



International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination

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Summary record of the 2588th meeting

Held at the Palais Wilson, Geneva, on Tuesday, 21 November 2017, at 3 p.m.

Chair: Ms. Crickley

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The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

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

Combined second to fifth periodic reports of Serbia (CERD/C/SRB/2-5 and annexes 1-5; CERD/C/SRB/Q/2-5; HRI/CORE/SRB/2010)

1. *At the invitation of the Chair, the delegation of Serbia took places at the Committee table.*
2. **Ms. Paunović** (Serbia), introducing the combined second to fifth periodic reports of Serbia (CERD/C/SRB/2-5), said that Serbia was committed to promoting human and minority rights, as demonstrated by its support for the international and regional treaties to which it was a party and its cooperation with the associated bodies and procedures. It was a party to nine core United Nations human rights treaties and cooperated with the special procedures of the Human Rights Council. Since the publication of the initial report (CERD/C/SRB/1), four thematic mandate holders had visited the country. Comprehensive reforms were under way as part of the process for Serbian accession to the European Union, which comprised the implementation of an action plan for negotiating chapter 23 of the “acquis communautaire” on the judiciary and fundamental rights.
3. Serbia was unable to monitor the implementation of the Convention in the Autonomous Province of Kosovo and Metohija, administered by the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), in accordance with Security Council resolution 1244 (1999). She therefore suggested that the Committee should invite UNMIK to submit additional information on the implementation of the Convention in that province so that Serbia could complete the report as the signatory State. It was important for the Committee to gain full insight into the situation in the province, where members of non-Albanian communities faced challenges to the exercise of their human and minority rights.
4. Serbia had a legislative and institutional framework to ensure the protection of human and minority rights. Its Constitution guaranteed equality for all its citizens and the right to equal legal protection without discrimination; the rights guaranteed thereunder could be implemented directly. The provisions of the Convention had been incorporated into the national legal system to create a comprehensive protection system in the areas of criminal and civil law.
5. Supplementing the information provided in the report on measures adopted to comply with the provisions of the Convention, she said that, in 2014, a council had been established to monitor the implementation of recommendations by United Nations human rights mechanisms. The council had drafted an action plan for the implementation of all such recommendations and was developing related indicators in cooperation with civil society, State bodies and international organizations. Its activities were based on the principles of inclusiveness and transparency. In 2015, a council for monitoring the implementation of the Action Plan accompanying the Strategy on Prevention and Protection against Discrimination for the period 2014-2018 had been set up. The same year the Council for National Minorities had resumed its activities. It was chaired by the Prime Minister, which showed the Government’s determination to maintain dialogue on minority policy at the highest level. A national judicial reform strategy for the period 2013-2018 and related action plan had been adopted.
6. A new law on employees in autonomous provinces and local self-government units set forth the principle of equal access to employment. By-laws adopted to apply the law stipulated that where a national minority language was in official use, proficiency in that language and script was required for jobs involving verbal and written communication with the public. Members of national minorities were given priority for positions where they were deemed equally qualified and national minorities were underrepresented.
7. In view of the large number of national minorities in Serbia, efforts were made to promote mutual respect, understanding and cooperation among all the people living in the country regardless of their national, cultural, linguistic or religious identity. The Law on the Protection of the Rights and Freedoms of National Minorities regulated the exercise of the

individual and collective rights of national minorities, in particular through the national councils of national minorities. The councils represented the national minorities and advised State authorities on the exercise of their rights. The Constitution provided for members of national minorities to elect national councils to exercise the right to self-government in the fields of education, culture, information and official use of language and script. In 2010 and 2014, national councils had been elected in direct elections. There were currently 21 national councils and State funds of 305 million dinars had been allocated for their activities in 2017.

8. Members of national minorities were able to receive an education in 14 languages at all three educational levels. More than 86,000 students currently studied in their national minority language, while 15,902 students had elected to attend classes on their mother tongue and national culture. Eleven languages of national minorities were in official use in 42 local self-government units. More than 18,000 hours of radio and television programmes were broadcast each month in 16 languages of national minorities, and more than 100 print media were published.

9. An action plan on the rights of national minorities had been adopted in March 2016. Five reports on its implementation had been issued to date; the first one had been translated into 11 minority languages. That document formed part of the Action Plan for Negotiating Chapter 23.

10. As part of the long-term State policy to implement the Convention, the Strategy on Prevention and Protection against Discrimination and accompanying Action Plan envisaged specific measures to prevent discrimination against particularly vulnerable social groups. Five reports on the implementation of the Action Plan had been issued thus far.

11. Regarding the issue of Roma inclusion, efforts had been focused on strengthening institutional capacity at government and local self-government levels, including through the establishment of a special unit for anti-discrimination policy and the promotion of gender equality within the Ministry of Labour. The establishment of a government coordination body for monitoring the implementation of the Strategy for Social Inclusion of Roma for the period 2016-2025 would help to harmonize Roma inclusion policies. The strategy provided for the continued access to services for and improvement in the quality of life of citizens of Roma origin. While progress had been made in all areas, it was recognized that local self-government units were the key bodies responsible for the implementation of many measures. In future, it was intended to focus on strengthening the capacity of those units to deliver such measures and on allocating funds for Roma inclusion policies in local communities.

12. Amendments to the Law on Non-Contentious Procedure and the implementation of an agreement between the Ombudsman and key ministries, with the support of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), had helped to resolve the problem of personal documents for more than 25,000 persons of Roma origin. Furthermore, under legislation on the procedure for replacing registry books destroyed or mislaid in the Autonomous Province Kosovo and Metohija, 2,919 so-called legally invisible persons of Roma origin had been registered in 2015.

13. To date more than 1,600 Roma students had enrolled in universities and colleges and more than 6,000 in secondary schools. In the previous two years, 1,346 scholarships had been awarded to Roma secondary school students. The work of 75 health mediators had transformed health care for the Roma community and had been one of the most successful public health policy measures of the reporting period, particularly with regard to vaccination and child mortality rates. Active employment measures, self-employment incentive programmes and schemes involving subsidies to private sector employers were in place to help Roma people find work.

14. The number (583) and locations of informal Roma settlements in Serbia had been identified, thus allowing for the allocation of appropriate funds and drafting of zoning plans. Housing models had been presented to local self-government units to help them design housing that would best suit their needs. The resettlement procedure was carried out in full compliance with international human rights standards. The Law on Housing specified the conditions governing resettlement, afforded legal protection during the procedure and

provided appropriate housing for the persons concerned if they did not own or could not afford other housing. Since June 2011, in cooperation with the European Commission, the Government had been holding seminars on the social inclusion of Roma people in Serbia to monitor progress in that regard.

15. There were currently 203,140 internally displaced persons (IDPs) and around 17,000 so-called internal-internally displaced persons in Serbia. Conditions for the sustainable return of IDPs to the Autonomous Province of Kosovo and Metohija had not been secured: according to UNHCR, fewer than five per cent of such persons had returned to Kosovo and Metohija since 1999. The main obstacles to their safe return were the lack of physical and legal security; the inadequate institutional response to crimes against the lives and property of Serbs; double standards in the application of rights protection and enforcement mechanisms; difficult access to public services and limited opportunities to use their mother tongue.

16. A permanent solution for all IDPs from the Autonomous Province of Kosovo and Metohija should involve giving them a choice between local integration and sustainable return. Thus far, however, local integration had been the only option available owing to the numerous and complex administrative, legal and other obstacles to their return. Central and local-level bodies provided various support programmes for IDPs. Local self-government units had been actively involved in such programmes using funding allocated from the national budget and by donors.

17. The Regional Housing Programme was expected to provide permanent housing for 16,780 refugee families in Serbia. The Commissariat for Refugees and Migration kept databases on refugees and IDPs and records of asylum seekers/migrants placed in the permanent asylum and reception centres. In 2015, the National Strategy for Resolving the Issues of Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons for 2015-2020 had been adopted.

18. As part of efforts to harmonize national legislation with the European Union instruments pertaining to asylum, in August 2017 the Government had approved the Law on Asylum and Temporary Protection, which had been submitted to the National Assembly for consideration. The Asylum Office had been set up in January 2015 within the Border Police Directorate and was responsible for first-instance asylum procedure.

19. Serbia had tackled the migrant/refugee crisis responsibly and demonstrated its commitment to international and European values and standards. More than 900,000 migrants and refugees from 12 war-torn areas had passed through Serbia without major incidents. Following the closure of the migration route in 2016, more than 40 per cent of the migrants and refugees held in reception centres were children. There were currently 2,000 such persons in 18 reception centres. All were provided with appropriate accommodation; psychosocial support and additional recreational and educational activities were provided in partnership with civil society. The Ministry of Labour had issued instructions to social work centres and social security institutions that offered emergency accommodation and care for unaccompanied child migrants and refugees.

20. Child migrants and refugees had the opportunity to participate in formal education. At the beginning of the 2017-2018 school year, 586 children from reception and asylum centres had been enrolled in primary schools in 13 municipalities and 56 pupils under the age of 17 had been attending regular secondary schools. In addition, the centres offered various cultural, sport and leisure activities. In cooperation with international and civil society organizations, staff at the centres received training, including on how to deal with vulnerable persons and identify potential victims of trafficking. Border Police Directorate officers also received training on human rights, in particular on how to handle accompanied and unaccompanied child migrants. Serbia had brought more than 2,000 criminal charges against human smugglers and traffickers, which showed its commitment to protect persons who passed through its territory.

21. The dissemination of ideas, information or opinions which incited discrimination, hatred or violence against persons or groups of persons on the grounds of their affiliation or non-affiliation with a race, religion, nationality or ethnicity or because of their sexual orientation, regardless of whether such dissemination was qualified as a criminal offence, was prohibited under several laws relating to the media adopted in 2014. During the

reporting period, several training events had been organized for members of the media to improve their reporting on specific vulnerable social groups and ensure that they used proper language, without resorting to sensationalism and hate speech.

22. In the light of amendments to the Criminal Code in 2012, anyone who threatened the security of persons who performed duties of public interest in the field of the provision of information was liable to a prison sentence of between six months and five years. The aim of Article 54a of the Criminal Code was to enable more stringent sentencing and afford greater protection under criminal law to specific social groups whose members were victims of various hate crimes because of their affiliation with those groups. In December 2015, the Public Prosecutor of the Republic had issued a general directive on the keeping of special records of certain criminal offences, including hate crimes, within the meaning of article 54a of the Criminal Code. In April 2016, the Public Prosecutor and the Minister of the Interior had signed a cooperation agreement, supported by journalists' associations, which envisaged the possibility of establishing a specialized State body responsible for protecting journalists.

23. In conclusion, she underlined that Serbia, aware of the existing challenges, would pursue its efforts to fulfil its international commitments and meet international standards in preventing and combating racial discrimination.

24. **Mr. Yeung Sik Yuen** (Country Rapporteur) said that all references by the Committee to Kosovo would be in compliance with Security Council resolution 1244. References were not intended to undermine the status of Kosovo, which had unilaterally declared independence from Serbia in 2008. In view of the need to normalize relations with Kosovo as part of the path to membership of the European Union, he requested information on the normalization measures taken in that regard by the Government of Serbia.

25. The State party should comment on why so few asylum claims had been submitted, reviewed and granted in Serbia in 2014. Was it true that over 95 per cent of asylum claims made in 2016 had been dismissed on the basis of the safe third country concept? The State party should list the countries deemed safe; provide data on the percentage of asylum claims granted at first instance and on appeal in 2015 and 2016; explain why there was a large backlog of such claims; indicate the average processing time for claims; and report on efforts to increase funding for bodies that made decisions on asylum claims. Information should be provided on allegations of ill-treatment of asylum seekers and other undocumented migrants by law enforcement agencies, including the number of complaints filed and their outcomes. He requested an update on progress towards adoption of the bill on free legal aid.

26. He wished to know whether the State party made efforts to remain in contact with migrants, assessed their needs and informed them of how to find assistance. What measures had been taken to provide migrants with adequate housing and health care and employment and educational opportunities? He asked whether the State party intended to adopt a comprehensive strategy with clear time frames for facilitating the voluntary return of internally displaced persons and the full integration of internally displaced persons who were unable to return. More information should be provided on the status of the bill on foreigners that would tackle issues such as expulsion, forced removal and arbitrary detention.

27. He noted the reference by the State party to abuses allegedly suffered by the Serb minority in Kosovo that had resulted in Serbs withdrawing into enclaves for safety, and to the ethnic cleansing of a number of towns and villages. He expressed concern about reports of racism at football matches held in Serbia. The denial by the elected mayor of Srebrenica, before the International Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of the Former Yugoslavia since 1991 (International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia) in October 2016, that there had been a massacre in Srebrenica was a cause for concern, as was the slow progress in prosecuting and sentencing the perpetrators of war crimes. The delegation should provide an update on the number of cases pending before the Public Prosecutor and the courts, particularly in view of the appointment of a new Chief War Crimes Prosecutor in May 2017.

28. Details were needed of how many of the complaints received by the Commissioner for the Protection of Equality and the Protector of Citizens (or Ombudsman) involved racial discrimination. The delegation should comment on the number of complaints that had been effectively dealt with by the Ombudsman. Information should be provided on how the Commissioner for the Protection of Equality acted to combat racial discrimination, how much funding was provided to the Commissioner for that role and the results achieved; details would also be appreciated on the 13 strategic litigations reportedly initiated, and the 11 misdemeanour and 7 criminal charges reportedly submitted by the Commissioner. More information was needed regarding the Commissioner's role in proposing strategic litigation and charges and how they were initiated. In addition, he asked whether the Commissioner enjoyed security of tenure.

29. Further information should be provided on the mandate, decision-making powers and effectiveness of the National Minority Councils, including specific examples of the results of their activities and information on whether the Roma National Minority Council had improved access to education for Roma children.

30. The Anti-Corruption Council had concluded that judicial reform had failed; did the Government of Serbia share that view? The delegation should comment on the conclusions of the Council regarding the viability of the High Judicial Council and the State Prosecutorial Council, reports of government officials interfering in the work of the courts and politicians threatening and intimidating judges and whether there were millions of cases pending. He wished to receive information on the sanctions for violating provisions of the codes of conduct for government officials and members of parliament that related to restrictions on the right to comment on court decisions and procedures. He asked what measures were being taken to address the compatibility issues linked to the use of four different information systems for the work of the judicial authorities.

31. The State party should inform the Committee of the measures being taken to ensure that cases were heard within a reasonable time and that offenders did not escape justice due to time bars on punishments and the laxness of the judiciary. Information should be provided on the number of cases never brought or discontinued due to the time bar on punishments, and the proportion of those cases relating to the rights of minority groups or racial discrimination. He would appreciate information on whether improvements had been seen in the application of the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms since 2013 and on the number of cases from Serbia currently before the European Court of Human Rights.

32. **Ms. Shepherd** asked whether school curricula reflected the cultures of all national minorities. Information should be provided on the impact of efforts to introduce instruction in the mother tongue for national minorities and whether the communities concerned were consulted on the contents of curricula and textbooks. The delegation should explain why education in the mother tongue was not compulsory. Alternative data provided to the Committee indicated high illiteracy rates among Roma, Ashkali and Vlachs. The delegation should comment on the challenges to increasing school enrolment and tackling school dropout rates and illiteracy in those communities.

33. Information provided by the State party on the de facto segregation of public schools was not sufficient. Alternative information indicated that the percentage of Roma children in special schools was disproportionately high, that Roma children were often transferred to special schools without adequate justification and that some schools or classes contained only Roma children. She asked what measures were being introduced to tackle segregation in schools and how individual responsibility for segregation was determined. She asked whether the cases of de facto school segregation brought before the Protector of Citizens were indicative of the scale of infractions of the Rulebook on recognizing the forms of discrimination in education, which identified segregation as a serious form of discrimination. Was there public awareness that such segregation was illegal and unacceptable?

The meeting was suspended at 4.20 p.m. and resumed at 4.40 p.m.

34. **Mr. Kut** (Special Rapporteur for follow-up on concluding observations) recalled that, in its previous concluding observations on the implementation of the Convention in

the State party (CERD/C/SRB/CO/1, para. 29), the Committee had asked the State party to provide information, within a year, on its follow-up to the recommendations contained in paragraphs 11, 15, 19, and 22. The follow-up report had been expected in 2012 and received in 2013. The Committee had discussed it at its eighty-third session and had requested more detail on certain points. The State party had provided the further information requested under paragraph 11 in the periodic report under consideration (CERD/C/SRB/2-5, paras. 25-27). The Committee would now appreciate an update on the application and impact of the Anti-Discrimination Strategy 2013-2018 in the past year. On the question of public school segregation, raised in paragraph 15 of the previous concluding observations, the Committee would like to know what measures had been taken and what the current situation was.

35. The State party's periodic report (paras. 98-108) also provided further information on follow-up to paragraph 19 of the concluding observations, on lack of access to registration for various minority groups. He wondered whether the problem still persisted and requested an update on that situation. As to the follow-up to paragraph 22 of the concluding observations, on cooperation with the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, the Committee had been satisfied with the account given in the State party's follow-up report.

36. **Mr. Avtonomov**, noting that the National Employment Strategy 2011-2020 recognized the Roma community as an especially vulnerable group on the labour market, asked what measures were in place to promote their employment, such as subsidies to encourage employers to hire Roma, or grants to facilitate self-employment.

37. The report contained no information on measures to overcome de facto segregation in schools, yet the National Education Strategy defined education for national minorities as an integral part of the education system and a series of laws had been passed to protect children from discrimination and negative stereotyping.

38. **Mr. Lindgren Alves**, noting that, in the 2011 census, many of the respondents had declined to state their nationality or religion, wondered whether those individuals were subjected to different treatment from other members of the population.

39. **Mr. Marugán** thanked the delegation for providing statistics on hate crimes and racially motivated offences in response to the Committee's concerns regarding the low reporting rate of such crimes. The reporting rate had improved up to 2015 following a reform of complaint procedures, the implementation of measures to raise awareness among police and the judiciary, and efforts to support victims. However, according to more up-to-date statistics provided by the State party to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), in 2016 there appeared to have been a dramatic drop in the number of such crimes registered by the police, although elsewhere in Europe the figures were still rising. He would welcome the delegation's comments on that situation.

40. He would appreciate more information on the Press Council complaints procedure, including updated statistics from 2014 onwards, details of how complaints were resolved and what sanctions were administered, and whether such complaints cited grounds of relevance to the Convention.

41. Under the Law on Public Information and Media, which permitted courts to ban the distribution of media content disseminating hate speech, a conviction had been handed down for hate speech in 2012. He would like to know whether any other cases of relevance to the Convention had been prosecuted under the Law since then.

42. **Mr. Murillo Martínez** asked whether the delegation could provide statistics on hate speech crimes covered by the Law on Public Information and Media. He wondered what kind of acts were most commonly reported under that Law. More generally, he would like to know whether the various legal instruments for dealing with racial discrimination made provision for the reversal of the burden of proof.

43. A context of mass migration increased the risk of human trafficking. He would appreciate some information on acts of trafficking in the State party and details of the minority groups affected.

44. One telling indicator that enabled the Committee to gauge the extent of racial discrimination in a country was the proportion of minority groups represented in the prison population. He would be grateful for some statistics showing the situation in the State party in that regard. Lastly, he would like to know what contribution the State party was making to the forthcoming regional meeting for Europe, Central Asia and North America on the International Decade for People of African Descent.

45. **Mr. Calí Tzay** asked whether the State party had considered investigating the reasons why there were so few complaints of racial discrimination before the courts. Such a study could also look into the treatment of such complaints within government bodies and administrations, where staff members might refrain from making complaints for fear of dismissal. Referring to the Committee's general recommendation No. 31 (2005), on the prevention of racial discrimination in the administration and functioning of the criminal justice system, he asked whether minority groups had access to justice in their own languages.

46. **Mr. Bossuyt**, referring to paragraph 7 of the State party's report, said that the number of Serbs of Albanian origin appeared surprisingly low and he wondered whether that had always been the case. He would like to know how those figures could be reconciled with the far higher ones given for internally displaced persons from the Autonomous Province of Kosovo and Metohija. He would be interested to know what lay behind the incident mentioned in paragraph 45 of the report, which described how Albanian leaders had walked out of discussions on amendments to the Law on Seats and Territories of Courts and Public Prosecutors' Offices.

47. The figures for asylum seekers, given in paragraph 14 of the report, only covered the period up to mid-2015 and seemed rather low. He would be interested to learn about the figures for the period since then. Paragraph 71 of the report mentioned the offence of abuse of the right to asylum in a foreign country, penalized under a recent amendment to the Criminal Code: could he assume that that provision was aimed at Serbs seeking asylum in a third country? He wondered whether the change in the law represented part of the State party's efforts to prevent the abuse of European Union visa liberalization referred to in paragraph 108.

48. According to paragraph 29 of the report, the Constitutional Court had declined jurisdiction in the matter of prohibition of informal organizations. He would be interested to know who had requested such a prohibition.

49. Referring to paragraph 38 of the report, he said that he would appreciate more information on the affirmative action measures taken to boost the share of national minorities in the police force. He would also welcome more details regarding the minority languages in use in the State party. The delegation's introductory statement had referred to 11 such languages, while various paragraphs of the report contained other figures. He wondered what languages were in official use in Serbia and to what extent it was possible to use them in judicial and administrative matters.

50. **Mr. Amir** asked whether the State party intended to ratify the amendment to article 8 of the Convention, concerning funding for the work of the Committee.

51. **Ms. Shepherd** said that, while the State party was to be commended for its positive measures to encourage Roma students to enter tertiary education, she noted that, according to the statistics for 2016, at the primary and secondary levels Roma children had a very low completion rate. Thus they were not properly prepared for higher education and could not make use of those special provisions. That would tend to explain why only 0.3 per cent of Roma actually went into higher education. She would be interested in the delegation's opinion as to the main obstacles preventing Roma from accessing tertiary education and how racial discrimination against Roma could be tackled in order to help them to stay in school.

52. Referring to paragraph 13 of the Committee's list of themes ([CERD/C/SRB/Q/2-5](#)), on the situation of other ethnic minorities, she would welcome the delegation's views on the State party's success in using education to combat prejudice, for example by providing educational opportunities such as vocational training to unaccompanied minors. The law

giving minority groups the same rights to education as Serbs had been in force since 2016, but despite the positive measures taken by the Ministry of Education to include all groups, there were reports of migrant children, including the children of irregular migrants, who had no access to education at any level. There were indications that schools were unaware of their responsibility in that regard. Migrants were not recognized as minorities and therefore had to learn Serbian. She wondered what steps the Ministry of Education and local authorities could take to guarantee compulsory education for all children regardless of their legal status. Lastly, she would be interested to know what measures were in place to punish those responsible for bullying schoolchildren belonging to minority groups and to support the victims.

53. **Mr. Yeung Sik Yuen** said that a 2008 reform allowing parents a free choice of school for their children had reportedly prompted a “white flight” that had further exacerbated de facto racial segregation in urban primary schools. He wondered what action the State had taken to correct that situation and with what result.

54. Since the adoption of the Law on the Prohibition of Discrimination in 2009 only one case out of the 80 brought to court under the Law had concerned Roma and that case had been running since 2012 with no end in sight. He would appreciate some information on measures taken to expedite cases brought under that Law.

55. The report and its annexes showed that the State party had adopted 26 strategies and action plans, which led him to wonder whether the sheer number might not have an impact on their effectiveness.

56. He asked whether any measures had been taken to improve the housing conditions of the Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian communities and develop social housing programmes for them. The Committee had received reports that a two-metre high wall had been erected around a Roma settlement in the town of Kruševac and that the pattern of racial segregation in housing had worsened, particularly in Belgrade and Niš, after public authorities had sold land to private developers and forcibly evicted Roma residents. He would like to know what corrective or preventive measures had been taken to avoid residential segregation of Roma, Ashkali, Egyptians and other minorities.

57. The State party report mentioned that charges of human trafficking had been filed against numerous suspected perpetrators between 2010 and 2015. He would like to know what the outcome of those proceedings had been, how many persons had been convicted and for what offences, and what penalties and remedies had been applied. What measures were taken by the State to combat trafficking, especially trafficking in migrants, asylum seekers and Roma children?

58. **The Chair** asked whether the State party’s strategies for Roma integration rested on the four pillars of housing, education, health and employment. In terms of housing, the Committee was concerned at the increase in the number of evictions of Roma and she would like to know whether culturally appropriate alternative accommodation was provided in such cases. There were indications that, in general, Roma and Travellers tended to die younger than other population groups and she would appreciate some information on the health dimension of the State party’s strategy.

59. **Mr. Kemal** said that, with regard to hate speech, he had the impression that there was greater restraint in political discourse than in certain of the State party’s neighbouring countries. Nevertheless there seemed to be a lack of comprehensive statistics on that subject; he would appreciate some figures showing the number of charges of hate speech brought against individuals in the course of 2016. He would also like to know whether there had been any resurgence in hate speech in the media following the warnings that had been issued.

60. Children whose parents lacked personal documentation or were stateless were themselves not registered. Regardless of their parents’ status, justice required that such children should be registered. He wondered if any measures were planned in that regard.

61. He enquired as to the possible reasons for the underreporting of the numbers of refugees in the State party, a problem that hampered the provision of funds and the search for solutions.

62. He welcomed the more stringent sentencing policy now being applied in respect of human trafficking, particularly given the major problem of trafficking of the State party's own citizens. Even stricter measures were clearly still needed, however, and he would like to know if the State party regarded the issue as a priority.

The meeting rose at 5.50 p.m.