



International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination

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Summary record of the 3212th meeting

Held at the Palais Wilson, Geneva, on Thursday, 23 April 2026, at 10 a.m.

Chair: Mr. Kut

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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 twentieth to twenty-fourth periodic reports of Burkina Faso (continued)
([CERD/C/BFA/20-24](#); [CERD/C/BFA/Q/20-24](#))

1. *At the invitation of the Chair, the delegation of Burkina Faso joined the meeting.*
2. **A representative of Burkina Faso**, replying to questions raised at the previous meeting ([CERD/C/SR.3211](#)), said that 500 young human rights defenders living in areas with security challenges had received human rights training in 2021. In December 2025, a military court, sitting in a mobile session, had convicted three persons in connection with the events that had taken place in Boucle du Mouhoun Region and sentenced them to varying terms of imprisonment and fines.
3. The Government did not discriminate against asylum-seekers on the basis of their countries of origin or the languages they spoke; applications were considered objectively on the basis of the same criteria. English-speaking refugees could turn to the competent authorities for their needs to be met.
4. Burkina Faso was home to a mosaic of cultures in which people of different ethnic groups, languages and religions coexisted harmoniously. The Government sought to promote the balanced and inclusive development of all communities, while respecting the spirit of international standards on the protection of Indigenous Peoples, including the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.
5. **Mr. Guan** (Country Rapporteur) said that he understood that about 60 ethnic groups were living in the State Party, including the Fulani and the Tuareg, who according to some sources were Indigenous Peoples. The Committee had been informed that the Fulani, most of whom were pastoralists, faced injustice in the country, including racist attacks and hate crimes. He would therefore be grateful if the delegation could provide the Committee with information on the impact of the security situation on ethnic communities, particularly the Fulani; on investigations and prosecutions initiated, convictions secured and penalties imposed in relation to allegations of serious human rights violations committed against members of the Fulani ethnic group since 2019; and on Operation Green Whirlwind 2, conducted between February and April 2025 in the western part of Boucle du Mouhoun Region, including any available information on allegations of violence committed against members of the Fulani ethnic group.
6. The Committee was also concerned about discrimination based on descent and, in particular, the persistence among certain ethnic groups of a caste system that impeded the enjoyment of the rights enshrined in the Convention. In its report, the State Party had informed the Committee that the laws of Burkina Faso prohibited discrimination based on descent, citing the Constitution, the Criminal Code and the Persons and Family Code, and that it had taken steps to raise awareness of the provisions in question. The Committee would therefore appreciate information on the results of public awareness and education campaigns and examples of administrative penalties and court judgments handed down in relation to discriminatory practices.
7. In its previous concluding observations ([CERD/C/BFA/CO/12-19](#)), the Committee had recommended that the State Party strengthen existing measures to protect *garibou* children. As the State Party had indeed taken steps since 2013 to combat the exploitation, abuse and trafficking of *talibé* or *garibou* children from neighbouring countries or belonging to certain ethnic groups, he would appreciate further information on the impact of those measures. The delegation might also provide statistics on the number of complaints, prosecutions and convictions in relation to forced begging and other forms of abuse, ill-treatment or exploitation of *talibé* or *garibou* children.
8. The delegation had briefly mentioned the progress made in avoiding the marginalization of certain ethnic groups, including nomads, migrants and people living in rural areas, and ensuring their inclusion in development policies and programmes. Bearing in mind the Committee's previous recommendations, he would be grateful if the delegation

could report on the implementation of the National Economic and Social Development Plan 2016–2020 and related measures, providing concrete examples of their impact on the protection of the economic, social and cultural rights of all persons without discrimination.

9. In its previous concluding observations, the Committee had expressed concern about the persistence of conflicts between different ethnic groups over farming or herding activities and had recommended that the State Party implement and build on initiatives to resolve such conflicts and prevent them from turning into ethnic conflicts. In that regard, he would like to know what the role and functions of the National Observatory for the Prevention and Management of Community Conflicts were and what had been the impact of its activities, including in terms of preventing and reducing inter-ethnic tensions and clashes and conflicts between practitioners of pastoral and sedentary farming.

10. According to the information before the Committee, certain ethnic groups, particularly the Fulani, were arbitrarily targeted by law enforcement or armed groups and their rights and interests were not sufficiently protected by the courts, resulting in the denial of access to justice. The Committee had also received reports that the work of prosecutors and judges was threatened by certain organizations, groups and individuals. He therefore wished to know what steps the State Party had taken to prevent the ethnic profiling of members of certain ethnic groups, especially the Fulani, by law enforcement and the defence and security forces, including the Volunteers for the Defence of the Homeland and the Civic Brigade for Order and Discipline. He would also be glad to receive information on measures to ensure access to legal remedies in cases of racial discrimination and to combat discrimination against and stigmatization of Fulani persons, who were often targeted on account of their alleged association with terrorism.

11. **Mr. Diaby** (Country Task Force) said that he would like to receive information on the action plan for the period 2017–2024 for putting an end to statelessness, which included as a priority measure the issuance of civil status documents to people living in Côte d’Ivoire.

12. He would also be interested to hear about measures taken to encourage communities to abandon harmful cultural practices, including slavery, which might lead to grievances that could be exploited by terrorist groups.

13. The Committee would appreciate clarification of the measures that had been taken to investigate and prosecute those who had explicitly called for the extermination of the Fulani, including information on the current status of the investigation announced by the prosecutor of the Ouagadougou Tribunal de Grande Instance (court of major jurisdiction) on 20 March 2025.

14. **A representative of Burkina Faso** said that distinctions based on ethnicity were applied neither in the context of public administration nor in the development sector. The Constitution clearly stated that all citizens of Burkina Faso received equal treatment. Fulani persons served in high-ranking positions in the Government, the judiciary, the armed forces, the defence and security forces and the Volunteers for the Defence of the Homeland.

15. **A representative of Burkina Faso** said that the security situation affected all persons and communities living in Burkina Faso without exception, and the armed forces, the internal security forces and the Volunteers for the Defence of the Homeland were working to reconquer the whole of the national territory. The aim of that effort was to protect the country’s people and their property without distinction and in conformity with the international human rights obligations of Burkina Faso.

16. In 2019, the prosecutor attached to the Kaya Tribunal de Grande Instance had opened an expedited police investigation following an incident at Yirgou in the Centre-Nord Region; the police and the investigating judge had also conducted investigations. As a result, 13 individuals had been charged with murder, arson, malicious wounding, illegal possession of firearms, destruction of property, aggravated theft and other offences, and had been remanded in custody. More than 40 victims had been interviewed. The judicial investigation had concluded and the case had been sent to the Criminal Division of Ouagadougou Court of Appeal for trial.

17. From 27 February to 2 April 2025, government forces had conducted a security operation at Solenzo, Bankui Region (formerly Boucle du Mouhoun) that had led to the

release of 305 persons, mostly women, children and older persons who had been held hostage by terrorists. The victims had been assisted and permanently rehoused in a more secure location.

18. **A representative of Burkina Faso** said that article 1 (2) of the Constitution outlawed all forms of discrimination, while the Persons and Family Code prohibited discrimination based on descent, including with regard to marriage and inheritance. Article 221-3 of the Code provided that marriage required the consent of the intending spouses. Consequently, the law prohibited forced marriages, particularly those imposed by families and those resulting from customary rules that obliged the surviving spouse to marry one of the deceased spouse's relatives, child marriages, and impediments or objections to marriage on the basis of race, caste, colour or religion. Education and awareness campaigns on the prohibition of forced marriages had been conducted for the general public and traditional and religious leaders in particular. Different communities had participated in the National Strategy to Promote a Culture of Tolerance and Peace, which had been adopted in 2008 and reviewed in 2015. Activities to raise awareness of the Strategy had reached 183,000 persons.

19. Paragraphs 46 to 52 of the report described measures taken to improve the situation of *garibou* and *talibé* children. In addition, the Government had adopted a firm policy of combating trafficking in persons, and prosecutions were brought whenever the evidence supported an allegation of trafficking in persons. According to judicial statistics, the criminal courts had adjudicated 94 cases of trafficking in persons and similar practices in 2024 and 67 cases in early 2025. Between 2019 and 2022, 57 people had been convicted of procuring and 67 people of child marriage.

20. **A representative of Burkina Faso** said that the first National Economic and Social Development Plan 2016–2020 had been implemented against the backdrop of security challenges and the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, which had significantly affected the enjoyment of human rights in Burkina Faso. Despite the challenging context, improvements had been observed in access to health facilities and to drinking water and sanitation, as well as in enrolment in preschool education. The second National Economic and Social Development Plan had been adopted for the period 2021–2025.

21. **A representative of Burkina Faso** said that the National Observatory for the Prevention and Management of Community Conflicts was a decentralized body whose activities included measures to prevent conflicts between farmers and herders. Disputes over land accounted for about 70% of community conflicts. In 2025, the Observatory had recorded 1,764 community conflicts, including 228 between farmers and herders (13% of the total). The Observatory had resolved 559 of those conflicts, while 950 were pending resolution.

22. **A representative of Burkina Faso** said that the right to an effective remedy was provided for in article 4 of the Constitution, which guaranteed all citizens and residents the equal protection of the law. Victims of racial discrimination or any other human rights violation had the right to seek redress before the competent courts.

23. **A representative of Burkina Faso** said that the use of the term “armed groups” was not appropriate when referring to the security situation in Burkina Faso. Those who attacked innocent communities should more properly be described as terrorists.

24. **Mr. Guan**, recalling that, as part of the fight against child begging, the Government had opened an emergency reception centre in Ouagadougou in 2013, said that he wished to know whether that centre was still operational and, if so, how many staff it employed, how many children resided there and how it was funded.

25. He would also be interested to learn more about the structure of the National Observatory for the Prevention and Management of Community Conflicts, including the number of branches at the regional, provincial, departmental and village levels, the size of its staff and its sources of funding.

26. Lastly, he said he would be grateful if the State Party could respond to the letter the Committee had sent to the Government in 2023, addressing the issues raised therein, without further delay.

27. **Mr. Diaby** said that he would appreciate additional information on the education levels attained by children from ethnic minority groups, particularly those with a nomadic way of life. It had been observed that, despite the Government's efforts to build schools, many children did not have time to attend because they were assigned customary roles in the community, such as looking after livestock. He wondered what steps had been taken to adapt the education system to the nomadic lifestyle in order to ensure that such children were enrolled and remained in education.

28. He would also be interested to learn more about access to justice for the persons involved in conflicts between farmers and herders. For example, it would be useful to know whether the customary justice model, established under the Act No. 003-2026/ALT of 14 January 2026 regarding the determination of traditional dispute resolution mechanisms, the "Faso Bu Kaoré" Act, was applicable in cases of community conflicts and whether it was possible to appeal against the decisions that were handed down.

29. The Committee had been informed that elected local governments had been replaced with special delegations, who had been accused of taking measures detrimental to ethnic minority communities, such as the confiscation of their livestock. Indeed, it had been reported that the special delegation of Dédougou had confiscated 1,000 head of cattle and sold them at auction. The Committee would be interested to hear more about that case, including whether any investigations had been conducted and what remedies were available to the community whose cattle had been confiscated.

30. Furthermore, he would be interested to hear about any non-judicial remedies that might be available to victims of racial discrimination. For instance, it would be useful to know how many complaints related to racial discrimination had been lodged with the National Human Rights Commission. In that regard, he wondered what progress had been made towards the Commission's accreditation as the national human rights institution.

31. **Ms. Stavrinaki** said that, given the security challenges facing the country, she was concerned about sexual violence against women and girls and the likelihood – in the absence of disaggregated statistics – that women and girls from groups such as the Fulani were disproportionately targeted. The Committee had also received reports that women and girls who had been subjected to sexual or obstetric violence were reluctant to report cases for fear of stigmatization and reprisals. She would be grateful if the delegation could provide information on measures taken by the State Party to facilitate access to healthcare, including mental health services, for women of all ethnic backgrounds.

32. **Ms. Ali Al-Misnad** said that she had been concerned to read that 74% of children in Burkina Faso could not read by the age of 10 and that the rate of secondary school enrolment, although improving, remained low, at about 41% for girls and 33% for boys. She would be grateful if the delegation could provide statistics, disaggregated by ethnicity and urban/rural area, on rates of enrolment in primary, secondary and higher education.

33. **Ms. Tlakula** said that, regardless of whether or not the Government recognized the Fulani and the Tuareg as Indigenous Peoples, she wished to know whether those groups self-identified as Indigenous Peoples and were allowed to pursue their traditional way of life.

34. The Committee welcomed the measures that had been taken to address the conflict between herders and farmers, which had been described in paragraphs 87 to 94 of the State Party report, and would appreciate additional information on their impact. It would be interested to know why, according to the National Observatory for the Prevention and Management of Community Conflicts, only a quarter of conflicts between farmers and herders in 2020 had been resolved. More recent statistics on the resolution of community conflicts might be provided, if they were available.

35. **Mr. Guissé** said that the issue of ethnicity in the subregion was extremely complex and required a nuanced analysis. He did not believe that racial profiling of the Fulani, who were the second-largest ethnic group in the country, was systematic. Nevertheless, racial profiling could occur in any State and could affect any person. It was also important to remember that the Fulani ethnic group itself was not homogenous – many but not all of its members were nomadic. He was concerned that nomadic Fulani living in the countryside were much more likely to fall victim to ethnic profiling by the security forces or the police,

who associated them with jihadism because they were Muslims. It was necessary to be vigilant against such stereotypes, while also addressing the structural causes of economic problems that disadvantaged certain groups. With those challenges in mind, he would be grateful if the delegation could provide information on the training provided to the security forces to prevent racial profiling.

36. **A representative of Burkina Faso** said that the reaccreditation process of the National Human Rights Commission was under way. A letter on that subject had been sent to the Subcommittee on Accreditation in July 2025.

37. People of all ethnic backgrounds were treated equally in Burkina Faso. As the second-largest ethnic group, the Fulani participated in the free exercise of cultural expression. During National Culture Week, currently being held in Bobo-Dioulasso, representatives of all population groups, including the Fulani, had come together to celebrate cultural diversity. No ethnic groups had been excluded or forbidden from expressing their culture or identity. On the contrary, the Government worked to promote such diversity and considered that it enriched the country.

38. **A representative of Burkina Faso** said that two of the major causes of statelessness were the lack of birth registration and the fact that many people did not possess civil status documents. Under the National Plan of Action to Combat Statelessness 2017–2024, the Government had taken steps to promote birth registration and issue birth certificates in Burkina Faso and neighbouring countries, especially Côte d'Ivoire, which was home to a large number of citizens of Burkina Faso. Consular missions had been organized in which officials travelled to neighbouring countries to issue documents to Burkina Faso nationals who did not possess them. In 2019 and 2020, more than 15,000 civil status documents had been issued during two missions to Côte d'Ivoire. Similar consular missions had been undertaken in Cameroon, Gabon, Ghana, Mali and Togo.

39. **A representative of Burkina Faso** said that heads of special delegations, as representatives of the central Government acting at the local level, acted in accordance with the law. Any animals that ended up in the enclosure of the special delegation had likely been found roaming and impounded until such time as their owner collected them and paid a fine. It was not possible for the head of a special delegation to confiscate a community's animals in order to sell them and keep the proceeds. In Burkina Faso it was not unusual for farmers to keep herds and for herders to grow crops, meaning that there was no clear separation between the two groups.

40. The State had taken several measures to adapt education to the nomadic way of life. It had introduced mobile education, including the establishment of mobile schools, temporary classrooms and non-formal education tents in different locations. The school calendar had been adapted to transhumance periods. Students were initially taught in Fula and subsequently in French.

41. **A representative of Burkina Faso** said that, as of 2025, the National Observatory for the Prevention and Management of Community Conflicts had had 13 regional, 45 provincial, 350 departmental and 7,821 village branches.

42. **A representative of Burkina Faso** said that the country had several centres for the reception of *talibé* children, most of which were located outside Ouagadougou. In 2020, educational teams had conducted an intensive outreach campaign with a view to removing children from the streets. Of the 3,514 children identified, 195 had been placed in the emergency reception centre in Ouagadougou, where they received schooling and initial vocational education. In 2018 and 2019, 237 children who had been removed from the streets had been placed in boarding schools; hundreds more had been returned to their families or placed in other institutions. Comprehensive statistics on the number of children living in residential institutions were not available.

43. **A representative of Burkina Faso** said that measures taken by the authorities to address sexual violence included the continued provision of essential healthcare, including sexual and reproductive health services. The health system had adopted a specific protocol on the confidentiality of victims of gender-based violence and their referral to social and legal services. The armed forces, the internal security forces and organizations such as the

United Nations Population Fund deployed mobile clinics in the context of humanitarian efforts in areas with security challenges. A cross-sectoral approach ensured that victims were provided with coordinated health and social services and legal assistance, and health personnel were trained to care for survivors. Community awareness campaigns were conducted to combat stigmatization and promote the use of healthcare services.

44. **A representative of Burkina Faso** said that the measures taken under the National Plan of Action for the Prevention of Statelessness 2017–2024 included the issuance of certificates of nationality and registration for the issuance of identity cards and passports. The 2021 and 2023 consular missions to Côte d’Ivoire had resulted in the issuance of a further 6,200 civil status documents.

45. **A representative of Burkina Faso** said that the operation carried out in 2020 had included efforts to address the situation of women who had been begging on the streets with their children. Accordingly, the authorities had removed 302 mothers and 340 children from the streets and provided them with assistance. Of the 340 children, 134 had been enrolled in school and their mothers had been provided with food and a cash grant. Training and equipment had been provided for 126 women to engage in income-generating activities, with the result that 91 of them were no longer living on the street.

The meeting was suspended at 11.25 a.m. and resumed at 11.35 a.m.

46. **Mr. Diaby**, observing that the delegation had voiced concern about the Committee’s focus on the actions of the State Party, rather than those of terrorists, said he wished to point out that it was the State Party that had an obligation to implement the Convention. That did not exempt armed groups from responsibility: in due time they would be held accountable for their crimes before the International Criminal Court and other authorities. The purpose of the current dialogue was to discuss how the Committee could better support the State Party in fulfilling its international obligations.

47. In the light of reports that persons with albinism faced persistent stigmatization, social exclusion, discrimination in employment and housing and limited access to healthcare, he would like to know what had been done to address those challenges. He wondered whether the delegation was aware of a recent press report that a landlord had refused to rent a house to a person with albinism on account of his skin and hair colour, and whether the Government had intervened in that case.

48. As children with albinism sometimes failed at school because they could not read the blackboard, he wished to know whether the Government had delivered teacher training, adopted special programmes or developed learning materials in easy-to-read formats to ensure their inclusion in the mainstream school system. He would like to know whether the State Party conducted any campaigns to raise awareness of best practices among teachers and parents or had taken or planned any measures to support civil society organizations working on albinism awareness. He would be interested to hear about any measures to subsidize the purchase of sunglasses and sunscreen for children with albinism, and to know how many skin cancer screening campaigns had been conducted. What had been done to address the problem of families of children with albinism who took them to beg on the street? What steps had been taken to prevent the bullying of children with albinism and prevent their dropping out of school? Had any measures been taken to protect persons with albinism from violence, discrimination and stigmatization, such as investigating and prosecuting perpetrators of such acts?

49. The Committee would be interested to know what legislative measures had been adopted to prevent and prohibit the racial or ethnic profiling of certain groups by law enforcement and other officials, and whether officers were trained to avoid racial profiling when conducting traffic stops. It would be grateful if the delegation could report on any awareness campaigns conducted on the subject, including the dissemination of the Committee’s general recommendation No. 36 on preventing and combating racial profiling by law enforcement officials.

50. He would be interested to know what special measures had been taken to address inequalities and multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination experienced by persons belonging to ethnic communities such as the Fulani, including on the grounds of race, colour,

descent or national or ethnic origin. He wondered what measures were taken to protect vulnerable groups from discrimination, including persons with albinism, refugees, migrants, asylum-seekers, stateless persons and internally displaced persons, and whether those groups participated in the development, implementation and evaluation of measures affecting them. He would like to hear about any steps taken to ensure the full enjoyment of economic, social and cultural rights by persons belonging to ethnic communities, including the Fulani, and by persons with albinism, migrants, refugees and asylum-seekers. He would be grateful if the delegation could provide information, accompanied by statistical data, on measures to reduce poverty among those groups and to ensure their effective access to education, healthcare, employment and basic services.

51. Furthermore, he would be interested to hear about measures to ensure the adequate representation of the Fulani in central and local government and the National Human Rights Commission. He would appreciate information on efforts to prevent and combat trafficking in persons, especially Fulani and non-nationals, for the purposes of labour or sexual exploitation. He wondered what steps had been taken to raise awareness among the general public, civil servants and law enforcement officials of the importance of cultural diversity, tolerance and inter-ethnic harmony.

52. The Committee would welcome additional details concerning human rights education, in particular on the Convention and the fight against racism, racial discrimination and xenophobia, in school curricula and vocational training programmes and on its impact. It would also like to know how the State Party prevented the spread of racist and xenophobic stereotypes and prejudice against vulnerable groups. It would be useful to know how many investigations had been opened and how many convictions had been secured in relation to the offence of exclusion of women accused of witchcraft, which had been established as an offence in the new Criminal Code of 2018.

53. **A representative of Burkina Faso** said that the National Human Rights Commission had received no complaints of racial discrimination during the period under review.

54. **A representative of Burkina Faso** said that the Government had taken several measures to combat violence against women, including harmful traditional practices such as forced marriage, child marriage and female genital mutilation. For example, the Government had adopted the National Strategy for the Prevention and Elimination of Child Marriage for the period 2017–2025. Article 210-2 of the Persons and Family Code formally prohibited child marriage and forced marriage, including levirate marriage. The Government had established four care centres for victims of gender-based violence, 72,500 safe spaces and vocational training centres for women. Individuals who committed violence against women were punished by the courts: between 2022 and 2025, the Ziniaré Tribunal de Grande Instance had prosecuted 66 suspected perpetrators of gender-based violence, securing 62 convictions.

55. Since 2015, various activities, including awareness-raising, reintegration and follow-up of cases had been carried out under the road map for the rescue and social reintegration of persons excluded from society for alleged witchcraft. About 600 socially excluded women had returned to their families during the period 2013–2020. The State allocated an annual grant for the psychosocial assistance of victims of exclusion, with the result that 780 women were currently sheltered in 13 public and private institutions. Between 2019 and 2022, 256 individuals had been convicted of acts related to the social exclusion of women for alleged witchcraft.

56. Burkina Faso had adopted its first law prohibiting female genital mutilation in 1996. At the fifty-ninth session of the Human Rights Council, Burkina Faso had joined the Group of African States in sponsoring resolution 59/16 on the elimination of female genital mutilation, which had been adopted without a vote on 7 July 2025. To promote national ownership of that resolution, the Government had organized two feedback sessions for stakeholders, which had been attended by 57 participants.

57. **A representative of Burkina Faso** said that discrimination against persons with albinism was addressed under article 2 of the Constitution, which guaranteed the protection of life, security and personal integrity, and articles 322-1 to 322-5 of the Criminal Code. Institutions effectively tackled the stigmatization of persons with albinism, who could turn

to the courts in the event of discrimination, marginalization or violence. The Government had adopted the National Strategy for the Protection and Advancement of Persons with Disabilities 2021–2025 and the National Strategy on the Development of Inclusive Education 2018–2022, which addressed the specific needs of learners with albinism. It also organized an annual Albinism Week, which included the commemoration of International Albinism Awareness Day, to provide support for persons with albinism. Activities included awareness campaigns on the inclusion of persons with albinism and their specific needs, and the provision of eye care services.

58. **A representative of Burkina Faso** said that the allegation of ethnic profiling of members of communities such as the Fulani by the national armed forces, the internal security forces or the Volunteers for the Defence of the Homeland was unfounded. The activities of those institutions were underpinned by the Constitution, which stated that all Burkina Faso citizens were born free and equal in rights and explicitly prohibited discrimination on various grounds. In the context of the struggle against terrorism, anyone might be subjected to checks, which would be carried out with strict respect for the dignity of the person. The Government had consistently raised awareness of the need to avoid ethnic polarization and the stigmatization of certain communities. Terrorism had no ethnic dimension, and the struggle against it was not directed towards a particular community. The aim of the armed forces, the internal security forces and the Volunteers for the Defence of the Homeland was to protect people and property and defend the country's territorial integrity. They conducted their operations professionally and with respect for human rights.

59. Complaints mechanisms such as toll-free numbers allowed for the anonymous reporting of acts of discrimination or ill-treatment by law enforcement. Community policing had improved relations between the internal security forces and the population. The training manual of the Volunteers for the Defence of the Homeland included a specific module on the fight against discrimination and stigmatization and was accompanied by an illustrated guide.

60. **A representative of Burkina Faso** said that Burkina Faso had subscribed to the World Programme for Human Rights Education with the aim of instilling a human rights culture among its citizens. The Government was implementing a policy on justice and human rights for the period 2018–2027, under which the Ministry of Justice had drawn up successive action plans for human rights education. Human rights education was offered in primary, post-primary and secondary schools. The initial training curriculum for members of the national armed forces and internal security forces included modules on law enforcement, human rights and international humanitarian law, which covered the use of force and of weapons. Courses of varying duration on international humanitarian law, human rights and fundamental freedoms were taught by armed forces instructors and at the respective training academies of the police, the gendarmerie, the fire brigade and the prison service.

61. The national armed forces, internal security forces and Volunteers for the Defence of the Homeland received regular in-service training to reinforce professional conduct and respect for human rights in the performance of their duties, in particular during security operations. That training had been strengthened to prevent human rights violations. Between 2023 and 2026, 32 training of trainers sessions had been carried out for more than 900 coordinators of the national armed forces, and almost all Volunteers for the Defence of the Homeland had been sensitized to human rights issues. A national strategy for the prevention of radicalization and violent extremism had been adopted for the period 2020–2030. Training sessions on a human rights-based approach had also been organized for local authorities. Between 2022 and 2025, such training had been provided for 122 heads of special delegations and municipal officials.

62. **A representative of Burkina Faso** said that article 14 of the “Faso Bu Kaoré” Act provided that traditional dispute resolution mechanisms were competent to hear all but administrative matters. The decisions of such mechanisms must be set down in a record and were subject to appeal. Article 34 provided for that possibility, stating that those who wished to do so could assert their rights before the ordinary courts.

63. **Mr. Diaby** said that he wondered whether no complaints had been submitted to the National Human Rights Commission because the public was not aware of its existence, and whether the Commission had any local branches.

64. Given that many people living in areas under attack by terrorist groups had likely fled their homes and would now be living in camps or with their families, he wished to know how the Government ensured the schooling of internally displaced children.

65. As the Committee had received reports of persistent harmful cultural practices, including descent-based slavery among certain sub-groups of the Fulani and the Tuareg, he would like to know whether the Criminal Code prohibited such practices and whether awareness-raising had been conducted to remedy the situation. The information before the Committee suggested that descent-based slavery was perpetuated by religious leaders in the north of the country who opposed children's education – Western or Qur'anic – with the result that many children were kept as slaves and did not attend school. He wished to know whether any attempts had been made either to educate or prosecute religious leaders with the ultimate goal of eradicating the practice.

66. **Ms. Shepherd**, drawing attention to the Committee's general recommendation No. 25 on gender-related dimensions of racial discrimination, said that she would like to receive statistics on girls' enrolment in preschool and primary education, the dropout rates for both genders and girls' access to tertiary education.

67. **Ms. Stavrinaki** said that she would appreciate information on obstetric violence in the State Party. She would be grateful if the delegation could build on the information already provided on access to health services, considering that disaggregation by region and ethnic group would allow the Committee to assess the implementation of the Convention throughout the country and in respect of groups who were particularly vulnerable to racial discrimination.

68. **Ms. Tebie** said that she would be interested to know whether the measures taken by the State Party to reduce the social exclusion of women for alleged witchcraft had been successful. Recent data showing how the situation had evolved would be useful. She would also like to know whether harmful practices such as forced marriage and female genital mutilation affected all Burkina Faso women or particularly those belonging to specific ethnic groups or communities. Were awareness-raising measures targeted at the general population or at the most vulnerable groups?

69. **Mr. Vicente Vázquez** said that a complex legal system governed land ownership in Burkina Faso. He understood that Act No. 034/2009 on rural land tenure recognized customary land rights and allowed for local management, including collective rights, through tools such as local land charters. Nevertheless, the Committee had been informed that neither that Act nor Act No. 034-2012/AN of 2 July 2012 on agrarian and land reorganization contained any provisions specifically recognizing the collective land rights of nomadic pastoralist communities, whose way of life was an expression of their cultural identity. He therefore wished to know which legal provisions conferred collective rights over the pastures and transhumance corridors traditionally used by the Fulani and Tuareg, and whether land title had been awarded to any members of those communities.

70. The Committee had also received reports of escalating conflicts between artisanal miners and pastoralist communities over access to traditional pastureland. He wished to know how the Government protected the land rights of pastoralists against artisanal miners who encroached on their traditional pastures.

71. While the Act on rural land tenure formally prohibited gender discrimination in access to land, reports suggested that, between 2012 and 2019, only 3.27% of land titles had been awarded to women – a gender gap that likely had a disproportionate impact on Fulani and Tuareg women. He wished to know what specific measures were being taken to promote the independent exercise of land rights by women.

72. **A representative of Burkina Faso** said that the lack of complaints of racial discrimination to the National Human Rights Commission did not mean that there were no cases of racial discrimination in Burkina Faso. A legal framework was in place that allowed for the prosecution of such cases, should the victims approach the competent authorities. One reason for the absence of complaints might be that Burkina Faso, like other countries of the Global South, did not have a culture of systematic recourse to justice following the violation of rights.

73. **A representative of Burkina Faso** said that a plethora of measures had been taken to support the education of internally displaced children, over 1 million of whom had been re-enrolled in school. Measures included the recruitment of community facilitators and the construction or rental of additional classrooms to relieve crowded schools. Exams had been effectively organized in areas with security challenges, and over 2,200 schools had reopened in reconquered areas, with the redeployment of almost 7,000 teachers. School capacity had also been expanded through the addition of temporary learning spaces and the renovation and fitting out of damaged classrooms. The Government had subsidized the schooling of about 16,000 vulnerable internally displaced children, including by providing allowances to heads of households to keep children in school. About 296,000 school kits had been provided to displaced and other vulnerable students. More than 27,000 students affected by the crisis had been provided with psychological support.

74. **A representative of Burkina Faso** said that the 2019 general population and housing census had yielded statistics on the highest level of education attained by boys and girls. Boys accounted for a larger proportion of persons having attained primary, post-primary, secondary and higher education, with wider gender gaps observed in secondary and higher education. The National Institute of Statistics and Demography would soon publish its annual booklet on gender.

75. **A representative of Burkina Faso** said that the National Human Rights Commission had branches at Bobo-Dioulasso and Kaya.

76. **A representative of Burkina Faso** said that, in 2025, the Government had carried out several activities to promote girls' education and the inclusion of children with disabilities. Special learning materials had been purchased for 2,100 students with disabilities. Comprehensive communication plans related to girls' school enrolment, menstrual health and hygiene, pregnancy at school and support for students with disabilities had reached 15,000 people. Some 250 preschool, primary and non-formal education teachers had been trained in inclusive education. Training had been provided for 180 educational counsellors on a transformative approach to gender equality and positive masculinity in education, and for teachers and educational counsellors on the prevention of early pregnancy, gender-based violence and child marriage.

77. **A representative of Burkina Faso** said that the Government's actions had succeeded in reducing the number of women accused of witchcraft. Although no data were available, the Government had detected fewer cases and a greater willingness among the public to heed its recommendations.

78. Harmful traditional practices affected all women in Burkina Faso – there were no groups that were more vulnerable than others. Such practices were prohibited under the Constitution and the Criminal Code, and awareness-raising had been conducted with a view to their reduction and eventual eradication.

79. **A representative of Burkina Faso** said that the laws of Burkina Faso provided for customary land rights, which were individual rather than collective. Act No. 015-2025/ALT of 21 October 2025 on agrarian and land reorganization provided that the national territory was State property as of right and that no community could claim private ownership of publicly owned land. However, the State might cede ownership of or the right to use such land to legal or natural persons. The law did not permit gender-based discrimination or allow for any preference for men in the acquisition of land. The small proportion of land titles issued to women likely reflected a lack of demand.

80. **Ms. Esseneme** said that she was curious to know why it was mainly women who were accused of witchcraft.

81. **Ms. Tebie** said that she would be interested to know whether the Government had taken any steps to raise awareness among the general public, and especially among traditional or customary chiefs, of the equal right to land.

82. **Mr. Diaby** said that he would be interested to know what activities, including awareness-raising, had been carried out under the first International Decade for People of African Descent, and what measures the Government envisaged for the second Decade, which would run from 2025 to 2034.

83. **A representative of Burkina Faso** said that accusations of witchcraft against women reflected the vulnerability that women faced in the cultural environment in which they lived. Such accusations did not draw on objective criteria, but were generally directed at older women, widows and women who did not have children. Some men, too, had been accused of witchcraft and had been rescued and provided with shelter.

84. Awareness-raising campaigns on the right to land had been conducted. The law provided for all persons to have access to land, with no selective criteria that favoured men over women.

85. A number of measures had been taken as part of the Second International Decade for People of African Descent. For example, under an initiative of President Traoré, Burkina Faso had hosted an official visit by more than 400 people of African descent from around the world, 20 of whom had been issued with residence cards.

86. **A representative of Burkina Faso** said that the Criminal Code prohibited slavery and trafficking in persons. Acts of slavery carried severe penalties, of between 10 and 20 years' imprisonment – or, in the event of aggravating circumstances, up to life imprisonment. Articles 411-4, 422-1 and 513-4 addressed the offence of sexual slavery. Traditional, religious and customary leaders were strongly involved in awareness campaigns on social cohesion issues.

87. **A representative of Burkina Faso** said that, although terrorism presented the country with a major challenge, the Government was taking appropriate measures to protect people and their property with the utmost respect for human rights and its international obligations. Her delegation welcomed the constructive spirit that had prevailed throughout the dialogue, and wished to assure the Committee that the Government would carefully consider its recommendations, bearing in mind the country's values and security imperatives.

88. While the struggle against terrorism remained the absolute national priority, the Government was also strongly committed to addressing four challenges identified under the National Development Plan 2026–2030: strengthening national security and social cohesion and building peace; continuing to rebuild the State and to improve governance; accelerating the development of human capital; developing infrastructure; and transforming the economy in a sustainable manner. She reiterated the Government's call for international partners to support Burkina Faso in meeting those challenges and its willingness to cooperate with all actors for the promotion and protection of human rights in the country.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.