



International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination

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Summary record of the 3209th meeting*

Held at the Palais Wilson, Geneva, on Tuesday, 21 April 2026, at 3 p.m.

Chair: Mr. Kut

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* No summary records were issued for the 3205th to 3208th meetings.

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

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

Combined thirteenth and fourteenth periodic reports of Uzbekistan
([CERD/C/UZB/13-14](#); [CERD/C/UZB/Q/13-14](#))

1. *At the invitation of the Chair, the delegation of Uzbekistan joined the meeting.*
2. **A representative of Uzbekistan**, introducing her country's combined thirteenth and fourteenth periodic reports ([CERD/C/UZB/13-14](#)), said that they had been prepared with the participation of more than 40 State bodies and civil society institutions.
3. The country's population of 38.4 million people was made up of more than 130 ethnic groups and peoples, with over four fifths being Uzbek, alongside minorities including Tajiks, Kazakhs, Karakalpaks and Russians. In 2026, the first population census in 37 years had been conducted digitally in seven languages. A constitutional reform carried out in 2023 had significantly expanded the provisions on human rights, in particular strengthening the State's obligation to respect the languages, customs and traditions of all peoples and ensuring that human rights were upheld in accordance with international standards. The right to bring cases before international human rights bodies after the exhaustion of domestic remedies had been established for the first time. More than 40 laws, decrees and decisions strengthening the legal safeguards enjoyed by citizens had been adopted. The prohibition on racial discrimination had been established in criminal and administrative legislation. The first National Human Rights Strategy had been implemented, and a second strategy for the period up to 2030 was being developed, which would include indicators in the area of discrimination. An equality and non-discrimination bill, which would prohibit direct, indirect and other forms of discrimination, was currently being developed. To mark the sixtieth anniversary of the Convention, the Government had adopted a road map that contained a set of measures aimed at raising awareness of its provisions.
4. In 2025, the Government had established a committee for inter-ethnic relations and compatriots abroad, which was attached to the Office of the President. The Cabinet of Ministers had set up the Migration Agency in 2024 to regulate international labour migration, protect citizens' labour rights and license the activities of private employment agencies. The Human Rights Commissioner of the Oliy Majlis (Ombudsman) had been recognized in the Constitution and given the right to initiate legislation. The Human Rights Commissioner of the Oliy Majlis (Ombudsman) Act, adopted in 2024, had strengthened the Ombudsman's mandate and guarantees of independence. As part of judicial reforms, judges were appointed for an indefinite term and an electronic case management system and audiovisual recording of hearings had been introduced. Investigating judges had formed part of the judiciary since 1 January 2025. Procedural law ensured that persons who did not speak the State language had access to justice.
5. State policy was based on the principles of non-discrimination, equal rights, the preservation of cultural identity and the participation of all ethnic groups in public life. There were 157 national cultural centres in the country, television was broadcast in 12 languages, and the press published in 14 languages. Teaching at general education establishments took place in seven languages. There were more than enough textbooks in ethnic minority languages to meet current needs. Around 12 million students were attending weekly classes under the "Hour of the Future" education initiative. As a result of efforts to provide vulnerable groups with education, 16,317 Lyuli children were enrolled in compulsory education, 157 displaced Afghan nationals had received vocational training and support with starting businesses and 42 Palestinian children had been integrated into the education system.
6. Around 5,000 members of 35 ethnic minorities were employed in the public sector, and 12.7% of deputies in the parliament were members of such minorities. In 2025, more than 700,000 people had taken part in events aimed at strengthening intercultural dialogue, including the "Friendship" festival and the "Week of Tolerance". According to a survey conducted by Izhtimoi Fikr, an independent body, 90% of respondents had positively assessed the state of inter-ethnic relations. Under the World Programme for Human Rights Education, modules on the Convention had been introduced into the curricula of relevant

academies and had been completed by 160 students and 119 sitting judges. As part of efforts to prevent statelessness, more than 85,000 persons had received Uzbek citizenship under the I Belong campaign to end statelessness run by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). Safeguards to prevent statelessness among children had been introduced under the Citizenship Act.

7. Uzbekistan worked consistently with mechanisms of the United Nations to uphold the provisions of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action. The country had been visited by two United Nations High Commissioners for Human Rights, four special rapporteurs and a High Commissioner on National Minorities of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). The international humanitarian aid provided by Uzbekistan included a contribution of \$1.5 million to the activities of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) and support for international efforts to address humanitarian crises.

8. Uzbekistan faced several ongoing challenges. The situation in Afghanistan continued to affect regional stability, particularly with regard to forced migration and the integration of displaced persons. The environmental situation in the Aral Sea region was significantly affecting living conditions among the inhabitants of the Aral region, including ethnic minorities. There was a need to further raise awareness of the Convention and practices for its implementation among certain categories of civil servant.

9. The Government viewed collaboration with the Committee as an important mechanism for further strengthening the protection of human rights in Uzbekistan and was ready to engage in open and constructive dialogue on the issues raised.

10. **Ms. Stavrinaki** (Country Rapporteur) said that she wished to know when the full results of the 2026 census would be made available and whether they would include comprehensive data, disaggregated by categories including ethnic origin, gender and age, on all population groups. She would welcome clarification as to the categories used to define the population under the State's jurisdiction, particularly with regard to members of the Karakalpak and Lyuli/Roma ethnic groups, migrants, refugees, asylum-seekers and stateless persons. She wondered how ethnic groups were involved in designing data collection methodologies. She would appreciate comprehensive data on the ethnic composition of the prison population, including persons in pretrial detention and on probation, broken down by categories including ethnic origin, gender, age and type of detention, and more information about the measures that the State Party had taken to monitor and address the disproportionate representation of any ethnic minorities.

11. She would be grateful if the delegation could clarify the current status of the equality and non-discrimination bill and explain the manner in which the prohibition of discrimination was enforced in practice, including available remedies, relevant procedures and mechanisms and any examples of implementation. She wished to hear more about the meaning of "positive discrimination" and how it was interpreted in accordance with the Convention. She wondered what measures were being taken to ensure substantive equality for ethnic minorities in practice, and wished to receive data on investigations, prosecutions and penalties in hate speech and hate crime cases, disaggregated by offence and targeted group. Given that human rights defenders, journalists and representatives of civil society organizations had reportedly been prosecuted for extremism, she wondered what safeguards were in place to prevent unlawful restrictions on the enjoyment of the rights of expression and association.

12. It would be useful to receive detailed information on specific measures taken to prevent and combat racial discrimination by law enforcement officials, including racial profiling, in accordance with the Committee's general recommendation No. 36 (2020), in addition to statistical data on complaints, investigations, prosecutions and penalties in such cases, disaggregated by the ethnic origin of victims. She would welcome information on measures taken to address the low number of complaints of racial discrimination received, including by improving awareness of and trust in the available remedies, in addition to information on the scope of the complaints received and as to why no instances of racial discrimination had ultimately been confirmed.

13. She wondered how the State Party ensured in practice that the judiciary remained fully insulated from executive influence, particularly given the increasing number of presidential decrees and government decisions and orders related to the justice sector. She would welcome more specific information on the nature of the complaints regarding various socioeconomic issues that the Ombudsman had received from the Republic of Karakalpakstan, especially given that there had reportedly been no information on the outcome of investigations by the Ombudsman in three years. She wished to know how the Office of the Ombudsman had exercised its mandate in practice under the Ombudsman Act, as amended, particularly with a view to ensuring its independence, public trust and accessibility for all groups. She would appreciate an explanation as to why there were few or no complaints from certain marginalized communities, such as the Lyuli/Roma community. She would welcome further details on the measures that were being taken to strengthen outreach, reporting, follow-up on recommendations and bring the national human rights institution into line with the Paris Principles. She also wondered what measures the Ombudsman was taking to strengthen and cultivate a culture of human rights, including those aimed at ensuring a clear institutional distance from the executive and the Government.

14. **A representative of Uzbekistan** said that the Government attached great importance to the objectives of ensuring the effective implementation of the Convention in national law, strengthening institutional mechanisms for the protection of human rights and combating racial discrimination and hate crimes, including in the digital and public spheres. According to the National Statistics Committee, as at 1 April 2026, the permanent population, which had grown by 1.8% on the 2025 figure, included 31.9 million Uzbeks, 1.7 million Tajiks, 832,600 Kazakhs, 795,000 Karakalpaks and 700,000 Russians, 311,000 Kyrgyz, 222,000 Turkmen, 183,000 Tatars, 172,000 Koreans, 65,900 Ukrainians, 41,000 Azeris, 33,600 Armenians, 31,000 Lyuli/Roma and 381,500 members of other ethnic groups. The main source of data on the ethnic composition of the population was the census, which had been conducted between 15 January and 28 February 2026. The data had been collected in accordance with the principle of self-identification with a view to ensuring that they were as reliable and objective as possible. Another important source of information on ethnic composition was administrative sources, including birth, marriage and death records and the migration register. Moreover, systems such as the “Digital Mahalla” platform had been used to assess the quality, accuracy and transparency of population data, which had been especially important during preparation of the census. Household surveys conducted as part of the collection of official statistics made it possible to explore subjects such as ethnic minorities’ involvement in employment, standard of living and access to healthcare.

15. The Government was taking a range of measures based on international standards to ensure the accuracy and comparability of data on ethnic groups. A key factor in ensuring data comparability was the use of a unified methodology to collect and process data. Administrative sources were used to ensure that data were up to date in periods between censuses and monitor natural and migration-related changes in the size of ethnic groups.

16. **A representative of Uzbekistan** said that the personal details of prisoners, including ethnicity and citizenship, were recorded in a unified system. Convicted persons and remand prisoners had the same rights and obligations as citizens of Uzbekistan, subject to the exceptions and restrictions established by law. The delegation would provide the Committee with yearly statistics on persons held in places of deprivation of liberty, disaggregated by ethnicity and age, for the period from 2022 to the first three months of 2026. There were currently a total of 17,084 persons in police custody, including 16,985 Uzbek citizens, 98 foreign nationals and one stateless person. The Department of Corrections and law enforcement bodies used several mechanisms to detect racial discrimination in the criminal justice system, including monitoring of all complaints submitted through complaints boxes, portals providing government services and the Office of the Ombudsman, with the absence of systemic complaints of discrimination taken to be an indicator of stability; external audits and visits by independent observers from the National Centre for Human Rights, the Office of the Ombudsman and civil society, who held one-on-one conversations with prisoners that could reveal inequalities that were not recorded in official reports; and procuratorial checks to confirm the legality of all administrative decisions taken within institutions, particularly with a view to preventing racial discrimination by ensuring uniform application of the law. The Department of Corrections followed the principles of strict compliance with the

Constitution and other national and international laws in the area of human rights. By law, prisoners were punished in accordance with the principles of legality, humaneness, equality before the law, non-discrimination and non-segregation. The conditions of detention, rights and obligations of persons in police custody depended entirely on their procedural status and the regime of the facility and in no way on their race, ethnicity, language, religion or social background. All inmates were provided with accommodation and received food and other items in accordance with unified, established standards and benefited from a full range of medical services on an equal basis, with specialists brought in where necessary. They were also guaranteed unhindered access to expert legal assistance. Meetings with lawyers took place in accordance with the Penalties Enforcement Code without any restrictions related to ethnicity.

17. **A representative of Uzbekistan** said that article 18 of the Constitution, which established the principle of non-discrimination, also provided that benefits for groups such as persons with disabilities and low-income families were not considered discriminatory if they were established in accordance with the law and the principles of social justice. The definition of discrimination in public life established in that article did not cover discrimination in personal family relationships, differences in treatment based on professional qualifications in relation to labour requirements or differences in treatment to which non-citizens were subject for the protection of national security and public order. Such exceptions, which complied with international standards, were clearly set out in the equality and non-discrimination bill.

18. The census was the Government's main source of reliable and complete information about the location and socioeconomic characteristics of the population, including, in addition to ethnicity, language and religious affiliation. The first phase of the census had been conducted online in January 2026 through the OneID single identification system, and the second, door-to-door phase had been conducted in February 2026 with the assistance of the "Mahalla Seven", seven-member coordination teams operating at the level of neighbourhood communities (mahallas). The survey had consisted of 71 questions, 54 of which had been for the population at large and 17 of which had been for persons employed in agriculture. Data had been collected in strict compliance with international standards and recommendations. The final results of the census, including detailed demographic information, such as the ethnic composition of the population, would be published by 1 July 2027. Respondents had been free to choose their ethnocultural affiliation, which, in accordance with the principle of self-identification, had been treated as the main indicator of ethnicity, while native language had served as a supporting indicator. Consultations had been conducted with representatives of ethnic, linguistic and religious groups during the compilation and processing of census data to ensure transparency and equal treatment and improve understanding of the importance of data collection in specific areas.

19. The equality and non-discrimination bill, which had been developed by the National Centre for Human Rights in collaboration with the Ministry of Justice, included definitions of direct, indirect and multiple discrimination, anti-discrimination assessments, incitement to discrimination and positive discrimination. Public consultations on the bill were currently being held.

20. **Ms. Stavrinaki** said that it would be helpful to receive statistics that indicated how different ethnic groups were treated by the criminal justice system, such as statistics on convictions for particular offences broken down by ethnic group. She wished to receive more information about how the Government ensured that all prisoners had access to legal consultations. In particular, she wished to know whether Uzbek law prohibited the dissemination of ideas based on racial superiority, incitement to racial discrimination and violence, organizations that engaged in such incitement and the funding of such organizations and whether it established that motivation on the grounds of race was an aggravating circumstance in the commission of offences. She would appreciate more information about the prohibition of hate crimes. She wished to hear about any special measures taken in accordance with article 2 of the Convention to assist certain ethnic groups, including how the disadvantage faced by any such groups had been assessed and how the measures had been developed.

21. **Ms. Tebie** (Country Task Force) said that she would still be interested to hear what measures were in place to protect and uphold the right to freedom of expression of human rights defenders, especially those defending the rights of minority groups.

22. **Ms. Ali Al-Misnad** said that she would welcome the delegation's comments on a number of reports indicating, for example, that the State Party's judiciary lacked independence, that due process was not followed in criminal and civil cases and that the different segments of the population did not enjoy equal treatment, including a report by Freedom House in which Uzbekistan had been awarded just 12 out of a possible 100 points for its protection of political rights and civil liberties.

23. **Ms. Tlakula** (Follow-up Rapporteur) said that, in its follow-up report ([CERD/C/UZB/FCO/10-12](#)) and its combined thirteenth and fourteenth periodic reports, the State Party had provided statistical information on the ethnicity of persons held in prison or preventive detention, in implementation of the recommendation made by the Committee in paragraph 19 of its concluding observations ([CERD/C/UZB/CO/10-12](#)). The Committee considered that that recommendation had been fully implemented and had no further questions in that regard.

24. **Mr. Diaby**, speaking as focal point for reprisals, said that he wished to know whether the State Party planned to adopt a law specifically to protect human rights defenders, particularly those defending groups protected by the Convention.

25. **A representative of Uzbekistan** said that the Government viewed the development of the judicial and legal sphere in accordance with international standards as a task of strategic importance. At the initiative of the Head of State, in recent years, the Government had taken significant steps to further strengthen judicial protection of citizens' rights and legitimate interests. In the period 2022–2026, comprehensive measures had been taken to strengthen the independence of the courts and fundamentally improve the judicial and legal system. The revised Constitution of 30 April 2023 and the Courts Act provided that the judiciary was to operate independently of the legislative and executive branches and political parties and other voluntary associations. Judges were subject only to the Constitution and other national laws. Any interference in the courts' administration of justice was unacceptable and was punishable in accordance with the law. In the adjudication of specific cases, judges were independent and not accountable to any person or body. Judges enjoyed immunity. The Government ensured their security and that of their family members, including by providing them with armed protection where deemed necessary. Judges could be removed from specific cases, have their powers terminated or suspended or be transferred to a different post only on the grounds and in accordance with the procedure provided for by law. Their independence was ensured by the procedures established in law for their selection, appointment and dismissal; the strict procedure for the administration of justice; the confidentiality of judicial deliberations when reaching decisions and the prohibition of requests for disclosure; liability for contempt of court, interference in the resolution of specific cases and violation of the inviolability of judges; and the provision to judges of material and social benefits commensurate with their high status. The media were prohibited from prejudging the outcomes of specific cases or otherwise influencing the courts. Criminal cases could be initiated against judges only by the Office of the Procurator General, and they could be prosecuted or taken into custody only if the Supreme Judicial Council had been consulted and the Supreme Court, sitting in plenary session, had given its consent. Furthermore, they could face administrative proceedings only if the relevant division of expert judges had been consulted. Judges could be remanded in custody immediately only if they had committed a serious or especially serious offence. Article 140 of the Constitution provided that the judiciary was to be funded solely from the State budget. Accordingly, the country's legal foundation for the independence of the judiciary complied fully with paragraphs 1, 2, 3 and 6 of the Basic Principles on the Independence of the Judiciary.

26. In January 2021, as part of a wide-ranging reform of the judiciary undertaken to implement the recommendations of the Special Rapporteur on the independence of judges and lawyers, the participation of prosecutors at their own initiative in civil and economic cases brought by third parties had been ended except where provided for by law, with a view to reducing procurators' prevalent role in the administration of justice. In addition, procurators could only bring cases before the courts with respect to which a sentence,

decision, ruling or order had entered into force if the parties involved had requested them to do so. The power to consider cases involving administrative offences had been transferred to the criminal courts, and the administrative courts had been made responsible solely for matters of public law. In implementation of the recommendations that had resulted from the fourth round of monitoring under the Istanbul Anti-Corruption Action Plan, the Judicial Inspectorate had been established within the Supreme Judicial Council to ensure judicial immunity and prevent corruption.

27. **A representative of Uzbekistan** said that members of the parliament often travelled to the country's regions and spoke with regional representatives and local residents. The Mahalla Seven, who served between 600 and 5,000 persons, consisted of the mahalla chair, a women's activist (community representative for women's affairs), a social worker, an employment officer, a deputy regional chief administrator (*hokim*) and a law enforcement officer. There were approximately 10,000 such teams, which were funded by the State and worked together directly with the population and the People's Liaison Offices to resolve complaints. The National Social Protection Agency had been set up, together with local Inson social service centres, in response to the President's call for the Government to focus on people's well-being. A parliamentary committee had assessed the implementation of a law on assistance for persons with disabilities by visiting families and persons living alone, including foreign nationals, and confirming that all persons received the necessary support, including in the form of reasonable accommodation, regardless of ethnicity.

28. **A representative of Uzbekistan** said that there were currently 1,594 judges serving in the country, including 1,484 Uzbeks, 75 Karakalpaks, 12 Tajiks and 23 persons from six other ethnic groups. A total of 246 judges were women serving at different levels of the judiciary.

29. **A representative of Uzbekistan** said that the activities of human rights defenders were protected by legal and institutional safeguards, and national legislation guaranteed the rights of freedom of expression, freedom of assembly and freedom to participate in public life. Human rights defenders and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) were regulated in accordance with the law and operated without discrimination. The Government consistently took measures to establish conditions conducive to the operation of civil society institutions, including the simplification of registration procedures, the expansion of mechanisms for cooperation with governmental bodies and the inclusion of such institutions in the development and implementation of State programmes. In compliance with the Declaration on the Right and Responsibility of Individuals, Groups and Organs of Society to Promote and Protect Universally Recognized Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, the Government endeavoured to provide human rights defenders with conditions in which they could go about their activities freely and safely under the procedures established by law. Any cases of persecution of human rights defenders were examined in accordance with the legislation in force and in strict compliance with procedural guarantees, including the right to a fair trial. To examine that issue, the Government worked closely with the special procedures of the Human Rights Council. On 20 February 2026, representatives of governmental bodies and civil society institutions had participated in an online meeting with the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders.

30. **A representative of Uzbekistan** said that the Government was taking active steps to bring Uzbek law into line with article 4 of the Convention and other international standards concerning the fight against discrimination and hate speech. The Constitution contained provisions prohibiting discrimination and guaranteeing equal rights and freedoms, irrespective of race, ethnicity, language or religion, and the principles of the primacy of human rights and non-discrimination had become directly applicable in law. Such provisions were also reflected in other laws, including article 4 of the Labour Code, article 8 of the Freedom of Information Act, article 5 of the Education Act, article 4 of the Citizenship Act, article 13 of the Healthcare Act and article 11 of the Courts Act. Uzbek law also established severe penalties for genocide and prohibited the establishment of political parties and other voluntary organizations for the purpose of promoting racial, ethnic or religious discord. Criminal procedural legislation had been designed to ensure the rapid and complete detection of crimes, the identification of the perpetrators and the proper application of the law to ensure that sentences imposed were commensurate with the seriousness of the crime and that no

innocent person was prosecuted. Between 2024 and 2026, the courts had heard no cases under article 141 (Infringement of the equal rights of citizens) or article 153 (Genocide) of the Criminal Code. In 2025, the courts had heard six cases under article 156 of the Criminal Code (Incitement to national, racial or religious hatred), compared with five cases in 2024 and four in 2023.

31. **A representative of Uzbekistan** said that, under article 184 (3) of the Administrative Liability Code, production, possession or dissemination of material promoting national, racial, ethnic or religious hatred was punishable by a fine of between \$1,700 and \$3,400 or, for State officials, between \$3,400 and \$5,000, or up to 15 days' administrative detention, in addition to the confiscation of such materials and the means of producing and disseminating them. Under article 244 (2) of the Criminal Code, the establishment or leadership of, or participation in, religious extremist, separatist, fundamentalist or other banned organizations was punishable by between 5 and 15 years' imprisonment.

32. **Ms. Stavrinaki** said that she would be interested to know how many members of mahallas were from ethnic minority groups and what safeguards the State Party used to ensure that ethnic minority groups were fully represented in those bodies.

33. **A representative of Uzbekistan** said that, wherever ethnic groups lived, local mahallas included representatives from those communities. For example, in the Sokh District of Fergana Oblast, predominantly inhabited by ethnic Tajiks, there were 30 to 40 mahallas, whose chairs and other members of the Mahalla Seven were drawn from that community, while persons of other ethnicities were also members. Similarly, there were Kyrgyz, Turkmen and Kazakh mahallas in areas where those groups resided and their members served as chairs and Mahalla Seven officials, acting as genuine representatives at the local level.

The meeting was suspended at 4.35 p.m. and resumed at 4.40 p.m.

34. **Ms. Tebie** said that the report contained no information on refugees and asked whether any were present in the State Party. If not, she wondered how the State identified, registered and protected persons qualifying for refugee status in accordance with international standards. Despite the Legal Status of Foreign Nationals and Stateless Persons Act, no comprehensive institutional framework existed for international protection. She wished to know what steps were planned to establish such a framework, whether temporary mechanisms had been introduced to ensure legal certainty for asylum-seekers and how access to essential services was ensured.

35. With regard to the migrant resource centre under the European PROTECT project to improve migration management and migrant protection in Silk Road and Central Asian countries, she wished to know how accessibility for vulnerable populations and long-term sustainability were ensured, how the data collected informed migration policy and what cooperation existed for the reintegration of returning citizens. She would appreciate information on measures taken by the State Party to ensure that migrants had access to education, employment and healthcare.

36. On mandatory HIV testing for entry, residence and employment, she wished to know how the requirement was justified under the principle of non-discrimination and the Committee's general recommendations No. 37 (2024), No. 38 (2025) and No. 39 (2025). She wondered whether that requirement applied to Uzbek citizens and what safeguards were in place to prevent exclusion of migrants and stateless persons.

37. Noting that the State Party had not ratified the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees or the 1967 Protocol thereto, she wondered whether accession was envisaged. Updated information on the number of refugees and asylum-seekers would be welcome.

38. Clarification was needed on the criteria for granting political asylum in the "national interests of Uzbekistan", as provided for under the Legal Status of Foreign Nationals and Stateless Persons Act, and on the absence of a formal asylum procedure. Citing reports of expulsions to Afghanistan, she expressed concern about compliance with the principle of non-refoulement and wondered whether there were plans to establish asylum procedures accessible at borders and airports. She would also be interested in hearing about any plans to adopt asylum legislation.

39. She highlighted the risks of statelessness under the 2020 Citizenship Act, including restrictions on dual nationality and loss of citizenship by Uzbek nationals residing abroad who had not registered with a consulate for seven years. She wondered how the State Party prevented statelessness, what reforms were envisaged and how many stateless persons were present. She would also appreciate details on statelessness determination procedures and safeguards and relevant data.

40. She would be interested in hearing about any plans to align domestic legislation with the 1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons and the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness and whether there was a time frame for ratifying those Conventions. She wished to know how foreign nationals whose presence was deemed “undesirable” under the law, including members of NGOs, journalists and foreign workers, were not arbitrarily affected by the application of the law.

41. She wished to know how the State Party ensured that the National Strategy on Countering Extremism and Terrorism for the period 2021–2026 explicitly incorporated human rights education. She wondered what modules, teaching tools or school curricula had been developed under the Strategy to promote tolerance, ethnic diversity and the fight against racial discrimination. The Committee would also welcome clarification on the manner in which training relating to inter-ethnic relations and legal culture was integrated into the training programmes for teachers, civil servants, law enforcement officials, prosecutors and judges and on the practical tools made available to them to prevent discrimination.

42. She wondered whether the human rights training module, including the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action, taught at the Tashkent University of Law and the Academy of the Ministry of Internal Affairs was compulsory for all students or reserved for certain specializations. She asked whether those modules had been extended to other schools and universities, and to institutions for the training of teachers, law enforcement officials and the judiciary. It would be useful to receive data on the number of students, teachers, police officers and members of the judiciary trained on those various themes and the mechanisms for assessing their competencies in the area of human rights and the fight against racial discrimination. She asked whether the State Party had drawn up a national action plan specifically dedicated to the implementation of the Durban Declaration. She wished to know the outcome of the activities undertaken to ensure its dissemination, teaching and integration into public policies to combat racism and racial discrimination.

43. The report referred to a considerable number of awareness-raising activities. She would be interested to learn how the content of the campaigns, conferences and media programmes was developed and validated in order to guarantee its accuracy, relevance and conformity with national legislation and international standards. She asked which population groups had been specifically targeted by the campaigns, what proportion of the national population had actually been reached by the media campaigns and awareness-raising activities and how the State party assessed the impact of those activities on the targeted populations’ attitudes and behaviour. Lastly, she asked whether the State party envisaged adopting a national strategy on human rights education that would cover the entire education system, the media and the training of public officials and go beyond merely combating extremism.

44. **A representative of Uzbekistan** said that the general secondary education system of Uzbekistan addressed human rights issues consistently and systematically within its curricula. In grades 8 to 11, the teaching modules were designed to foster pupils’ understanding of the inherent nature of human rights and covered the principles of equality and non-discrimination and the mechanisms for their implementation and protection. Over those years, the foundations had been laid for a basic understanding of the individual, society and the State, with particular attention paid to the understanding that human rights belonged to everyone from birth and did not depend on the will of the State.

45. Pupils were introduced to the principle of the equality of all members of society, regardless of social status; in the context of the study of forms of government, the significance of the democratic system as a framework guaranteeing human rights and freedoms was explored, and issues such as racism were examined. Pupils also studied the rights of minors across various branches of law – civil, family and labour law – which enabled them to

understand their rights in concrete situations. In that way, the curricula ensured the progressive development of pupils' knowledge of human rights, from basic concepts to the legal mechanisms for their implementation and protection, thereby contributing to a legal culture of respect for human rights and freedoms and building active citizenship.

46. **A representative of Uzbekistan** said that, as part of wide-ranging reforms, the Citizenship Act had been amended to include recognition of citizenship for stateless persons permanently residing in the country. The Act set out a simplified naturalization procedure and the process for considering applications for the acquisition, renunciation and loss of citizenship. Under the Act, persons who had arrived in Uzbekistan and registered their place of permanent residence before 1 January 1995, and who had not acquired the citizenship of a foreign State on the basis of a residence permit for stateless persons, were recognized as Uzbek citizens upon expressing the wish to be so. In addition, stateless persons who had not acquired foreign citizenship, who had arrived before 1 January 2005 and had been permanently resident in the country for 15 years, were also recognized as citizens.

47. Since the entry into force of the Act, more than 15,000 stateless persons had acquired citizenship, while more than 65,000 had been formally recognized as citizens. Moreover, in order to prevent the loss of citizenship from leading to statelessness, including in cases where citizens residing abroad failed to comply with consular registration requirements, the revised Act had extended from three to seven years the period within which citizens permanently resident abroad must register with a consulate. The Secretary-General of the United Nations had specifically highlighted the work being carried out in Uzbekistan to reduce, prevent and eliminate statelessness. As at 1 April 2026, approximately 13,000 stateless persons were residing in the country, and the State was actively working to combat statelessness by granting them citizenship.

48. Turning to immigration and refugees, he said that, under the temporary residence registration system, over 3.2 million foreign nationals and stateless persons had been registered in 2025. With regard to international migration, the number of persons who had been abroad for a prolonged period of more than 90 days stood at nearly 1.8 million; of those, more than 42,000 had left to pursue education, more than 1 million were migrant workers and nearly 336,000 had departed to take up permanent residence and had been absent for more than five years, while some 200,000 children were with their parents.

49. With regard to refugees, the Constitution guaranteed that foreign nationals and stateless persons present on the territory enjoyed the rights and freedoms set out therein, subject to the registration and administrative requirements established by the Legal Status of Foreign Nationals and Stateless Persons in the Republic of Uzbekistan Act, which enshrined the fundamental rights, freedoms and obligations of foreign nationals and stateless persons. To date, the Migration and Citizenship Documentation Service of the Ministry of Internal Affairs had received no official applications for political asylum from foreign nationals.

50. Since 2018, practical steps had been taken towards the ratification of the 1951 Convention and 1967 Protocol thereto. Work was continuing, in close cooperation with UNHCR and the National Centre for Human Rights, to examine the prospects for ratification and to conduct comparative studies, and practical proposals and a legal framework were being developed to harmonize national legislation on refugees with the 1951 Convention and other relevant international standards. Work was also under way on accession to the 1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons and the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness and on the incorporation of their provisions into national legislation, including the study of international best practice and consultative meetings and seminars with international and national experts.

51. In accordance with article 35 of the Legal Status of Foreign Citizens and Stateless Persons Act, a decision on expulsion could be appealed before the courts. To date, the administrative penalty of expulsion from the country had not been applied to any refugee or asylum-seeker.

52. **A representative of Uzbekistan** said that, in the field of education, measures were also being taken to organize a system of support for a group of Palestinian citizens. A total 32 school-age children from 19 Palestinian families had been enrolled in mainstream schools, and 13 children aged between 3 and 6 from 8 families in preschool education programmes.

Daily lessons were held for children accompanied by their parents to facilitate their adaptation. Arrangements had also been made for interpreters to provide every student with support. Palestinian students were encouraged to participate in club activities, and an Arabic and Uzbek language club had been organized to accelerate their learning of the Uzbek language.

53. In addition, in Surkhandarya Oblast, training for 256 Afghan students had been ongoing since 2021, with the support of the European Union and the United Nations, as part of a project to enhance the protection of children in emergency situations in Uzbekistan. At the national level, 10 psychological support centres had been established by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and equipped with the necessary information technology, furniture and equipment. Furthermore, with the support of UNESCO and funding from Japan, psychological support centres had been established in 15 districts of Surkhandarya Oblast to serve as information centres for psychological assistance; practical training programmes and teaching materials had been developed, including a life-skills course and guides on topics such as psychological trauma, helping children and providing psychological support in crisis situations.

54. **A representative of Uzbekistan** said that members of ethnic minorities exercised their rights through guarantees of equality in the spheres of education, culture and language, support for ethnic cultural centres and socioeconomic programmes. The protection of the rights of ethnic minorities was one of the priority areas of State policy. The Constitution enshrined the principles of equality for all citizens, regardless of their nationality, guaranteed respect for their language, customs and traditions. Every person was ensured the right to preserve and develop their ethnic identity. Furthermore, with a view to ensuring inter-ethnic harmony and supporting the interests of ethnic minorities, a number of legislative acts had been adopted. For example, the Freedom of Conscience and Religious Organizations Act guaranteed freedom of religion.

55. **A representative of Uzbekistan** said that Uzbekistan was actively involved in implementing the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training and World Programme for Human Rights Education. Since 2023, a special national programme, approved by the President, had been under way in the country. At the Academy of Public Administration attached to the Office of the President, topics such as human rights and gender equality had been included in professional development courses. Between March and May 2025, 290 participants attended these training courses. The curriculum for specialized courses for women holding leadership positions in central and local authorities and in state higher education institutions included the topic of developing a national and universal approach to achieving gender equality. Since 2021, specialized courses had been running for law enforcement officers and judges, covering issues such as combating discrimination and safeguarding human rights. Over 3,000 participants had completed those courses to date. A master's programme in international law and human rights had been launched at Tashkent State University of Law.

56. With a view to strengthening human rights education, a series of radio and television programmes on the national human rights system had been aired. The Government conducted training courses on human rights, including issues of non-discrimination, in collaboration with Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), OSCE and UNESCO. All the main international human rights instruments ratified by Uzbekistan had been translated into Uzbek and Karakalpak. Furthermore, in March 2026, the Government had adopted a road map for the implementation of the World Programme for Human Rights Education, which would be monitored by a national commission made up of representatives from the academic community and civil society organizations. There were plans to hold a series of events to mark the anniversaries of the International Covenants on Human Rights, the Declaration on the Right to Development, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action.

57. **Ms. Tebie** said that she wished to know whether human rights education was provided in the languages of ethnic minority groups so that children could understand the meaning of racial discrimination from a young age. She would also like to know whether the State Party had developed a plan of action for the implementation of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action. It would be interesting to learn what measures were taken to ensure

that children born in the State Party did not face the risk of becoming stateless. She would be grateful if the delegation could provide the Committee with a timeline for the ratification of the relevant conventions on refugees and stateless persons. That issue had also been raised repeatedly in other treaty bodies. She wondered what national policies were currently in place to protect persons who were internally displaced or compelled to migrate internally for economic social and environmental reasons, whether a special plan had been developed to deal with displacement caused by natural disasters, how data on the impacts of internal migration were collected and monitored and what services were provided to internally displaced populations, including in the area of employment, education, healthcare and housing. She would appreciate hearing about the development projects and measures envisaged to build up the resilience of vulnerable communities in the face of forced displacement.

58. **Ms. Stavrinaki** said that the Committee would like to learn more about the barriers that were preventing the State Party from setting up a national asylum system. She wished to know whether there were any initiatives in place to train law enforcement officers, judges and health workers on the Convention and whether the Convention was specifically included in the human rights education curriculum.

59. **Mr. Sibande** said that, although the State Party had made commitments to ratifying the 1951 Convention, for example during the universal periodic review process in 2018 and 2023, it still showed a reluctance to do so. While Uzbekistan had developed legislation on migration, that legislation focused on labour migration and did not establish a comprehensive legal framework for asylum or refugee protection. He would appreciate an explanation of the source of the delays in ratifying the Convention in the light of the positive developments with regard to granting citizenship to tens of thousands of persons and its close collaboration with UNHCR.

60. **Ms. Tebie** said that she had not heard a reply to the question raised concerning mandatory HIV testing.

61. **Ms. Ali Al-Misnad** said that, as of 1 January 1995, there had been approximately 85,000 individuals in the country, of whom 17,000 had applied for citizenship. Of those, around 17% had been granted citizenship. She would appreciate further clarification regarding the reference to a new simplified procedure for the recognition or acquisition of Uzbek citizenship introduced in 2020, in particular the difference between that procedure and the previous one. She wondered why the State Party had been reluctant to recognize the Committee's competence to receive and consider communications from individuals.

62. **Ms. Esseneme** said that she, too, would appreciate a reply to the question concerning HIV testing. In particular, she wished to know what was the purpose of such testing and what were the implications for foreign nationals and migrant workers who tested positive. She wondered whether they enjoyed the same access to healthcare, employment and basic services such as education as other citizens who were not HIV-positive.

63. **Mr. Diaby** said that he would appreciate further details of legislation allowing for the expulsion of foreign nationals deemed to be "undesirable". It was unclear who those individuals were and what threat they posed. He wondered whether stateless persons were among those considered undesirable and what their status was. He also wished to know how their cases were dealt with. It would also be useful to have an account of the plans in place to eradicate statelessness once and for all.

64. **A representative of Uzbekistan** said that, before ratifying any international treaty, Uzbekistan first brought its domestic legislation into line with its provisions. Only then could ratification be considered. With regard to the 1951 Convention, an interministerial working group had been established and was actively engaged in drafting the relevant legislation on refugees, in collaboration with UNHCR.

65. With regard to individual communications, the right of citizens to appeal to international human rights mechanisms had been introduced to the Constitution (art. 55) as part of the country's constitutional reform in 2023. Once national legislation was brought into line with international standards and an effective mechanism for implementing the

decisions of treaty bodies was established, the issue of whether Uzbek citizens could submit individual communications to the relevant committees would be considered.

66. In accordance with article 14 of the Citizenship Act, children born in Uzbekistan automatically acquired Uzbek nationality if one or both of their parents were stateless. Such children enjoyed the same rights and freedoms enshrined in the Constitution and other laws as other children born in Uzbekistan.

67. A central coordinating body, the National Agency for Social Protection, ensured that all sections of the population had access to social services. The mahallas also provided broad social protection. The Government was also implementing the “From Poverty to Prosperity” Programme, which had reduced the poverty rate from 8% in 2024 to 5.8% in early 2026.

68. Uzbekistan fully supported effort to combat racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance and took a systematic approach to implementing the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action, in accordance with the Committee’s general comment No. 33 (2009). The Declaration had been translated into Uzbek and distributed to the relevant ministries, law enforcement agencies, educational institutions and the public. It had also translated the Ljubljana Guidelines on Integration of Diverse Societies into Uzbek and minority languages. The principles set out in the Durban Declaration had been incorporated into training programmes for judges and law enforcement officers. Furthermore, they formed part of the modules on human rights and international law at the Law Enforcement Academy.

69. Regarding the issue of HIV/AIDS, regular medical check-ups were provided to individuals living with HIV. As the President had rejected amendments to the law on HIV adopted by the parliament, the provisions of the law had not entered into force.

70. **A representative of Uzbekistan** said that the Education Act enshrined the principle of equal rights to education for all. All children living in the country had access to schools, regardless of their social status or background. Education was provided in seven languages, namely Uzbek, Karakalpak, Russian, Tajik, Kazakh, Kyrgyz and Turkmen.

71. **A representative of Uzbekistan** said that, pursuant to more than 115 presidential decrees, over 25,000 stateless persons had been granted Uzbek nationality since 2016. Specifically, 4,567 individuals had become Uzbek citizens in 2021, in 553 in 2022, 583 in 2023, 659 in 2024 and 477 in 2025. In the same period, over 65,000 permanent residents had been granted citizenship, including 26,228 in 2021, 11,543 in 2022, 4,410 in 2023, 2,403 in 2024 and 2,132 in 2025.

72. **A representative of Uzbekistan** said that, in the 2025/26 academic year, 160 students had been studying law on State grants, including 61 studying criminal law, 58 civil law, 19 commercial law and 22 administrative law. A course on international standards of justice and human rights was taught at the Academy of Justice of Uzbekistan. The training programme covered relevant international conventions on racial discrimination and topics such as inter-ethnic tolerance and respect for cultural diversity. Round-table discussions were held on the themes of tolerance and human rights. Training sessions were held to enhance the professional skills of judges. A number of study guides on the application of the provisions of international human rights treaties in judicial practice had been published.

73. **A representative of Uzbekistan** said that racial profiling was prohibited under the Internal Affairs Act of 2016. The Code of Professional Conduct and Discipline for Staff in the Internal Affairs Agencies provided for non-discrimination, respect for the customs and traditions of the peoples of Uzbekistan and other States and the promotion of social stability and inter-ethnic and inter-religious harmony. The Academy of the Ministry of Internal Affairs ran some 145 hours of further training courses, including lectures on methods of investigating crimes related to incitement to national, racial, ethnic or religious discord. Between 2023 and 2025, more than 700 staff members took relevant professional development courses and obtained certificates. The Ministry regularly took part in training sessions, with support from OSCE, the United Nations Development Programme and the National Human Rights Centre that included the study of international human rights standards on non-discrimination and the prevention of torture.

74. **A representative of Uzbekistan** said that more than 5 million citizens had been tested for HIV/AIDS in 2024 and more than 4 million in 2023. Of the 1 million citizens who had

returned to Uzbekistan after a long stay abroad, only 34,000, or 25%, had voluntarily undergone HIV testing. Of them, 3,903 citizens had been diagnosed with HIV/AIDS, 1,512 of whom were citizens returning from abroad. Furthermore, in 2024, more than 1,200 foreign nationals or stateless persons had voluntarily undergone testing, and 81 had been diagnosed with the disease. Currently, there were no requirements for medical check-ups for foreign nationals or stateless persons entering the country for work or persons between 18 and 60 years of age residing in Uzbekistan who had returned from a stay abroad of more than 90 days.

The meeting rose at 6 p.m.