to ensure Indigenous Peoples' effective participation and address their underrepresentation in Congress. He would like to know what steps the State Party was taking to prevent the arbitrary arrest of operators of community radio stations. Information on the work being done by the Ministry of Education on educational curricula and materials in the Xinka language would also be helpful.

21. **Ms. Esseneeme** said that she would appreciate clarification as to what extent members of Congress who were not themselves Indigenous persons were involved in the promotion of laws affecting Indigenous Peoples.

22. **Ms. Tebie** said that, in the light of the displacement, forced evictions, conflicts and prosecution of community leaders due to large-scale public utility projects, she wished to know whether the State Party had considered any alternative development strategies in order to reconcile the protection and preservation of Indigenous lands with the country's economic growth. She also wished to know what steps the State Party had taken to implement decisions of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights regarding forced evictions and the restitution of ancestral lands to Indigenous Peoples.

23. **Mr. Yeung Sik Yuen** said that, given the many shortcomings in the procedure for appointing judges that the Special Rapporteur on the independence of judges and lawyers had noted in her preliminary observations following her 2025 visit to Guatemala, he wished to know whether the State Party intended to reinstate the reforms introduced in 2016, which were referred to in those preliminary observations.

24. **Mr. Diaby** said that he would like to know whether compensation had been provided following the construction of a dam on the lands of a Maya people without their prior consent, what steps the State Party was taking to protect the land rights of Indigenous Peoples and prevent their eviction where title to the land was disputed, and whether the State Party was planning to implement the recommendation made by the Special Rapporteur on adequate housing as a component of the right to an adequate standard of living, and on the right to non-discrimination in this context, at the end of his 2025 visit to Guatemala to put in place a moratorium on collective evictions.

25. **A representative of Guatemala** said that, because of the racism that continued to prevail in Guatemalan society, it was very difficult to generate the political will needed to amend the election laws. As a member of Congress, she had, together with civil society and women's organizations, put forward initiatives to introduce parity requirements and provisions addressing the participation of Indigenous Peoples into the Elections and Political Parties Act. Proposals for electoral reform had also been made through the Electoral Updating and Modernization Committee of the Supreme Electoral Court. While it was, strictly speaking, not necessary to be Indigenous to promote a legislative agenda supporting Indigenous Peoples' rights, the reality seemed to suggest otherwise.

26. **A representative of Guatemala** said that the Presidential Commission for Peace and Human Rights, which was responsible for monitoring compliance with the judgment regarding community radio stations, had been in regular contact with the Public Prosecution Service and had held meetings directly with prosecutors. There had been strong resistance from the Public Prosecution Service to complying with the judgment, and Commission members had even feared that they could face criminal charges for insisting on compliance. The Commission had, unfortunately, learned in 2024 that the Public Prosecution Service was investigating two community radio stations following complaints received from the Directorate General of Civil Aviation and the Office of the Superintendent of Telecommunications because of interference with communications at La Aurora International Airport. Work must therefore be done with the administrative bodies under the executive branch to stop the filing of such complaints and to explain the scope of the judgment. The Commission was working on an analysis of the efforts to implement the measure under the judgment regarding the annulment of convictions.

27. An analysis was also being done on the feasibility of implementing the recommendation regarding the moratorium on evictions. Mechanisms for the provision of humanitarian assistance to evicted groups had been implemented.

28. **A representative of Guatemala** said that the national basic curriculum of the Ministry of Education provided for the study of Maya, Garifuna and Xinka cultures and languages. The Ministry was working with the Xinka on a local curriculum in one municipality, but progress had been hampered by disagreements within the Xinka community.

29. **A representative of Guatemala** said that articles 207 and 209 of the Constitution governed appointments of judges, and later articles addressed the appointment of judges to the Supreme Court and appellate courts. Members of the judiciary must begin their careers at the lowest rung of the judiciary and work their way up; no one could enter the judicial service midway. Any person wishing to become a justice of the peace must first go through training at the School of Judicial Studies, which included content on the prevention of the criminalization of Indigenous Peoples, and a justice of the peace who wished to become a judge of a court of first instance must also attend the School of Judicial Studies before being able to advance to that position. Because of the right to the presumption of innocence, during the judicial appointment process, nominating commissions considered no accusations in the absence of a judicial decision against the person in question.

30. **A representative of Guatemala** said that, according to the 2018 census, 0.2 per cent of the population self-identified as being of African descent and 0.1 per cent as Garifuna. While little had been done during the International Decade for People of African Descent, efforts were being made under the current Government for institutions to coordinate and begin implementing measures in 2026.

31. **A representative of Guatemala** said that the National Employment Service of the Ministry of Labour and Social Security had prepared a guide to labour inclusion that covered Afrodescendent communities. The Ministry organized job fairs and other events to promote employment.

32. **A representative of Guatemala** said that, from 2020 to 2024, the Directorate General for Cultural Development and Enhancement of the Ministry of Culture and Sports had carried out a series of activities including forums, festivals and workshops to engage with the population and sign agreements with representative organizations. A work agenda had been signed by the executive branch and Garifuna and Afrodescendent communities in November 2024.

The meeting was suspended at 11.35 a.m. and resumed at 11.45 a.m.

33. **Ms. Shepherd** said that she would like to know whether there were any persons of African descent in the Government. It would be useful to learn what steps the State Party was taking to put an end to the persistent effects of the historical, structural, multiple and intersectional forms of discrimination faced by the Maya, Xinka and Garifuna peoples and people of African descent; to reduce poverty levels among Indigenous Peoples, Garifuna communities and people of African descent; and to guarantee the right to adequate housing. She wished to learn about any measures being taken to address food insecurity and chronic undernutrition; the obstacles that the State Party anticipated in its efforts to reduce the national chronic malnutrition indicator; and the budget for ensuring water and sanitation rights in Xinka, Maya and Garifuna communities. It would also be helpful to know what the State Party was doing to mitigate the impact of natural disasters and climate change and to provide legal certainty regarding the status of Indigenous lands and territories.

34. She would appreciate information on the availability, accessibility and quality of education for Indigenous and Garifuna children and children of African descent; any measures taken by the State Party to guarantee the right to intercultural bilingual education; and the outcomes achieved by the Guatemalan Academy of Mayan Languages. She wished to know why secondary education had not been made compulsory and whether the State Party had succeeded in reducing dropout rates, including among Maya and Xinka girls in rural areas. The delegation might comment on the sufficiency of the education budget to meet the needs of students, the cultural relevance of the education being provided to a multi-ethnic school-age population and the quality of the history textbooks used.

35. She wondered how the State Party planned to decrease the number of Indigenous women engaged in unpaid domestic and care work and ensure that they had better job

opportunities; whether any of the employers of the agricultural workers assisted by the General Labour Inspectorate had been prosecuted; and how the State Party ensured that Indigenous workers were protected from retaliation when they reported abuses, had equitable access to higher paying skilled jobs in the formal sector and were protected from discrimination. She wished to know how many of the complaints of forced labour that had been received by the Public Prosecution Service had resulted in indictments and convictions and whether any institutional obstacles prevented the effective investigation and prosecution of such cases.

36. She would like to know what special measures the State Party was taking to make health services under the social security system accessible and culturally relevant for Indigenous Peoples, how the effectiveness of those measures was evaluated, what the primary causes were of the decline in use by Indigenous Peoples of the services of the Guatemalan Social Security Institute and what measures were in place to reverse that trend. She would also like to know how the State Party facilitated access to culturally relevant sexual and reproductive healthcare services to Indigenous Peoples, the Garifuna people and people of African descent, what the budget was for training and equipping traditional midwives and how the implementation of the National Policy on Midwives was being monitored to ensure that it reduced maternal mortality.

37. She wondered whether any special measures were in place to ensure that Garifuna and Afrodescendent women had effective access to justice for gender-based violence and to address the convergence of racial and gender-based discrimination, and whether the State Party had assessed the capacity of the Office of the Ombudsman for Indigenous Women's Rights to fulfil its mandate, including in terms of providing legal and psychological support to victims of violence.

38. In the light of reports received by the Committee that the Garifuna people in Livingston were facing the loss of traditional handicraft knowledge, land loss and the presence of organized crime, she wished to know what measures the State Party was taking to guarantee their physical security, facilitate the restitution of their ancestral lands and implement programmes to revitalize and protect their cultural practices. Lastly, she would appreciate information on any measures being taken by the State Party to protect collective intellectual property pertaining to textiles and clothing made by Indigenous women and, in that connection, an update on the status of bill No. 6136.

39. **A representative of Guatemala** said that efforts were being made to identify social actors of African descent to participate and play a decision-making role in initiatives undertaken for their communities.

40. **A representative of Guatemala** said that, in 2025, the regional office of the Office of the Ombudsman for Indigenous Women's Rights in Izabal had hired four women from the Garifuna community. There was also a Garifuna woman on the Office's coordinating board. In communities of women of African descent, there was a reluctance to self-identify because of a fear of discrimination. However, during a dialogue held within the Garifuna community, in which representatives of 20 Garifuna women's organizations had participated, five women had self-identified as being of African descent.

41. **A representative of Guatemala** said that a report prepared on the situation of Garifuna women and women of African descent in Guatemala had highlighted the structural inequalities that they faced, documenting, for example, their limited access to basic services such as education, health, and social security and their concentration in precarious and poorly paid employment. The findings of the report informed the advice provided by the Presidential Secretariat for Women to public entities on improving access to basic services and the socioeconomic situation of Garifuna women and women of African descent. A Garifuna woman had been hired as a departmental delegate for Izabal, and Maya, Garifuna and Xinka women and women of African descent had been hired to join a technical team working to update the National Policy for the Advancement and Comprehensive Development of Women.

42. **A representative of Guatemala** said that Decree No. 13-2025, which amended the Organic Act on the Budget to allow public investment on Indigenous Peoples' communal lands, represented a recognition of ancestral forms of communal property and land tenure

and made it possible for public resources to be invested in water, sanitation, health and education projects. In addition, Congress had allocated 12 billion quetzales to the development councils in 2025 and was expected to allocate 10 billion quetzales in 2026, almost 10 per cent of the national budget. However, such efforts had, unfortunately, given rise to corruption, and social auditing was needed. Bill No. 6136 had, unfortunately, not received a favourable opinion and had therefore not moved forward in Congress. A new bill was being drafted with the participation of the National Weavers' Movement and members of the Congressional women's commission.

43. **A representative of Guatemala** said that the Ministry of Education had, to date, hired 12,932 teachers, 48 per cent of them for bilingual positions. Of the 11 million textbooks that had been distributed, 1 million had been in 9 Mayan languages. The Ministry had also improved the infrastructure of 18,000 public schools, of which 9,489 were in Mayan areas, 184 were in Garifuna areas, and 100 were in Xinka areas. Ten institutes were being established in strategic regional areas and half of the more than 500 middle schools being opened were in Indigenous areas. In addition, efforts were being made to serve more Indigenous persons through extramural education, which was available to persons 13 years old and older. Such education was also open to persons in situations of mobility and persons who had dropped out of school. The majority of students who dropped out were Indigenous. A scholarship programme for learning English had been introduced in 2025, with three Garifuna students already participating.

44. The Ministry was working on 185 new titles in 22 Mayan languages and the Garifuna language. The textbooks in Xinka, however, were from another agency. The Ministry was also developing a reading and writing evaluation system for students, including Indigenous students, in first through sixth grades, in all languages. Mayan language scholarships had been approved in 2025 for teachers and speakers of Mayan languages and the Garifuna and Xinka languages.

45. **A representative of Guatemala** said that 72 per cent of the population worked in the informal sector, and 65.6 per cent of Indigenous persons participated or sought to participate in productive activities. The Technical Institute for Training and Productivity provided services that prepared workers for the labour market. An inter-institutional cooperation agreement signed in March 2025 by the Ministry of Labour and Social Security, the Presidential Secretariat for Women and the International Domestic Workers Federation provided for the establishment of a multisectoral committee on the rights of women domestic workers. In addition, the General Labour Inspectorate implemented targeted and regional operational plans to monitor the labour rights of workers in the agriculture and the maquila sectors.

46. **Ms. Shepherd** asked whether the State Party had been able to assess the outcomes of the educational initiatives that it had undertaken.

47. **Mr. Sibande** said that he wished to know whether the Government had attempted to track the global fashion brands, tourism companies and local businesses that reproduced for commercial gain textile patterns originally designed by Indigenous communities, without providing credit or compensation to those communities, whether any laws were in place to protect those patterns and whether any government body was responsible for raising awareness of intellectual property issues among those communities.

48. **Ms. Stavrinaki** said that she wished to know whether the State Party ensured that the specific needs of women were taken into account in the development of health policies and whether it had taken any steps to increase their access to healthcare services, other than the services of midwives, and to challenge sexist stereotypes that limited women's agency in taking decisions about their own health.

49. **Mr. Diaby** said that he would appreciate clarification regarding the Government's stance on the possibility of a moratorium on evictions. He wished to know how many Indigenous leaders had been prosecuted because of actions that they had taken in 2023 in defence of democracy and what the grounds for the prosecutions had been. He would appreciate an update on the situation of the Maya leaders Luis Pacheco, Héctor Chaclán and Esteban Toc.

50. **A representative of Guatemala** said that the Presidential Commission on Discrimination and Racism against Indigenous Peoples had launched awareness-raising campaigns to counteract hate speech on social media and to inform the public about the right to self-identify. It also offered advice on communications to help government agencies launch internal campaigns on self-identification among public servants and had entered into a series of inter-agency agreements in that regard.

51. **A representative of Guatemala** said that networks of women weavers had taken part in the national dialogue held in connection with the updating of the National Policy for the Advancement and Comprehensive Development of Women and in the four events held to launch the policy in the departments of Alta Verapaz, Huehuetenango, Chimaltenango, and Quiché. At their request, the Presidential Secretariat for Women had agreed to provide support in promoting the adoption of bill No. 5452, which would address Indigenous women's intellectual property rights related to weaving. The Secretariat was also advising the Ministry of Education on extracurricular activities on textiles and clothing.

52. **A representative of Guatemala** said that there was a National Policy on Midwives Belonging to the Four Peoples of Guatemala for the period 2015–2025 and a related action plan for the period 2021–2025. A national plan on an intercultural approach to health was also in place for the period 2023–2028. Efforts were under way with the Guatemalan Academy of Mayan Languages to develop a campaign on women's health in the 22 Mayan languages. There were 29 departmental health directorates that focused on comprehensive healthcare for women and children. Measures were being taken to promote breastfeeding, a healthy diet and good hygiene practices in the municipalities with the highest infant and maternal mortality rates. There were also programmes for deworming, vaccination and the distribution of food and vitamins.

53. **A representative of Guatemala** said that there were now 18 courts serving the public in the department of Izabal, where the Garifuna people and people of African descent were concentrated. Persons from those groups were represented among the leadership of the Secretariat for Indigenous Peoples, which was headed by a descendant of Indigenous Peoples. On 26 November, the judiciary would commemorate the National Day of the Garifuna People.

54. **A representative of Guatemala** said that, in the case of Mr. Pacheco, the proceedings were in progress, and no decision had yet been issued.

55. **A representative of Guatemala** said that the current Government rejected the criminalization by the Public Prosecution Service of Luis Pacheco, Héctor Chaclán and Esteban Toc for their work in defending democracy. The State had adopted the precautionary measures requested through the Inter-American human rights system and had noted due process violations in the cases of Luis Pacheco and Héctor Chaclán, as no judge had yet been assigned to review their placement in pretrial detention. One of the recommendations made by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights following its visit to the country, and with which the Government would have to comply, was the conduct of an independent evaluation of the Public Prosecution Service. Esteban Toc had been released under alternative measures after his initial statement.

56. **Mr. Tlemçani** said that he wished to thank the members of the delegation for the frankness and openness with which they had answered the Committee's questions. He wished to note that, in 2022 and 2023, several communications had been sent to the State Party, under the Committee's early warning and urgent action procedure, relating to land conflicts, violent evictions, and the criminalization of Indigenous persons for the unauthorized occupation of property. The Committee regretted that there had been no response to those communications and wished to emphasize the importance of the State's full cooperation.

57. **A representative of Guatemala** said that his delegation had taken note of the Committee's questions and recommendations, and would endeavour to submit any outstanding replies within 48 hours. The issues that the Committee had raised were structural ones, relating to the foundations of the State of Guatemala, and the Government was now dealing with the effects of marginalization, exclusion and racism. It was committed to continuing its efforts to strengthen the human rights of all Guatemalans, without distinction.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.