



**International Convention on  
the Elimination of All Forms  
of Racial Discrimination**

Distr.: General  
19 August 2011

Original: English

---

**Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination**  
**Seventy-ninth session**

**Summary record of the first part (public)\* of the 2099th meeting**

Held at the Palais Wilson, Geneva, on Monday, 15 August 2011, at 10 a.m.

*Chairperson:* Mr. Kemal

**Contents**

Informal meeting with non-governmental organizations

*Information relating to the fourth and fifth periodic reports of Georgia*

*Information relating to the nineteenth to twenty-first periodic reports of Ukraine*

---

\* The summary record of the second part (closed) of the meeting appears as document CERD/C/SR.2099/Add.1.

---

This record is subject to correction.

Corrections should be submitted in one of the working languages. They should be set forth in a memorandum and also incorporated in a copy of the record. They should be sent *within one week of the date of this document* to the Editing Unit, room E.4108, Palais des Nations, Geneva.

Any corrections to the records of the public meetings of the Committee at this session will be consolidated in a single corrigendum, to be issued shortly after the end of the session.

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

### **Informal meeting with non-governmental organizations**

*Information relating to the fourth and fifth periodic reports of Georgia  
(CERD/C/GEO/4-5)*

1. **Mr. Devdariani** (Civil Development Agency) said that the Civil Development Agency was a leading NGO advocate for the human rights of disadvantaged people in Georgia. Although it had been established in 2002 in the Kvemo Kartli region, its work extended to the whole of eastern Georgia. The Agency focused on the integration of internally displaced persons, ethnic minorities and other marginalized groups into the community. It also promoted self-help activities by encouraging tolerance and integration, community mobilization, economic development and capacity-building, and supported local populations through advocacy of civic participation, networking of civil society organizations, public-sector training and development of independent media.
2. In 2011 the Agency had created regional civil integration working groups and multi-ethnic confidence-building networks composed of local civil society organizations, informal community leaders and local self-government institutions. The institutions also monitored the implementation of the National Concept and Action Plan for Tolerance and Civil Integration (2009–2014).
3. The Agency's report to the Committee was based on a survey implemented within the framework of the Multiethnic Confidence-Building Network supported by the United Nations Development Programme and contained basic information concerning the Kvemo Kartli and Samtskhe-Javakheti regions, which were densely populated by ethnic minorities.
4. He welcomed the latest amendments to the Georgian Civil Code concerning the status of religious denominations, which could now register as private non-profit-making legal entities or public-law entities.
5. With regard to the teaching of the State language, Georgian, and access to education, the State had implemented several important reforms, such as the establishment of "Language Houses" in the regions inhabited by national minorities, the introduction of bilingual education into State schools, the translation of textbooks into minority languages, amendments to educational legislation that set a minimum quota in universities for members of national minorities, and the introduction of aptitude tests in their native language for enrolment of national minorities in institutions of higher education.
6. According to surveys conducted by his organization, approximately 10 per cent more student members of national minorities now spoke Georgian than in 2009. However, 80 per cent of respondents still saw a need for language courses, especially in rural areas. The number of Language Houses should clearly be increased and existing Houses should provide more diverse services. According to the recent survey, 27.3 per cent of respondents, especially representatives of national minorities, had not heard about the amendments to educational legislation. While 48.3 per cent of non-Georgian respondents believed that the amendments were helpful, only 30 per cent of Georgian respondents shared that opinion. A more active awareness campaign should therefore be conducted to highlight the importance of the amendments.
7. Lack of knowledge of the Georgian language was a serious impediment to the integration of national minorities. It adversely affected participation in social and political life, access to employment, opportunities to be elected and appointed to public positions, and access to information concerning the situation in the country.
8. Almost two thirds of the non-Georgian population of Samtskhe-Javakheti received their information in Russian and Armenian. More than one quarter of the non-Georgian

population of Kvemo Kartli received information in Russian and more than one half in Azerbaijani. Although the public broadcasting authority had issued contracts to regional television channels and developed several programmes in the Armenian, Azerbaijani, Ossetian and Abkhazian languages for national minorities, technical problems prevented the authority from covering the whole of Georgia, news prepared in minority languages was not aired during prime time and regional television channels were not popular because of their inadequate quality. Such shortcomings adversely affected the process of integration of national minorities.

9. Two major infrastructural projects had recently been implemented. The “village support project” and the “municipality development project” focused on road rehabilitation, improvement of drinking water supply and the irrigation system, and upgrading of cultural and musical centres and libraries. Nevertheless, national minorities still perceived their existing infrastructural needs as acute. According to a survey conducted by his organization, drinking water supply constituted a problem for 30.7 per cent of respondents in Kvemo Kartli and natural gas supply constituted a problem for 34.8 per cent.

10. Up to 70 per cent of the respondents in the two regions covered by the survey regarded employment as the most serious issue. Other problem areas were access to health-care services and access to education.

11. The Government should step up its efforts to address the needs of national minorities. A well-developed infrastructure was essential for their integration and it was also vitally important to improve the economic situation of regions that were densely populated by national minorities.

12. At the same time, he emphasized the positive attitude of national minorities towards Georgia. According to the Agency’s survey, 75 per cent of national minority respondents designated Georgia as their homeland and around 90 per cent associated Georgia with their plans for the future.

13. **Mr. Dzhussoev** (International Association of Ossetian Organizations “Renaissance”) said that Georgia presented itself in its periodic report to the Committee as a country with diverse ethnic, cultural, linguistic and religious points of view. The Constitution guaranteed the rights of persons belonging to national minorities and prohibited discrimination, including discrimination based on ethnicity and religion. However, full integration of all national minorities into Georgia remained an ongoing task for the Government in the aftermath of the “Rose Revolution”.

14. In its 2010 draft resolution on the implementation by Georgia of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe had noted that the main problem faced by the authorities consisted in guaranteeing the linguistic rights of national minorities. Although the Georgian authorities sought to provide education in the Georgian language for national minorities, their efforts clearly fell short of existing needs.

15. The participation of national minorities in the cultural, social, economic and socio-political spheres was limited and the impact on the situation of the increase in interdenominational tensions was a source of concern.

16. There were reports of torture, inhuman treatment, arbitrary detention and excessive use of force, including against national minorities, by the law enforcement agencies.

17. On joining the Council of Europe in 1999, Georgia had undertaken to enact a law on the repatriation of the Meskheta Turks within two years. Under the law, they were to be given access to Georgian citizenship and provision was to be made for their return within the subsequent 10 years (i.e., by the end of 2011). On 1 January 2008 a law on the “Repatriation of Persons Forcefully Sent into Exile from the Soviet Socialist Republic of

Georgia by the Former USSR in the Fourth Decade of the Twentieth Century” had entered into effect. It covered persons displaced from Georgia by a resolution of 31 July 1944 adopted by the Soviet Union’s State Committee of Defence as well as their direct descendants who could provide documents confirming their displacement. Spouses and underage children of such persons could benefit from the law if the latter submitted an application on their behalf. There was no reference in the law to the ethnicity of the persons entitled to repatriation. It was declaratory in many respects and offered no real incentives or guarantees. The authorities did not assume responsibility for the provision of housing, jobs or material assistance to the repatriates, and the process of return was complicated by restrictions and bureaucratic conditions. The initial strict time frame, requiring applications to be submitted by 31 December 2008, had been extended three times under pressure from international organizations and Meskheta NGOs. The final deadline was 1 May 2010. It had also been difficult for applicants to provide notarized documents to their local Georgian embassy in the Georgian or English language and to pass a test in the Georgian language, history and Constitution. Moreover, applicants were required to revoke their current citizenship without any guarantee of acquiring Georgian citizenship, which was provided individually by presidential decree.

18. In July 2010 Süleyman Barbakadze, Chairman of the Meskheta NGO Vatan, who had come to Georgia to deal with repatriation issues, had been arrested and imprisoned on a trumped-up fraud charge. His son and the leadership of Vatan had addressed appeals to the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights, but their efforts had proved fruitless. In January 2011 Süleyman Barbakadze had been sentenced to 11 years’ imprisonment and a heavy fine.

19. The Azerbaijanis were the biggest national minority in Georgia, numbering approximately 300,000 inhabitants. They were deliberately discriminated against by the Georgian authorities. The number of Azerbaijani secondary schools had been systematically reduced in the Kvemo Kartli region and employers gave priority to ethnic Georgians. Incidents in December 2004 and March 2006 had also led to inter-ethnic tensions.

20. The Georgian leadership continued to defer action to address the problem of funding of the Azerbaijani regions, which had an extremely negative impact on their economic and social development. Almost all areas suitable for agricultural cultivation in Kvemo Kartli had been allotted to Georgian tenants and only a small portion to local Azerbaijani residents.

21. The Cultural Heritage Law, which imposed additional taxation on residents of the historic part of Tbilisi, had infringed the rights of ethnic Azerbaijanis, who were concentrated in that area and belonged for the most part to the less well off strata of society. Representatives of the Azerbaijani community claimed that economic pressure was being used to drive Azerbaijanis out of the capital.

22. A recent anti-Azerbaijani measure that had elicited a strong response was the posting of a map on an official State website on which Azerbaijani villages had been given Georgian names. The 5 villages in Marneuli and 12 in Tsalka were all in the Kvemo Kartli region (Borchali in the Azerbaijani language). Some 38 settlements had been renamed since the 1990s. Such action offended the national feelings of the local population and undermined the authority of the Georgian leadership, encouraging resettlement in Azerbaijan.

23. According to official data, the Armenian community in Georgia numbered 246,000 inhabitants. However, there was heavy emigration to the Russian Federation, Greece and other European countries, mostly on account of the difficult socio-economic situation and

unemployment in Georgia. Most of the Armenian intelligentsia and more dynamic members of the community had fled the country in the 1990s.

24. A bilingual education system had been introduced pursuant to a decision of the Georgian Government. Under the system, Armenian schoolchildren were taught all school subjects in their native language only at the primary level. Subjects of further study such as chemistry, physics and mathematics were taught in the Georgian language. The history of Armenia was taught in the Armenian language.

25. The socio-economic situation in the Armenian-populated region of Samtskhe-Dzhavakheti (Dzhavakh in Armenian) was disastrous. About 40 per cent of the population were forced to emigrate to the Russian Federation during the winter to earn a living. Georgians were appointed to most administrative positions in local governing bodies.

26. In January 2009 the Director of the Akhaltsikhe Armenian youth centre, Grigor Minasyan, and the President of the Charles Aznavour charity organization, Sargis Akopdzhanyan, had been arrested by the Georgian authorities on charges of separatist activities and espionage. The action had been unanimously condemned by Armenian public organizations in both Georgia and Armenia (including at the parliamentary level). In June 2009 Georgian border guards had prevented Shirak Torosyan, a member of the Armenian National Assembly and the Chairman of the Dzhavakh expatriates' union, from entering Georgia.

27. As there was no law concerning religion in Georgia, the Armenian Apostolic Church had no official status. The Georgian Orthodox Church laid claim to the Armenian churches of Surb Gevorg (Norashen) and Echmiadzin in Tbilisi, since their ownership was not specified in any legal document.

28. Between 1990 and 1992, over 100,000 Ossetians had fled from ethnic cleansing operations in Georgia. Nine villages in Gidzhareti gorge as well as Sakavre, Pitsesi and other villages in the Gori and Kareli districts were now completely depopulated.

29. According to the last population census conducted in the Soviet Union in 1989, 126,000 Ossetians lived at that time in the Georgian Soviet Socialist Republic, excluding the South Ossetian Autonomous Region. According to the Georgian population census of 2002, only 36,000 Ossetians lived in Georgia. Most of the remaining inhabitants had sought refuge in the Russian Federation and some were refugees in the Republic of South Ossetia. The overwhelming majority were still displaced.

30. Tens of thousands of descendants of the Ossetian refugees from South Ossetia, who had survived the massacre committed by the troops of the Democratic Republic of Georgia in June 1920, lived in the Republic of North Ossetia-Alania in the Russian Federation. Their property had not been restored, their losses had not been reimbursed and the damage inflicted had not been assessed. The Law on Property Restitution and Compensation for the Victims of Conflict in the Former South Ossetian Autonomous District in the Territory of Georgia, which had been heavily criticized by both the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the European Commission for Democracy through Law (the Venice Commission), remained a dead letter. No Ossetian could win a property recovery action in the Georgian courts.

31. In 2011 the Georgian delegation to the sixty-fifth session of the General Assembly had submitted for the fourth time a draft resolution entitled "Status of internally displaced persons and refugees from Abkhazia, Georgia, and the Tskhinvali region/South Ossetia, Georgia". It concerned ethnic Georgians who had been displaced when the Georgian army had attacked South Ossetia. How could more than 50 delegations vote for an unjust draft resolution that denied rights for Ossetians and proclaimed them for Georgians? A resolution that asserted Georgian rights in respect of the territories of other States merely escalated

existing tensions. As Georgia flatly refused to sign peace agreements with South Ossetia and Abkhazia, so that the threat of a fresh Georgian attack persisted, the issue of the return of refugees who had escaped the war looked like an attempt to manipulate poor people who had become hostages to political interests.

32. The Ossetian population of Georgia, which had greatly diminished as a result of the mass expulsion in 1991–1992, continued to suffer discrimination. Most Ossetian schools had been closed. The residents of the village of Bolkvi in the Lagodekhi district were Ossetians and there had earlier been a Russian school, which also taught the Ossetian language. Pupils could continue their education in a secondary school in the village of Areshperan, where tuition was also provided through the medium of Russian. The Areshperan school had been repaired, converted into a Georgian school and reopened in 2011 at a ceremony attended by President Saakashvili. The school in Bolkvi had been closed down on the pretext of necessary repairs. Seven of its 13 teachers had been hired by the Areshperan school but their salaries had been reduced by more than half. The repairs to the Bolkvi school had never been undertaken. Children who had been taught through the medium of Russian and who did not speak Georgian were required to continue their schooling in the Georgian language. The difficult social and humanitarian situation was aggravated by the fact that there had been no functioning kindergarten, medical centre or sports ground in Bolkvi for a number of years. Multiple appeals by the local population to public institutions and efforts by Guram Kakalashvili, a Member of Parliament, had met with no response.

33. In 2007, at the request of Merab Gazzashvili, Chairman of the Union of Ossetian People in Georgia, the Ministry of Education of the Republic of South Ossetia had provided Ossetian language textbooks for Ossetian children living in Georgia. The initiative had been coordinated with the Ministry of Education of Georgia and Georgian school managers, but the Interior Ministry of Georgia in the town of Gory had confiscated the textbooks. South Ossetia had repeatedly raised the matter with the Georgian authorities and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, but all official channels had ignored its appeals.

34. In 2005 the Georgian Parliament had ratified the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities with several reservations. In particular, it had underlined that it was impossible to guarantee full application of the Convention until the territorial integrity of Georgia was restored. While noting that the State must provide national minorities with facilities to learn the State language, the Parliament had failed to acknowledge the State's commitment to support and promote national minority languages. The Parliament also continued to delay ratification of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages.

35. **Mr. Avtonomov** asked whether the Georgian names given to Azerbaijani villages involved an official change of name or merely their designation on the map.

36. He asked for information about the official status of Azerbaijani schools.

37. **Mr. Sanakoev** (International Association of Ossetian Organization "Renaissance") said that local people still called the villages by their original Azerbaijani names. Official policy was for a gradual move towards using the Georgian names. It was important to ensure that any renaming took place with the agreement of local people.

38. School programmes for the teaching of minorities were not as active as claimed. Specific information about the number of schools or the use of the Azerbaijani language was not available.

39. **Mr. Devdariani** (Civil Development Agency) said that there were more than 2,000 schools in Georgia of which 350 were non-Georgian. They included 89 Azerbaijani

schools, 9 Russian schools and 133 mixed schools where education took place in two languages.

40. The Ministry of Education and Science was continuing its reforms. That included the distribution of books on Georgian history and geography, both in Georgian and in minority languages such as Russian, Armenian and Azerbaijani.

41. Georgia had a school offering annual courses in Georgian for members of national minorities employed by the State. Between 2006 and 2009, 100 Azerbaijani and 100 Armenian students had trained there.

42. Georgia had recently closed a number of schools of all kinds as part of a programme to optimize its education system. However, the Ministry of Education was supporting a minority-language protection programme which involved the financing of Ossetian schools.

43. The main problem affecting all schools in Georgia was a lack of qualified teachers. The translation of textbooks also posed considerable difficulties.

44. The question of Azerbaijani villages given Georgian names had been raised in the report submitted to the Committee by the Human Rights Monitoring Group of Ethnic Minorities, which contained a list of about 40 villages affected. He did not know if the changes had been agreed with the inhabitants.

45. **Mr. Sanakoev** (International Association of Ossetian Organizations “Renaissance”) said that the linguistic issues discussed had existed for a long time. If reforms continued to drag out over decades, the number of speakers of minority languages would decrease, as they continued to emigrate precisely because they did not have sufficient opportunity to study in their own languages.

46. **Mr. Diaconu** (Country Rapporteur) noted that the meeting was not the place for NGOs to enter into dialogue with one another, but to report to the Committee and to answer questions.

47. Georgian was the official language of the State. Much remained to be done in regard to the teaching of Georgian, but minorities unquestionably had to learn it as a second language in order to be able to exercise their political rights and to access higher education.

48. The fact that Azerbaijani villages were given Georgian names on an official State website might not be significant; what counted was the real situation. He would like to know to what community the majority of the inhabitants of the villages concerned belonged, and whether consideration had been given to putting up bilingual road signs.

49. He would also welcome information on how many Ossetians were currently on territory under Georgian State control and what their situation was.

50. **Ms. Crickley** expressed concern that the situations described could conceal elements of racial discrimination. She enquired whether the NGOs present could provide information about the discrimination being experienced by Roma, an issue which had been raised in the concluding observations on the previous periodic report of Georgia (CERD/C/GEO/CO/3).

51. She requested further information about the racial discrimination experienced by women from minorities.

52. **Mr. de Gouttes** asked for further clarification about information contained in a report published in 2010 by the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance, which had highlighted a worrying increase in acts of discrimination and racism in Georgia since the armed conflict of 2008, including xenophobic discourse and stereotyping directed against minority groups by politicians and the media.

53. **Mr. Sanakoev** (International Association of Ossetian Organization “Renaissance”) said that Ossetians in Georgia currently numbered around 33,000. However, they continued to leave and, although the exodus was not as large as in 2008, it included many young Ossetians who did not want to serve in an army that might again attack the Republic of South Ossetia.

54. All available information was contained in the alternative report, which only went up to 2008 because of current difficulties in contacting organizations inside Georgia.

55. **Mr. Devdariani** (Civil Development Agency) acknowledged past difficulties with textbooks in minority languages, but noted that the Ministry of Education had adopted a new strategy on language education in schools for ethnic minorities, including the distribution of new school textbooks which would meet national and international standards.

56. Road signs were currently in Georgian and English, but not in minority languages.

57. There were about 1,000 Roma in Georgia. Many of them were not registered with identity documents and, although a number of international organizations were working to improve their social and economic integration, that would be ineffective unless the question of registration was resolved.

58. Xenophobic propaganda did exist in Georgia but it was not widespread. Politicians and other public figures had made comments of a xenophobic nature but had been harshly reprimanded by the Office of the Ombudsman. Georgian law contained concrete provisions to sanction acts of xenophobia.

*Information relating to the nineteenth to twenty-first periodic reports of Ukraine (CERD/C/UKR/19-21)*

59. **Mr. Shirane** (International Movement against All Forms of Discrimination and Racism) said that, since the representatives of the Foundation for Research and Support of Indigenous Peoples of Crimea were unable to be present, he would deliver a statement on their behalf.

60. Crimean Tatars were an indigenous people of Crimea. Their territory had been annexed to the Russian empire in 1783 and they had been deported to other regions. They had suffered further deportations in 1944. In 1954, while the Crimean Tatars were still in exile, the territory of Crimea had been transferred to the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic. Today, Ukraine continued to use the land and its natural resources, and had taken no measures to restore the rights of the Crimean Tatar people.

61. During the 1944 deportations, Crimean Tatars had lost property, livestock and farmland to the value of more than US\$ 6 billion, all of which had passed to Ukraine.

62. Returning Tatars had been denied the opportunity to claim back land, which had become the private property of people of other nationalities. The average land share for Crimean Tatars in rural areas of Crimea was around 1.47 hectares per head, as compared to 2.35 hectares per head for other groups. In 2000 the Council of Europe had adopted recommendation 1455 concerning the repatriation and integration of the Tatars of Crimea, but it had been practically ignored.

63. The Ukrainian courts refused to consider land restitution claims made by Crimean Tatars on the grounds that there was no special law on the restitution of property to former deportees. The Office of the Ombudsman shared the view of the courts. However, no special law was, in fact, necessary because the current Civil Code, and the former Civil Code which had been in force from 1963 to 2003, included a general provision for the restitution of land. Such inequality before the law affected not only Crimean Tatars but also other indigenous peoples of Crimea.

64. Crimean Tatars had also been excluded from the process of privatization of State property because they had been unable to obtain Ukrainian citizenship prior to 1999. In contrast to Government claims, not one Crimean Tatar had recovered property lost at the time of deportation, or any kind of compensation.

65. Sixty per cent of Crimean Tatars were unemployed or had no source of permanent income. Furthermore, though representing around 14 per cent of the entire population of Crimea, they accounted for only between 2 and 7 per cent of State employees. The persistence of that state of affairs 20 years after Ukraine had obtained its independence could not be seen as anything other than conscious racial discrimination.

66. The Ukrainian authorities falsely claimed that they were striving to open schools where pupils were instructed in Crimean Tatar. In fact, the very few such schools that existed had only been permitted to open following persistent lobbying by Crimean Tatar parents and teachers. Most schools in Crimea were only allowed to teach Crimean Tatar for a maximum of two hours per week and, of 60,000 Crimean Tatar pupils, over 20,000 had no opportunity to study their mother tongue at school.

67. Since the start of Russian involvement in Crimea, there had been a systematic campaign to erase the cultural heritage of Crimean Tatars. That had included the razing of cemeteries and mosques and the expropriation of archaeological artefacts of spiritual and cultural significance. Over 95 per cent of Crimean towns and settlements had once had Tatar names but now had Russian names which Ukraine insisted on retaining. Furthermore, Ukraine was refusing to adopt legislation that would secure the status of the Crimean Tatars as one of the country's indigenous peoples.

68. Ukrainian publications and the country's media continued to portray Crimean Tatars, as well as other Turkic peoples and Muslims in general, in an extremely negative light. Racially motivated vandalism against Crimean Tatar cemeteries, mosques and monuments as well as attacks on Muslim women had occurred in recent years.

69. By its actions, Ukraine was violating articles 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination.

70. Despite the many challenges they faced, Crimean Tatars continued to engage with the international community to resolve their problems. A petition providing accurate information on their situation, and containing over 4,000 Crimean Tatar signatures, had been submitted to the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. A copy of that petition had, moreover, been submitted to the Committee.

71. **Mr. Thornberry** (Country Rapporteur) said that he had hoped to ask a range of Ukrainian NGOs, inter alia, about the situation of Crimean Tatars. He hoped that NGOs from Ukraine would address the Committee later that week. If they did not, the Committee would only be able to ask the Ukrainian Government about its concerns.

72. Articles 11 and 92 of the Ukrainian Constitution referred to the development of the ethnic, cultural, linguistic and religious identities of all indigenous peoples and national minorities of Ukraine. The Committee intended to ask the State party what action it was taking to fully implement its Constitution. Questions would focus on designing legislation to address, inter alia, racial discrimination, hate speech, racial profiling and xenophobia. Many of those issues were, moreover, relevant to the situation of Crimean Tatars, as were some of the responses in the State party's report to the Committee's previous recommendations.

73. Although there was no special law in Ukraine dealing with the restitution of property, the State party maintained that such a law was not required because provisions of its Civil Code that addressed the issue of restitution could apply, inter alia, to Crimean

Tatars. Unfortunately, it appeared that the Code was proving ineffective in resolving cases involving land restitution. He asked Mr. Shirane for his opinion of that matter.

74. He noted that some very strong claims had been made in the NGO statement just delivered. The Committee, in its report, should, nonetheless, rigorously adhere to the language of the Convention.

75. **Mr. Shirane** (International Movement against All Forms of Discrimination and Racism) said that, although he was not in a position to answer the Committee's questions, he would refer them for a response to the Foundation for Research and Support of Indigenous Peoples of Crimea.

76. **Mr. Avtonomov** asked if the Committee would be briefed by Georgian and Ukrainian NGOs.

77. **Ms. Habtom** (Secretary of the Committee) said that the Committee would be briefed by Georgian NGOs the following day. However, no NGOs from Ukraine would be briefing the Committee in Geneva.

78. **The Chairperson** drew attention to a number of high-quality television documentaries that had been made on the deportation of Crimean Tatars.

79. **Mr. Avtonomov** stressed that, in the 1940s and 1950s, many other peoples had been illegally and forcibly deported from Crimea, including Armenians, Greeks and Bulgarians. A study needed to be carried out of all those deportations, with a view to fully addressing the issue of restitution. Furthermore, the Meskhetian Turks had been forcibly deported from Georgia and very few had, to date, been able to return there.

80. **Mr. Kut**, supporting Mr. Avtonomov, asked the Country Rapporteur for assurances that the Committee would work to fully address issues related to the situation of Crimean Tatars.

81. **Mr. Thornberry** gave assurances that the Committee would pursue that and other issues in its dialogue with the State party.

*The public part of the meeting rose at 11.45 a.m.*