



International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination

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Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination 108th session

Summary record (partial)* of the 2926th meeting

Held at the Palais Wilson, Geneva, on Monday, 14 November 2022, at 10 a.m.

Chair: Ms. Shepherd

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* No summary record was prepared for the rest of the meeting.

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The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

Opening of the session

1. **The Chair** declared open the 108th session of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination.
2. **Mr. Cissé-Gouro** (Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)) said that the new United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Mr. Volker Türk, had taken up his functions on 17 October 2022 and had immediately signalled his wish to cooperate with and to provide strong support for the treaty bodies. The Office was grateful to the Committee for its commitment to strengthening the treaty body system, noting that the Committee had agreed with all other treaty bodies to establish a predictable schedule of country reviews, with an eight-year cycle for full reviews and follow-up reviews in between. The Secretary-General's report on the status of the treaty body system ([A/77/279](#)) included information on the Chairs' proposal for a new predictable schedule of reviews. Member States would now decide how the treaty body strengthening process should proceed. The report stressed the importance of ensuring the sustainable financing of the treaty body system, in a forward-looking manner, in order to implement the predictable schedule. Both the Office and the Chairs of the treaty bodies had conveyed that same message to Member States at the General Assembly.
3. The coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic had revealed the increasing complexity of structural racism and racial discrimination and the interrelatedness of all human rights. The pandemic had aggravated pre-existing socioeconomic gaps and inequalities between and within nations and had prevented the most vulnerable members of society, especially women belonging to minorities and Indigenous women, from fully enjoying their human rights on an equal footing with others. Addressing the consequences of the pandemic and ensuring a sustainable recovery required a human rights perspective that included the elimination of racial discrimination and the promotion of equality, taking intersectional factors into consideration.
4. The fight against racial discrimination required global efforts and synergies. Accordingly, the Committee should work with other human rights mechanisms mandated to address racial discrimination, in order to urgently tackle factors such as systemic and structural racism, legacies of colonialism and doctrines of racial superiority, whose consequences weighed on every aspect of victims' lives. In that regard, he drew the Committee's attention to the thematic study by the Expert Mechanism on the Right to Development on racism, racial discrimination and the right to development ([A/HRC/51/37](#)), presented to the Human Rights Council at its fifty-first session, which treated racism and racial discrimination as barriers to the implementation of the right to development and called on States to take proactive, targeted measures to protect vulnerable individuals and communities, to uphold the rights to health, housing, employment and education and to prevent police violence and negative stereotyping in the media.
5. The High Commissioner's report entitled "Promotion and protection of the human rights and fundamental freedoms of Africans and of people of African descent against excessive use of force and other human rights violations by law enforcement officers through transformative change for racial justice and equality" ([A/HRC/51/53](#)), also presented at the Council's fifty-first session, contained information on developments and initiatives taken by States and others to address manifestations of systemic racism and to advance accountability and redress for victims, including for legacies of slavery, the transatlantic trade in enslaved Africans and colonialism. The High Commissioner reiterated the call for States to step up the implementation of the 20 actions contained in the agenda towards transformative change for racial justice and equality.
6. The Independent Expert Mechanism to Advance Racial Justice and Equality in Law Enforcement had also presented its report ([A/HRC/51/55](#)) to the Council, followed by an interactive dialogue. Such dialogues would henceforth be placed on the Council's agenda.
7. Furthermore, a panel discussion on the negative impact of the legacies of colonialism on the enjoyment of human rights had been held at the Council on 28 September 2022. In her opening statement, the Acting High Commissioner for Human Rights had underscored the

need for stronger political leadership, sincere dialogue and effective and comprehensive responses to address the impact of legacies of colonialism and their links with contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination and inequality, and for the identification and in-depth analysis of structures, laws and policies that perpetuated discrimination, marginalization and exclusion. She had highlighted that the recommendations of United Nations mechanisms, the political commitments made in the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action and the obligations set forth in the Convention were tools that could help States parties address the negative impact of legacies of colonialism on human rights and advance accountability and redress for Africans and people of African descent.

8. The Permanent Forum on People of African Descent would be held in early December. He encouraged the Committee to work with the new mechanism to build synergies to combat racial discrimination more effectively.

9. **Ms. Stavrinaki** (Vice-Chair) said that, during the Committee's 108th session, it would continue to develop its future general recommendation on racial discrimination and the right to health. In particular, it would consider a preliminary draft, taking note of the statements made by States parties, international organizations, national human rights institutions and civil society organizations during the day of general discussion held at the previous session ([CERD/C/SR.2914](#)). Once adopted, the draft would be published on the Committee's website and States parties, experts and other stakeholders would be invited to submit further comments.

10. **Mr. Balcerzak** (Vice-Chair) said that the Committee had a full agenda. Besides reviewing the reports of six States parties, it would consider individual communications and take decisions under its early warning and urgent action procedure. It would also continue its dialogue with relevant international and regional mechanisms, including the Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent.

11. **The Chair** said that the Committee would consider many problems that marginalized groups continued to face, including legacies of colonialism, the ongoing effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, climate change and hate speech and incitement to violence on social media. The Committee would not dwell upon past accomplishments but would focus on future progress and on holding States accountable with respect to their treaty obligations.

Adoption of the agenda ([CERD/C/108/1](#))

12. *The agenda was adopted.*

The discussion covered in the summary record ended at 10.35 a.m.