



International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination

Distr.: General
10 December 2018

Original: English

Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination Ninety-seventh session

Summary record of the 2694th meeting

Held at the Palais Wilson, Geneva, on Wednesday, 5 December 2018, at 10 a.m.

Chair: Mr. Amir

Contents

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

Combined ninth to twelfth periodic reports of Albania (continued)

This record is subject to correction. Corrections 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 the present record to the Documents Management Section (DMS-DCM@un.org).

Any corrected records of the public meetings of the Committee at this session will be reissued for technical reasons after the end of the session.

GE.18-21153 (E) 071218 101218



* 1 8 2 1 1 5 3 *

Please recycle A small graphic of a recycling symbol consisting of three chasing arrows forming a triangle.



The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

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

Combined ninth to twelfth periodic reports of Albania (continued)
([CERD/C/ALB/9-12](#); [CERD/C/ALB/Q/9-12](#))

1. *At the invitation of the Chair, the delegation of Albania took places at the Committee table.*
2. **The Chair** invited the delegation to continue replying to the questions raised by Committee members at the previous meeting.
3. **Ms. Lleshi** (Albania) said that she wished to assure the Committee that her Government attached great importance to the implementation of the Convention, despite the delays in its reporting. It welcomed the guidance provided by the human rights treaty bodies on improving the quality of its reports. The collection of accurate data on national minorities was essential for the development of government policy.
4. The questions in the 2011 census had been drafted in accordance with the recommendations of the Economic Commission for Europe. National minority organizations had expressed concerns about article 20 of the Law on the Population and Housing Census, which had established a penalty, in the form of a fine, for replies to the questionnaire that did not correspond to the data contained in the civil registry. Those organizations had claimed that the article in question compromised the right to self-identification. The penalty had not been imposed on any respondents. Consultations with representatives of minority groups on the 2020 census had been held the previous day. The 2020 census questionnaire would contain questions on ethnic origin and religion; however, the penalty for incorrect responses would not be applicable to those questions.
5. **Ms. Peçi Minarolli** (Albania) said that, over the course of 2018, public consultations had been held with representatives of national minorities, including the Greek minority in the municipality of Gjirokastra, regarding the development of secondary legislation for the implementation of the Law on the Protection of National Minorities. The Government hoped to adopt all such legislation before the end of 2018. The Law provided for the establishment of a national minorities fund, which would be financed from the State budget and was expected to be operational as of 2019.
6. The questions on ethnic origin and religion in the 2011 census had been optional. All ministries involved in preparing the 2020 census would attach great importance to the principle of self-identification, which would be enshrined in the new law on the population and housing census. The question on ethnic origin in the 2020 census would again be optional. In preparing the census, the Government would take into account the outcome of consultations with associations of national minorities.
7. The Government would work with the Central Election Commission to ensure that national minorities were fully informed about the upcoming local elections, for example by distributing leaflets in minority languages. The Government was preparing its response to the fourth opinion of the Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities. The resolution that would be adopted by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe in that connection would serve as the basis for the Government's work to protect the rights of national minorities.
8. **Mr. Llahana** (Albania) said that political parties, organizations, programmes and activities that were based on totalitarian methods, incited or supported religious, racial or ethnic hatred, used violence to take power or influence State policy, or were of a secret nature were prohibited under article 9 of the Constitution. Furthermore, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) were required by law to respect and promote the basic human rights and freedoms enshrined in the Constitution, national law and the international agreements that had been ratified by Albania. An NGO could not be established unless its statutes had been verified and deemed lawful by a court.

9. **Ms. Lleshi** (Albania) said that the Government was aware that there had been several incidents of hate speech by high-level politicians and that the Internet was increasingly being used to spread racism and intolerance. Freedom of expression and freedom of the press should not be invoked to justify defamation or hate speech. There were now hundreds of websites that published low-quality content, some of which was slanderous, and there was often a lack of transparency surrounding the ownership and funding of such websites. The Government was therefore preparing a regulatory framework to address that problem, with due regard for international standards and on the basis of broad consultations. It had reached out to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Representative on Freedom of the Media for support. It was also planning an initiative whereby public entities would be encouraged to take legal action in cases of defamation; any compensation awarded would go to a special fund for the provision of learning materials to kindergartens, school libraries and top students. Public consultations on the initiative, involving minorities and vulnerable groups, would begin shortly and the corresponding legislative proposal would be submitted to parliament in 2019.

10. **Ms. Peçi Minarolli** (Albania) said that Albania had an Egyptian community that was recognized as a national minority. There was no Ashkali minority, however: Ashkali lived mainly in Kosovo, not Albania.

11. **Ms. Lleshi** (Albania) said that the municipal authorities of Tirana had conducted a socioeconomic assessment of the families affected by the implementation of the ring road project and had verified whether those families were beneficiaries of social housing programmes. To assess the situation on the ground, three specialist working groups had been established without discrimination of any kind, in accordance with the relevant national laws and international conventions, including article 5 of the Convention. A total of 141 families had been assessed, including 5 Roma families. All inhabitants who were not in possession of property deeds had been encouraged to apply for inclusion in a short-term or long-term housing programme. The five Roma families had been able to provide proof of ownership and would therefore be covered by the law on expropriation.

12. **Ms. Mitro** (Albania) said that, under the new Law on Social Housing, 5 per cent of social housing would be set aside for Roma. A definition of eviction had been established in the Law in order to avoid some of the eviction-related problems that had arisen in the past. Enabling legislation was currently being drafted and consultations with all vulnerable groups, including the Roma and Egyptian communities, were ongoing. Roma and Egyptian communities benefited from housing measures taken under the National Action Plan for the Integration of Roma and Egyptians and the Social Housing Strategy 2016–2025. In 2017, a total of 101 Roma and Egyptian families had benefited from low-cost housing, while 77 families had received a rent bonus. Thirteen local government units had been granted support for projects in areas such as reconstruction and sanitation.

13. Another objective of the National Action Plan for the Integration of Roma and Egyptians was to map the distribution of those population groups throughout the national territory with the aim of facilitating their civil registration. By ascertaining where the largest Roma and Egyptian communities were located, the Government would be able to ensure that they were registered with all relevant institutions and thereby improve their health and education outcomes. With the support of civil society, some 260 Roma and Egyptian children had been registered in 2017.

14. The Government was working with municipal authorities to ensure that all returning Roma and Egyptian migrants were registered. The municipal focal points responsible for overseeing the implementation of the National Action Plan assessed the situation of returning Roma and Egyptian migrants and referred them to the relevant authorities.

15. The Roma and Egyptian communities were represented in the State Committee on Minorities and assisted the Government in implementing the National Action Plan. The targeted financial assistance provided to the female population as a whole had likewise benefited Roma and other vulnerable women, who had reported an improvement in their quality of life. From 2019 onwards, Roma and Egyptian women would receive a one-off lump-sum payment on the birth of their first child, which would be doubled for any subsequent children. The Ministry of Health, through the Institute of Public Health,

guaranteed Roma and Egyptian women's right to health care. The Roma were also represented in municipal government. Although the quota system introduced in the higher education system did not target the Roma or Egyptian communities specifically, it had led to an increase in the admission of Roma and Egyptian women to higher education establishments.

16. **Ms. Peçi Minarolli** (Albania) said that, under article 265 of the Penal Code concerning hate speech and/or incitement to hatred based on ethnicity or sexual orientation, nine cases had been registered in 2017 and only one case in 2018. Similarly, under article 266 of the Penal Code regarding incitement to national hatred, only one case had been registered in 2017 and no cases in 2018. Under article 119 (a) of the Penal Code covering the dissemination in electronic media of racist or xenophobic content, two cases had been registered in 2017 and no cases in 2018. Under article 119 (b) of the Penal Code concerning insults in electronic media based on ethnicity, nationality, race or religion, only one case had been registered in 2018. No cases involving the dissemination of materials promoting genocide or crimes against humanity had been registered under article 74 (a) of the Penal Code over the 2017/18 period. Only one case involving threats in electronic media to commit murder or to cause serious injury based on ethnicity, nationality, race or religion had been registered under article 84 (a) of the Penal Code in 2017, and no cases had been registered under that article in 2018.

17. Ten cases involving offences committed by police officers had been registered in 2015, compared with six such cases in 2016, five cases in 2017 and one case in 2018. Under the Law on State Police, police officers who committed such offences were subject to disciplinary measures, which included dismissal.

18. **Ms. Lleshi** (Albania) said that the aim of the comprehensive reform of the judiciary was to address long-standing deficiencies in the areas of independence, accountability, efficiency and professionalism. To date, 17 new laws out of a package of 27 had been adopted. A key element of the reform was the vetting of around 800 judges and prosecutors. Although the process was well under way, it was not moving forward as quickly as desired. The effects of the reform would be wide-ranging and would have a positive impact on the life of Albanian citizens, the fight against organized crime and corruption, and the enforcement of civil contracts. Progress had been made towards establishing a high judicial council and a high prosecutorial council. The process of selecting the lay members to sit on those councils had already been concluded. The appointment of judges and prosecutors to those bodies was contingent on the outcome of the above-mentioned vetting process. The reform had been certified by the Venice Commission of the Council of Europe and was being implemented with the support of the European Union. During the current transitional phase of the reform, old institutions were being dissolved to make way for the establishment of new ones, which would serve as the foundation of the new judiciary. In the interim, the High Council of Justice would continue to be responsible for appointing, transferring, vetting and overseeing the activities of judges sitting on courts of first instance and courts of appeal. It was hoped that the new institutions would be operational by mid-December 2018. The imminent establishment of the new governing bodies of the judiciary and prosecution service would prevent the emergence of any gaps in protection and guarantee access to justice for victims of racial discrimination. The administrative courts and the courts of first instance continued to function normally.

19. **Ms. Peçi Minarolli** (Albania) said that, according to the Albania Border Protection Monitoring Report, a total of 4,106 identified refugees and migrants from Afghanistan, Algeria, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Libya, Morocco, Pakistan, Palestine, Syria and Yemen had entered the country in 2018, with the greatest number hailing from Syria and Pakistan. Albania was primarily a transit country for refugees and migrants hoping to reach neighbouring European countries.

20. **Mr. Kut** (Country Rapporteur) said that he welcomed the frankness with which the delegation had replied to the Committee's questions and was pleased to learn that the census planned for 2020 would resolve the issues identified around the 2011 census. The recently adopted Law on the Protection of National Minorities, if properly implemented, had the potential to solve many of the problems encountered by vulnerable groups in Albania. He urged the State party to take all the measures necessary to ensure effective

implementation of the Law and to follow up on its intention to involve various stakeholders in the implementation process.

21. It would be useful to know how often article 9 of the Constitution, which prohibited political parties and other organizations that incited and supported racial, religious or ethnic hatred, and similar legal provisions were applied and to receive information on cases in which extremist or racist organizations had been banned. The fact that those provisions were seldom invoked did not prove that such organizations did not exist.

22. The continued prevalence of hate speech in electronic media in Albania was a major cause for concern. He hoped that the legislative proposal related to the anti-defamation initiative would be submitted to Parliament in 2019. It would be helpful to hear more about how the State party dealt with incidents of racist hate speech by high-level politicians, as those persons held sway over large swathes of the population and could pave the way for others to engage in similar conduct. By failing to condemn such rhetoric and to punish those resorting to it, the State party was effectively promoting the democratization of racism.

23. He had been surprised to hear that only five Roma families would have to vacate their property as a result of the ring road project in Tirana; according to information received by the Committee, a much larger number of Roma were subject to forced eviction. He asked whether the 136 other families affected had legal ownership of their homes.

24. While he welcomed the efforts made to promote the civil registration of the Roma and Egyptian population, he would like to learn more about the underlying causes of the low registration rate among those groups. He wondered whether it was attributable to a lack of information, a lack of incentive to register or bureaucratic difficulties in the registration process.

25. The delegation might also provide more information on the different cases involving incitement to racial hatred and the dissemination of racist, xenophobic or otherwise discriminatory content and indicate whether they had simply been reported to the police, referred to the prosecution service or had been the subject of a court decision. In any event, the low number of cases was likely to be symptomatic of the inconsistent or ineffective application of the legal provisions in question. He would also be interested to know whether any of the offences committed by police officers included an element of racial discrimination, given their alleged tendency to subject members of vulnerable minority groups to racial profiling.

26. The State party had made commendable efforts with regard to judicial reform and should pursue its endeavours in that area, which would be of benefit not only to the country but also to the international community.

27. He wished to know whether the Commissioner for Protection against Discrimination had adequate human and financial resources to provide efficient and effective services. While fully cognizant of the difference between equality and equity, he would also like to know whether positive measures were envisaged for the Egyptian community and other vulnerable groups. Lastly, he would be interested to hear about any mechanisms in place to address multiple discrimination, for example against women from vulnerable communities.

28. **Mr. Murillo Martínez** said that he shared the concerns expressed in relation to racist hate speech and would welcome further information on how the State party was tackling the issue. He would be interested to know whether the State party had considered amending legislation to reverse the burden of proof in cases of racial discrimination and to consider racial discrimination as an aggravating circumstance. He would be grateful for additional information on transnational organized crime in the State party. He would like to hear about the impact of housing policy on minority groups. He would welcome clarification of whether self-identification was an option in the census and details of the role played by minority groups in the census process. Lastly, he would be grateful for information on the proportion of the prison population represented by members of minority groups; if that information was not available, perhaps the State party would consider collecting such disaggregated data in the future, as it was a good indicator of the situation of racial discrimination in a country.

29. **Ms. Shepherd** said that she would be interested to know what steps the State party planned to take in the school curriculum and police training to ensure that the roots of discrimination against vulnerable groups were addressed. She wished to know what proportion of the population was made up of people of African descent and whether it was considered important to educate Albanian society about the roots of anti-black racism, especially in the light of the recent report by the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights about growing anti-black racism in the European Union. She would also like to hear about any efforts being undertaken in the context of the International Decade for People of African Descent.

30. **Ms. Chung** said that she would appreciate information on any laws for the protection of refugees and measures to address the problem of statelessness. She would also welcome details of problems in the Roma and Egyptian communities, including late birth registration, and statistics on employment and school enrolment among those minorities. She would be interested to know whether forced or early marriage and early childbearing were prevalent in those communities and whether there was a problem with human trafficking. She would like to know what steps the Government was taking to address the issue of forced disappearances of Roma children.

31. **Mr. Diaby** said that he would be interested to know whether the National Action Plan for the Integration of Roma and Egyptians could be extended to cover other ethno-religious minorities in the country. He wished to know how the country's linguistic diversity was reflected in programming on public Albanian television and would welcome statistics on the matter, if available. He would be grateful for details of the proportion of the large number of people leaving the country who were from minorities and the reasons for their departure.

The meeting was suspended at 11.35 a.m. and resumed at 12 noon

32. **Ms. Lleshi** (Albania) said that the State party appreciated the Committee's making constructive suggestions and bringing issues of concern to its attention, as they might not otherwise be addressed; the Committee's input had indeed contributed to the amendments to the Law on the Population and Housing Census. It was true that there were often problems with the implementation of legislation, and the new Law on the Protection of National Minorities was no exception. Work was under way to finalize the secondary legislation, based on the established practice of consultation with different stakeholders and with the support of international partners. In drafting the Law itself, the State party had relied heavily on the support of the Council of Europe, while the secondary legislation was being drafted with the assistance of OSCE. Any contributions from the Committee in that regard would be very welcome.

33. **Mr. Llahana** (Albania) said that in order to legally establish an NGO in Albania it was first necessary to have its statutes approved by a court. If the organization's objectives included incitement to racial, religious or ethnic discrimination, the statutes would not be approved and the NGO could thus not be established. The current system was considered an effective preventive mechanism, which was why racist organizations were not criminalized.

34. **Ms. Lleshi** (Albania) said that, when it came to hate speech, the State party operated within a global framework; efforts were made to engage all actors that could offer support in addressing the issue, including the OSCE Representative on Freedom of the Media. It was a very sensitive issue, as there was a fine balance to be struck between ensuring freedom of expression and the media, on the one hand, and combating hate speech, on the other. It was true that hate speech by high-level politicians which was reproduced in the media was a concern, particularly as there was a risk that it could normalize the expression of such opinions. The defamation package would thus target all persons who engaged in defamation, slander or libel, regardless of their status. Persons responsible for hate speech offences would face civil rather than criminal proceedings. The amount of any fines imposed by the courts would be paid into public funds used to raise awareness, particularly among the younger generations, of the importance of responsible citizenship and journalism.

35. **Mr. Kut** said that he would be interested to know who would initiate civil proceedings in such cases.

36. **Ms. Lleshi** (Albania) said that the draft legislation had not yet been finalized and ideas were still being circulated. The intention was that politicians or others who felt that they had been slandered would have a duty to take the case to court.

37. With regard to the situation concerning the Tirana ring road project, the figures provided by the delegation were those that had been gathered by working groups on the ground, which had circulated questionnaires to people living in the area. There had been a genuine effort to engage with stakeholders, but the authorities were faced with the conundrum of having to resolve a situation born out of illegality. The eight-story buildings in question had been constructed without a permit in an area known to have been designated for public construction. Ultimately, the compensation being offered was from the State budget and thus the taxpayer. It was a very sensitive issue and the Government was mindful of the fact that it could have implications for vulnerable groups.

38. **Ms. Mitro** (Albania), responding to questions on civil registration, said that the Ministry of the Interior and local government bodies were coordinating at the highest level to ensure the registration of the Roma population. Some of the civil registration data available were from the 2017 report on the National Action Plan for the Integration of Roma and Egyptians. One of the measures set out in the Action Plan concerned assistance with obtaining documents for children born abroad. In 2017, technical support had been provided by civil society organizations in respect of 235 children born abroad from the Roma and Egyptian communities. In 2017, 427 children born in the Roma and Egyptian communities had been identified as unregistered; 70 per cent of them had since been registered.

39. **Ms. Peçi Minarolli** (Albania) said that, during 2018, the Commissioner for Protection from Discrimination had reviewed and issued decisions concerning 40 complaints of discrimination on the grounds of race. The Commissioner had found discrimination in 6 cases and non-discrimination in 17 cases, while 12 cases had been dismissed for not meeting the criteria set forth in Law No. 10/221 on Protection from Discrimination. An analysis of those cases had revealed that Roma and Egyptian community members were not well informed about their rights or about the benefits deriving from Law No. 10/221, and that there was a need to raise their awareness in that regard. The Office of the Commissioner had also initiated ex officio more than 35 cases of discrimination involving children, identifying issues in the sphere of education that ranged from the segregation of Roma and Egyptian students to the provision of free textbooks for certain categories of beneficiaries and the refusal to enrol schoolchildren with disabilities or Roma children. The Commissioner had also dealt with the protection of children from violence, the health and safety of children in centres for victims of domestic violence, insulting behaviour of police officers towards Roma, violence against preschool children, poor living conditions and the lack of timely and appropriate medical supplies and health services.

40. **Ms. Mitro** (Albania) said that the Ministry of Health and Social Protection, the Ombudsman and the Commissioner for Protection from Discrimination had together participated in an initiative of the Council of Europe that aimed to boost the effectiveness of the anti-discrimination system. As part of that project, they had drafted the strategy and improved the procedures of the Office of the Commissioner for Protection from Discrimination. The Office had also participated in a project to establish a database for the documenting and recording of cases.

41. One housing solution for Roma and Egyptians was provided by the National Emergency Transition Centre, which had originally been part of a State network of social services centres and had been open for almost three years. Roma families could stay at the Centre on a temporary basis while receiving services and preparing for reintegration into society.

42. **Ms. Lleshi** (Albania) said that, in respect of justice reform, she wished to point out that members of the public had participated in the vetting process for prosecutors and judges. The Independent Qualification Commission had received approximately 1,900

reports from citizens on unfair decisions handed down by judges or prosecutors, while the Appeal Chamber had received 112 reports and the Institution of Public Commissioners 47 reports. The relatively high number of reports suggested that the public supported the process and trusted the vetting institutions and the outcome of the process.

43. **Ms. Peçi Minarolli** (Albania) said that the Commissioner for Protection from Discrimination had a staff of 23 persons based in Tirana and in four regional offices. In 2019, the staff would be expanded to 34 persons and its budget would rise to 43 million leks (approximately €350,000).

44. **Ms. Mitro** (Albania) said that Law No. 10/221 included provisions on the prohibition and grounds of discrimination, protection from discrimination in employment, the rights of employees, the obligations of employers and the duties of institutions. It also defined indirect discrimination as “that form of discrimination that occurs when a provision, criterion or practice, apparently neutral, would put a person or group of persons in unfavourable conditions [...] in relation to a person or another group of persons, and also when that measure, criterion or practice is not objectively justified by a legitimate aim, or when the means of achieving that aim either are not appropriate or are not essential and in fair proportion with the condition that has caused it.” It was hoped that the introduction of that definition marked the first step towards making indirect discrimination more visible in society. In that regard, it would be necessary to monitor the number of complaints of indirect discrimination that were addressed to the Commissioner for Protection from Discrimination and to the Ombudsman.

45. **Ms. Lleshi** (Albania), responding to a question about efforts to address hate speech, said that research had been conducted by the office of OSCE in Albania to determine the origin of web portals that operated in Albania in the Albanian language. The Government welcomed the support and cooperation of all partners in addressing that issue.

46. **Ms. Mitro** (Albania) said that, with regard to the burden of proof in cases of racial discrimination, under Law No. 10/221, persons or groups of persons who claimed to have been discriminated against could submit any kind of evidence to the Commissioner for Protection from Discrimination in support of their claim.

47. **Ms. Peçi Minarolli** (Albania) said that the Administrative Procedures Code adopted in 2015 contained a provision that reversed the burden of proof in cases of discrimination, so that it no longer lay with the victim. The Commissioner for Protection from Discrimination had recommended that the Civil Code should be amended to include the reversal of the burden of proof, and it was hoped that a similar amendment would be made to the Code of Civil Procedure in 2019. The Government considered that such measures represented a step towards compliance with the Convention and other human rights instruments.

48. **Ms. Mitro** (Albania) said that the Government recognized the importance of maintaining statistics on minorities in order to understand their role in all areas of society, especially areas in which they might come to harm. In respect of the presence of minorities in prisons and penitentiary institutions, the Government maintained statistics on the offences for which prisoners had been convicted. However, it had encountered difficulties in compiling disaggregated statistics on other indicators and would welcome any comments in that regard.

49. **Ms. Lleshi** (Albania) said that the Government was mindful of the difficulties that had arisen in the 2011 census; in particular, that it had not always been possible to check for discrepancies between self-identification and official records. Therefore, and having reflected on comments from the Committee and from the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance, it had decided to alter its census methodology.

50. **Ms. Peçi Minarolli** (Albania) said that in 2018, following the preparation of the guide “Policing Hate Crime against LGBTI Persons: Training for a Professional Police Response”, over 150 police from different parts of Albania had been trained to identify and address hate crimes targeting such persons. That training was designed to provide law enforcement officials with knowledge of hate crimes and to strengthen their capacities and practical skills to investigate them. The guide and training activities had been developed in

the framework of a joint European Union-Council of Europe initiative entitled “Preventing and Combating Discrimination on Grounds of Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity in Albania”.

51. Justice officials, including prosecutors and judges, received training in all United Nations and Council of Europe human rights conventions. In 2018, specific training had been provided on the Convention and how it was implemented by judges. Although the Constitution and domestic legislation gave priority to the Convention over national law, the Government did not have any data on cases in which the Convention had been invoked before the courts. Therefore, training efforts would continue and she hoped that more information about the implementation of the Convention by the judiciary would be provided in the subsequent periodic report.

52. **Ms. Lleshi** (Albania), responding to a question by Ms. Chung, said that Albania had many similarities with Montenegro, one of which was the legal framework for the protection of refugees. In that regard, as part of a collective response and with the support of partners, Albania had not adopted new laws but had amended its existing legislation to address the issue of refugees travelling along the Balkan route.

53. **Mr. Llahana** (Albania) said that the freedoms of expression and of access to information were of great importance for persons belonging to national minorities; for that reason, article 14 (4) of Law 96/2017 on the Protection of National Minorities stated that national minorities should enjoy the right to information in their mother tongue. Every day, the public broadcaster, Albanian Radio and Television, broadcast two 5-minute news bulletins and 20 minutes of cultural programming in each minority language, while local radio and television stations in regions with large concentrations of minorities also broadcast minority-language programmes. In cooperation with Albanian Radio and Television, the State Committee on Minorities had proposed the creation of a department of minority languages and cultures, whose staff, drawn from all national minorities, would dedicate themselves to producing news and cultural programmes in minority languages. The considerable financial cost of that project would be covered by the State budget. The State Committee on Minorities had also requested that 1 of the 10 members of the administrative council of Albanian Radio and Television should come from a minority.

54. **Mr. Kut** said that he was grateful for the delegation’s sincerity in the constructive dialogue. The Committee’s concluding observations would address a number of issues, including the implementation of legislation and policies, the evaluation of strategies, programmes and action plans, and forced evictions insofar as they related to discrimination. They would also contain the suggestion that the core document ([HRI/CORE/ALB/2012](#)) should be updated to reflect recent developments, and the recommendation that civil society, relevant governmental institutions and other stakeholders should be more visibly involved in the preparation of the State party’s next periodic report.

55. **Ms. Lleshi** (Albania) said that her delegation appreciated the Committee’s engagement and the concerns that it had raised. The Government considered that such observations were a helpful reminder of the things it needed to achieve and it looked forward to future cooperation with the Committee.

The meeting rose at 12.55 p.m.