

764th meetingWednesday, 12 March 1986,
at 3.15 p.m.Chairman: Mr. CREMONACONSIDERATION OF REPORTS, COMMENTS AND INFORMATION SUBMITTED BY STATES PARTIES
UNDER ARTICLE 9 OF THE CONVENTION (agenda item 6) (continued)Seventh periodic report of Denmark (CERD/C/131/Add.6) (continued)At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr. Hoppe (Denmark) took a place at the
Committee table.

1. Mr. LAMPTEY asked whether Danish ships had stopped transporting oil to South Africa.
2. Mr. PARTSCH said that since Denmark's six earlier reports had provided such a complete picture of the situation in the country, the Committee, as a matter of procedure, only needed to know what measures had been taken in the past two years.
3. He wondered how education in Denmark was organized for the children of immigrants, especially the Turks. He inquired whether there were classes in Turkish. He was particularly interested to know whether efforts to integrate Turkish children into Danish society were not being hampered by the existence of Turkish schools, in which a contrary influence might prevail.
4. Mr. SHERIFIS commended Denmark for having made the declaration under article 14 of the Convention and for its excellent record in implementing human rights internally and in aiding victims of racial discrimination abroad. He particularly welcomed the measures taken to implement article 3, especially the closing of its consulate in, and the cancellation of Scandinavian Airlines flights to, South Africa.
5. Mr. STARUSHENKO commended Denmark's generally favourable record in combating racial discrimination, but drew attention to paragraphs 35, 42 and 43 of the report, which made it clear that Denmark still had extensive trade relations with South Africa, in addition to its diplomatic relations. He was disturbed by paragraph 15 of the report, which stressed the peaceful abolition of apartheid, because peaceful methods had been tried for 40 years and proved insufficient. He wondered what Denmark's position was concerning armed struggle - as opposed to simple humanitarian aid to liberation movements - when the need for such was, in effect, being imposed upon the population. He welcomed the decisions taken in Denmark to apply sanctions against South Africa, but would appreciate information

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(Mr. Starushenko)

as to how they were actually being implemented. He wondered how much Danish capital investment there was in South Africa and what the volume of trade relations was between the two countries. It would also be useful to know whether any Danish companies had been penalized for their relations with South Africa, and if so, to be given examples.

6. In another area, he would like further information concerning the exceptions to the ban on immigration referred to in paragraph 12 of the report and also would like to know under what circumstances aliens could be expelled within a period of three months, as indicated in paragraph 13.

7. Mr. ÖBERG said he realized that racist organizations were prohibited in Denmark but he wondered whether in fact such organizations existed.

8. Mr. HOPPE (Denmark) said that he would reply to the questions at the next meeting.

Mr. Hoppe (Denmark) withdrew.

Second periodic report of Sri Lanka (CERD/C/126/Add.2)

At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr. Sunil de Silva (Sri Lanka) took a place at the Committee table.

9. Mr. SUNIL DE SILVA (Sri Lanka), introducing his country's second periodic report, said that, with a view to achieving a political settlement of the Tamil question (paras. 4 and 5 of the report), a draft "Terms of Accord and Understanding" had been finalized by the representatives of the Governments of Sri Lanka and India on 30 August 1985. The next day the Tamil United Liberation Front had submitted a set of proposals to the Government of India which were diametrically opposed to that understanding. Sri Lanka's full observations on those proposals would be made available to the Secretary of the Committee for reference.

10. In addition to that understanding, a cease-fire had been established between the Government of Sri Lanka and certain sections of the terrorist groups operating in the country, but that cease-fire had been sabotaged by continuing violations on the part of the terrorists. Despite that, his Government had declared that if the terrorists disavowed violence and laid down their arms it would withdraw the army. The cessation of violence was therefore in the hands of the terrorist groups and not the Government, which must continue to maintain law and order and protect all citizens.

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(Mr. Sunil de Silva, Sri Lanka)

11. He wished to update paragraph 8 to indicate that the number of displaced persons resulting from the most recent terrorist violence had reached 150,000. The refugees were from all three major communities, so that now members of the majority community were refugees in their own land.
12. In connection with paragraph 13, he said that the delegation referred to in the last sentence had completed its work in the United States and that draft proposals for the establishment of the separate office for the enforcement of fundamental freedoms referred to in that paragraph was under consideration. A body called the Organisation for the Protection of Human Rights through Law Enforcement Agencies had already been set up.
13. To update paragraph 14, he noted that 93,000 persons of recent Indian origin and their children had been given Sri Lankan citizenship by an act of Parliament of 30 January 1986.
14. Basically, Sri Lanka's problem was that a very small minority urged separation of the country into two racially homogeneous States. That racist demand was not a popular outcry of the minority community, which was subject to brutal acts of terror for opposing what was tantamount to apartheid. Terrorism had prevented a solution, or even an amicable discussion, of the problem and no meaningful steps towards a political dialogue could be taken until most members of the minority community could exercise their free will unhindered by terrorist action.
15. He hoped that the detailed information provided in annex VI to the report would provide the clarification which the Committee had previously sought on the subject of the policy on admissions to universities, but would provide more information if needed.
16. Mrs. SADIQ ALI said that Sri Lanka's second periodic report had not been compiled according to the recommended guidelines and hoped that that would be corrected in the future.
17. Referring to annex II to the report, she said that it should have pointed out that even the Buddhists in Sri Lanka still followed the Hindu caste system, with 14 or more sub-castes not very different from that of the Tamil minority.
18. The Committee had been concerned primarily about compliance with articles 2 and 5 of the Convention, and had viewed Sri Lanka's crisis not as a matter of terrorism requiring a military solution but rather as one of militancy arising from

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(Mrs. Sadiq Ali)

an increasing sense of frustration, which called for more faithful observance of the Convention. The frustration of the Tamil minority in particular had been viewed as arising from legitimate social, economic and political grievances particularly in such areas as denial of equal status to their language, the problem of land settlement, education and employment, and a growing sense of insecurity. The report showed that escalating violence had in fact undermined security to the point that there were currently 120,000 Tamil-speaking refugees in India and 45,000 in Europe.

19. The devolution of power was also a major problem, and she wondered what difficulties successive governments had had in implementing the Bandaranaike-Chelvanayakam Pact of 1957, which had gone some way to meet the demands of the leaders of the Tamil ethnic group. Recent negotiations with Tamil community leaders on the question of devolution required clarification, because the information provided in paragraphs 3 and 4 of the report was inadequate.

20. It would be particularly useful to receive additional information about the national policy on land settlement and the basis on which the Government intended to undertake land colonization. Information would also be welcome on the opening up of previously unsettled rural lands through the establishment of new irrigation projects, and whether such lands included parts of the northern and eastern provinces. With respect to the eastern province, she wished to know what was the Government's policy towards the estimated 50,000 Tamils who had been pushed out of the Trincomalee and Batticaloa areas, since that exodus was likely to change the demographic character of the province.

21. It was generally recognized that proficiency in the official language was necessary in order to advance economically. She therefore wished to know what the Government was doing to allay the fears of the Tamil community that the official language policy might be an attempt to apply domination techniques, and what special measures it was adopting to safeguard the cultural identity of the Tamil community, in which language played a crucial role.

22. With regard to article 5 of the Convention, she noted that the relevant extracts of the provisions of the Constitution concerning fundamental rights, requested during discussion of the first periodic report of Sri Lanka, had not been received. With respect to article 5 (b) of the Convention, she would welcome

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(Mrs. Sadiq Ali)

information about the impact of the security zones created in the northern province, and of the ground, naval and air actions, on the non-combatant Tamil population. She would also appreciate information on the protection accorded to the civilian population in the security zones as well as to those Tamils forced to flee. Developments in the security zones were also of relevance to the application of article 5 (d) and (e). Many of the rights provided for therein were also in jeopardy and it was important to adopt measures to safeguard them.

23. She would welcome information on the fate of the committee set up to monitor the cease-fire agreed to by the All-Party Conference and the Government through the good offices of the Government of India, as well as information on the prospects for the return of Tamils to their homes in safety and dignity. She also wished to know what additional measures were being taken to restore harmony among the people of Sri Lanka, and what, in particular, was being done to restore Tamil confidence in the credibility of the cease-fire monitoring committee, which seemed to have been eroded by the resignation of two of its three Tamil members.

24. Under article 5 (c), it would be of interest to know what were the prospects of lifting the Sixth Amendment to the Constitution to enable moderate members of the Tamil United Liberation Front, with whom the Government had had dealings, to participate in Parliament and work towards a political solution to the ethnic crisis.

25. With regard to article 5 (d) (i) and (ii), it would be interesting to learn how many of the displaced persons accommodated at welfare centres after the July 1983 communal disturbances had been able to return to their homes and whether, apart from the rehabilitation measures described in annex I to the report, the Government was also committed in principle to creating the conditions for the displaced persons, including refugees in India, to return to their homes.

26. With regard to article 5 (e), the latest admission policy of the University Grants Commission was that 5 per cent of the available places in each course of study would be allocated to the administrative districts of Hambantota, Mannar, Mullaitivu, Amparai and Badulla. Since the proportion of Tamils to Sinhalese varied in each of those districts, the basis for that figure needed clarification.

27. Employment policies, particularly in the civil service and government-controlled public corporations, were also a source of grievance.

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(Mrs. Sadiq Ali)

Whereas at independence about 30 per cent of entrants into government service were Tamils, that proportion was now approximately 6 per cent. It was important to know whether the Government intended to increase that percentage as a gesture of conciliation.

28. The implementation of article 7 of the Convention was of special significance in Sri Lanka. It would be of interest to learn what measures were being taken to improve inter-community relations through education, culture and information. The Government had shown that it was capable of leniency towards security personnel and soldiers alleged to have committed excesses. They undoubtedly represented the "lunatic fringe", which was also to be found within the Tamil community. It was therefore to be hoped that similar leniency would be shown to the militant elements within the Tamil community in order to win them over and bring them to the negotiating table. One had higher expectations from Sri Lanka, a vibrant democracy with a highly-educated community, than from many other countries. Moreover, Sri Lanka had a liberal and articulate professional and intellectual class which needed to rise to the occasion by moulding public opinion and influencing the Government to take specific action with a view to achieving a fair and workable solution to the ethnic problem within the framework of a united Sri Lanka.

29. Mr. DE PIÉROLA Y BALTA said that the report of Sri Lanka suggested that there was alarming internal violence between the minority Tamil community and the Sinhalese. He welcomed the recent contact between the Government and the Tamil terrorist groups, which had led to a cessation of hostilities since June 1985, as well as the declared commitment of the Government to a political, peaceful and lasting solution.

30. He wondered whether the 93,000 stateless persons mentioned in paragraph 14 of the report were refugees from other continents or whether they had lived for some time in Sri Lanka. He would also welcome information on the causes of the violence and the reasons for the separatist trends.

31. It would be interesting to learn whether the Government still maintained its policy of having no relations with South Africa. He also wished to have information on how the rights enumerated in article 5 of the Convention were ensured by the Government, as well as clarification on the manner in which legal policies and appeal procedures in cases of racial discrimination were implemented.

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32. Mr. BANTON said that the word "polarization" should send a chill down the spines of Committee members, who had seen the tragic consequences of that process in such countries as India, Pakistan and Burundi. Ethnic polarization was at the root of the tragedy that had been unfolding in Sri Lanka since 1958. Once started, the process was extremely difficult to stop, and to regulate it required political skill. He did not think that the Sinhalese or the Tamils were particularly chauvinistic. All ethnic groups could be chauvinistic given certain circumstances.

33. Combating polarization in Sri Lanka required political responsibility and the maintenance of law and order, as the experience of other countries showed. The army, in its determination to impose order, should not commit atrocities. It was in fact possible for the security forces to make matters worse. He wondered whether the police in Sri Lanka were underpaid, undertrained and under strength. If so, that had great bearing on the situation.

34. He regretted that the parliamentary opposition had abdicated its responsibility to the sole Communist member of Parliament.

35. The President of Sri Lanka had stated that the only solution was a military one. The adoption of such a policy could lead to a suspension of civilian government and the loss of the independence of the judiciary.

36. While the report of Sri Lanka did not conform to the revised guidelines, the situation that prevailed in that country required that its report should reflect on the past and look forward to the future.

37. With regard to the policy of the Government on admissions to universities (annex VI of the report), such admissions did not reflect the ethnic composition of the population. Additional information provided by a professor of law at a well-known university in the United States had indicated that the percentage of Tamil students pursuing university studies in various branches of science had significantly decreased between 1970 and 1975. Tamil-speaking Sri Lankans had contributed greatly to the country's development. However, the inflexible approach of the Government had signalled to qualified Tamil youths that they could not look forward to equal competition with other citizens in their country, and that had reinforced the separatist tendency within the Tamil community.

38. The issue of devolution was a complex one. It seemed, however, that devolution did not meet the legitimate expectations of the Tamil community.

(Mr. Banton)

39. The Government of Sri Lanka bore political responsibility for the strong anti-Tamil sentiment in southern Sri Lanka, where very few Tamils lived.
40. He wished to know whether the representative of Sri Lanka shared the conclusions of Mr. Paul Sieghart, Chairman of the Executive Committee of Justice, the British section of the International Commission of Jurists, contained in the report entitled "Sri Lanka - A Mounting Tragedy of Errors" published in March 1984.
41. Mr. KARASIMEONOV said that the report was interesting and thought-provoking, although he agreed with other speakers about the difficulties encountered because it had not been presented according to the guidelines. Nevertheless, he understood that the ethnic crisis in Sri Lanka should lie at the centre of the report. As a member of the Committee, he saw his role as that of assisting the people and the Government of Sri Lanka to overcome their difficulties and achieve reunification and equality for all. He appreciated India's good will in offering its assistance.
42. He requested the representative of Sri Lanka to elaborate on the social and economic roots of the crisis and to indicate what social and economic differences existed between the two groups concerned.
43. He wished to be informed about the class and caste differences in Sri Lanka and whether they concerned both the Sinhalese and the Tamil populations. He would also be interested in hearing about recent developments in Sri Lanka's well-known anti-apartheid struggle.
44. Lastly, he hoped that Mr. Banton, when speaking about polarization, had not forgotten the unfortunate role of the colonial Power in the development of polarization in Sri Lanka and India, and also in Malaysia.
45. Mr. ČIČANOVIĆ joined his colleagues in praising the report, although it was short. He emphasized the Committee's wish to help the Sri Lankan Government to solve its problem in a manner satisfactory to all concerned and hoped that peace and order would be restored.
46. He would welcome some explanation regarding the three rather different elements mentioned in paragraph 2 of the report namely, terrorist violence, communal disturbances and the minority Tamil community. He felt that the three categories should be clearly distinguished and that terrorism should be considered quite separately.

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(Mr. Čičanović)

47. Although the historical background to the distribution of the population had been given in annex II to the report, he had had difficulty in understanding the real difference between the Sinhalese and Tamil peoples. Since it was stated in that annex that there was no evidence to indicate that the Sinhalese and the Tamil sects had kept their ethnic identities distinct, he wondered what were the differences between them around which the whole issue appeared to revolve.

48. He welcomed the reference in paragraph 4 to the search for a political solution, since he believed that it would exclude violence. He also noted that in introducing the report the representative of Sri Lanka had indicated his Government's determination to follow a peaceful path.

49. He hoped that the next report would be more detailed, that it would be presented in accordance with the revised guidelines, and that the difficult situation currently facing Sri Lanka would by then have been resolved.

50. Mr. YUTZIS said he was grateful for Sri Lanka's willingness to maintain a dialogue with the Committee. The report depicted a very complex situation of internal violence, but there was no reason why the presentation of the report should not have been in keeping with the guidelines.

51. He had found nothing in Sri Lanka's previous report concerning the measures called for in article 4 of the Convention. There had been very little concerning article 5 in either report, and he was seriously concerned about the possible violation of human rights in connection with article 6.

52. In the second report, he had noticed a marked tendency to characterize the Tamil community as the only guilty party in the current situation. It was a common human tendency to attach all the negative aspects of a situation to the other party, and he questioned whether it was possible for the faults to lie on one side only in a shared social situation. The central problem seemed to be not just the violence of certain groups of the Tamil community, but the fact that the Government was not addressing the underlying causes. He considered it extremely dangerous that the Government should counter violence with violence. It was the duty of any State to combat violence without suspending constitutional guarantees. Official and unofficial information seemed to indicate that the Government was reacting excessively against the Tamil community in a way that was not so much affecting the persons committing the violence, as those who were caught in the middle of such

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(Mr. Yutzis)

conflict. He would therefore like the representative of Sri Lanka to transmit to his Government a request that it should seek a constitutional solution to the problem that did not harm people caught in the middle, and that it should not be tempted by the irrational approach sometimes taken by human beings that all the right lay on their side.

53. Mr. SHERIFIS said that the report was an unusual one because the circumstances prevailing in the reporting State were unusual: it was appropriate that the report had focused on the civil strife and the efforts undertaken to end it.

54. With reference to paragraph 8 of the report, he had been saddened to learn that the current estimate of persons displaced as a result of the situation had risen to some 150,000. He felt that there was no need to refer to specific articles of the Convention: those displaced persons' rights had been violated almost in toto. He hoped that they would still have the right to freedom of movement and residence and that a peaceful political solution could be found that would guarantee the civil, political and human rights of all citizens, irrespective of their ethnic origin or religion. There were two prerequisites for a just and lasting solution: all rights under the Convention, including those referred to in article 5, must be observed and guaranteed; and the efforts to partition the country mentioned in paragraph 6 of the report must be abandoned.

55. The efforts of the President of Sri Lanka and the co-operation extended by the Prime Minister of India referred to in paragraph 4 of the report were encouraging and he hoped that they would bear fruit.

56. He welcomed the policy of the reporting State with respect to article 3 of the Convention, its participation in international efforts to eradicate racism and its stand with regard to the problems of southern Africa in general and Namibia in particular.

57. Mr. ABOUL-NASR, referring to what Mr. Banton had called "ethnic polarization" in many parts of the world, said that it was not wise to dig into the past and make accusations. It was extremely difficult to identify who was responsible for certain situations. He hoped that the Committee, in examining the report, would be concerned with the unity and territorial integrity of Sri Lanka and the preservation of social justice in that country. He shared Mr. Yutzis' hope that it would be recognized that there were rights and wrongs on both sides.

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(Mr. Aboul-Nasr)

58. He had never expected Sri Lanka's report to conform to the guidelines rather than deal with the current situation. He hoped that in its next report Sri Lanka would be able to inform the Committee that the problem confronting that country had been solved.

59. Mr. SHAHI said he appreciated the prompt submission of the second report, in spite of the difficult situation, and also the statement by the representative of Sri Lanka in which he had provided information on the important political developments since September 1985, when the report had been submitted.

60. The scale of violence in Sri Lanka was very great and excesses had been committed both by Tamil elements and by the Government security forces. Passions were running high and there was an element of religious antagonism in addition to racial antagonism. He understood the concern expressed with regard to compliance with article 5, but at the same time it was necessary to take note of the violent situation. He therefore had no comments to make except that a political solution must be sought in the framework of the country's territorial integrity and unity. Good faith and a compromise was needed on both sides. The failure to achieve a solution that would result from insistence on a "maximalist" position would outweigh any possible psychological advantages.

61. He inquired whether the representative of Sri Lanka was in a position to amplify the statement made in the last sentence of paragraph 3 of the report, as well as the reference in paragraph 6 to the declared policies of the Government as well as non-Government opposition parties, all of whom were united in their commitment to the maintenance of the unitary multi-communal, multi-religious status of Sri Lanka. The situation was a delicate one: perhaps the representative of Sri Lanka would indicate the extent of devolution that might have been proposed or discussed in the intercommunal talks held with the assistance of the Government of India.

62. Mr. SUNIL DE SILVA (Sri Lanka) said he would answer the simplest of the Committee's questions at the current meeting and other, more difficult, questions at the 765th meeting. The most complex questions, which could not be answered in such a short period of time, would be dealt with in the third periodic report.

63. His Government had obviously misunderstood what it was the Committee wished to have included in reports. The Sri Lankan Government had thought that the

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(Mr. Sunil de Silva, Sri Lanka)

implementation of the Convention on article-by-article basis was to be discussed only in the initial report, with subsequent reports simply bringing the Committee up to date on any legislative or related developments and answering the questions raised during consideration of the previous report. In the case of the report before the Committee, the Sri Lankan Government had focused primarily on the country's current problems, which were directly related to the Convention. However, now that he had a clearer understanding of the Committee's guidelines, he was sure that his Government would comply with them in the preparation of the third periodic report.

64. No caste system existed under Buddhism. However, not all Sinhalese were Buddhists. Prior to the advent of Buddhism in Sri Lanka, Sinhalese families had been classified according to occupational group, as successive generations of one family tended to follow the same trade, and some vestiges of that system remained.

65. All schools in Sri Lanka taught the Sinhala and Tamil languages. Students were placed in classes according to the ethnic group to which their parents belonged, with students whose parents belonged to two different ethnic groups entitled to choose their language. The statistics cited by Mrs. Sadiq Ali with regard to the admission policy of the University Grants Commission proved conclusively that the apportionment of places in Sri Lankan universities was not made on ethnic grounds. Admissions quotas were determined on the basis of administrative districts, regardless of the ethnic background of students from those districts.

66. He had been asked whether irrigation and other development projects would be set up in the northern and eastern provinces of the country. Such projects were largely financed by donor countries and international financial institutions such as the World Bank, which invariably carried out studies to identify possible project sites. Certain provinces were better endowed with natural resources, and were consequently more likely to be chosen as project sites. However, the Government was attempting to see that the benefits of those projects were enjoyed by other provinces as well. Other factors were also responsible for the determination of project locations: he had learned only that morning that a project financed with Canadian aid in the northern part of the country had had to be abandoned as a result of terrorist activity there. Given the complexity of the issue, information regarding land settlement would be provided in the next report.

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(Mr. Sunil de Silva, Sri Lanka)

67. Mr. Banton had indeed touched upon the crux of the current problems in Sri Lanka when he had spoken of polarization. Polarization was the goal, not of the Sri Lankan Government, but of certain groups within the country which claimed that certain parts of the national territory were theirs alone.
68. It was a mistake to state that the report implied that the Tamil community was to blame for the current problems in Sri Lanka. Only a small number of Tamils were so involved. Tamils in fact held many government positions, and, thus could hardly be considered to be terrorists. It should also be noted that the Government sought to enter into negotiations with moderate groups within the country, who, unfortunately, were not given free reign to do so by extremist groups.
69. The fact that the report discussed only those things that had exacerbated, rather than caused, the current problems in Sri Lanka was an oversight.
70. No racial distinction could be made between the Sinhalese and Tamil communities. All had come originally from India, albeit at different times. Consequently, no specific area of the country could be described as being the historic homeland of either the Sinhala or the Tamil group.
71. The "stateless persons" mentioned in paragraph 14 of the report were Tamils who had been brought from India by the British in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries to work on plantations. Following independence in 1948, detailed arrangements had been worked out to determine the percentage of those Tamils to be repatriated and the percentage to be absorbed by Sri Lanka. The question had been solved only recently, when some 90,000 such persons had been given Sri Lankan citizenship by an act of Parliament. In connection with the report to which Mr. Banton had referred, he noted that between 300 and 400 cases had been filed with the courts in connection with the recent violence in Sri Lanka, with decisions still pending in many of them. As of 31 January 1986, some 81 inquests had been carried out in connection with deaths caused by the security forces during the period of violence, and the verdicts had been forwarded to the Commission on Human Rights.
72. The Government had given equally lenient treatment to the militants and the security forces, except in instances involving violations of rights. While an individual could, under Sri Lankan law, which was based on the common-law system, plead diminished responsibility as a defence, it was impossible for a group to do

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(Mr. Sunil de Silva, Sri Lanka)

so. Thus if a group of security forces was alleged to have committed a crime, the group as a whole could not be convicted unless it could be proved that they had a common intent or were guilty of unlawful assembly. As a result, the Government was frequently compelled to try such cases under military law. It should be noted that, as yet, there had been no cases in which witnesses were willing to speak out against the security forces.

73. Mr. PARTSCH said that, according to the definition of race in article 1 of the Convention, the term did not necessarily imply distinctions made on genetic grounds. Studies on the subject of race by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) had shown that racial differences were more social than genetic, and involved such factors as language and traditions. For example, an Italian gastarbeiter from Verona working in a Munich factory was clearly a genetic descendant of the Langobards, a Germanic tribe which had migrated to Italy during the Middle Ages, yet such an individual clearly belonged to a different ethnic group than a contemporary German. Consequently, an important criterion in determining race was whether or not an individual was regarded as being, or considered himself to be, a foreigner.

74. Mr. YUTZIS agreed that the notion of races as being genetically separable was false, even from a scientific viewpoint. As that erroneous concept had in fact been used to justify many forms of colonialism and slavery, it was imperative that it should be eliminated.

75. Mr. SHAHI noted that annex II to the report claimed that the Sinhalese were of Aryan origin, whereas the Tamils were of Dravidian origin. Those basic ethnic differences implied linguistic and other socio-cultural differences. It was thus clear that the Sinhala and Tamil were distinct ethnic, and perhaps even racial, groups.

76. The CHAIRMAN drew attention to article 1, paragraph 1, of the UNESCO Declaration on Race and Racial Prejudice, which stated: "All human beings belong to a single species and are descended from a common stock".

77. Mr. BANTON suggested that the Committee should set aside a time in which to discuss the terminology to be used in periodic reports of States parties. Such a meeting would make it unnecessary to discuss such questions while the Committee was actually considering reports.

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78. Mr. SUNIL DE SILVA (Sri Lanka) pointed out that linguistic considerations were not a good way to determine race. Just as all speakers of English did not belong to the English race, so all Sinhalese speakers did not belong to the Sinhala race. Such distinctions became blurred in Sri Lanka, where, for example, citizens of Moorish origin might speak both Sinhala and Tamil. He agreed with Mr. Banton that the Committee should be clear as to the terminology to be used in reports.

The meeting rose at 6.05 p.m.