



Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment

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Committee against Torture Seventy-fifth session

Summary record of the first part (public)* of the 1937th meeting

Held at the Palais Wilson, Geneva, on Monday, 31 October 2022, at 10 a.m.

Chair: Mr. Heller

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* The summary record of the second part (closed) of the meeting appears as document [CAT/C/SR.1937/Add.1](#).

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The meeting was called to order at 10 a.m.

Opening of the session

1. **The Chair** declared open the seventy-fifth session of the Committee against Torture and welcomed the representative of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to the meeting.
2. **Mr. Cissé-Gouro** (Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights) said that the newly elected United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights had expressed his commitment to supporting and cooperating with the treaty bodies throughout his mandate.
3. The recently issued fourth biennial report on the status of the human rights treaty body system ([A/77/279](#)) contained information on the proposal for a predictable schedule of country reviews and on initial calculations of assessed meeting time for 2024. The implementation of the predictable schedule would need to be sustained by adequate financing, and he therefore urged the Committee to encourage States parties and other stakeholders to actively support the consideration of the treaty body system's resourcing requirements, which would be critical to success in that regard.
4. Other actions taken by the Office to strengthen the treaty body system included the establishment of a task force on the operationalization and costing of the predictable schedule; an assessment of the treaty bodies' working methods aimed at identifying ways of harmonizing their working methods, avoiding duplication and achieving cost-saving effectiveness; and the development of a digital case management system for individual complaints and urgent actions which would help to rationalize working methods and increase transparency and cost efficiency.
5. The latest annual report of the Secretary-General on means of addressing intimidation and reprisals against individuals and groups for cooperating with the United Nations system ([A/HRC/51/47](#)), including the treaty bodies, had shown that the problem remained widespread. Self-censorship and the use of restrictive legislation to interfere with efforts to cooperate with the United Nations were also causes of concern. Intimidation and reprisals disproportionately affected some groups, such as representatives of indigenous peoples and minorities. He wished to commend the Committee on its efforts to address the cases of intimidation and reprisals brought to its attention in connection with country reviews and on the preventive measures that it took in that regard.
6. The adoption of a resolution by the Human Rights Council to encourage States to establish or strengthen national mechanisms for implementation, reporting and follow-up on human rights obligations and commitments was a positive development. The resolution included a recommendation that all international human rights mechanisms should promote national mechanisms as key human rights structures. He encouraged the Committee to bear that recommendation in mind in the course of its work.
7. The Human Rights Council had also published a report on the promotion and protection of the human rights and fundamental liberties of Africans and of people of African descent against excessive use of force by law enforcement officers. The report contained information on the initiatives taken by States to combat systemic racism, end impunity and advance various forms of reparations. The International Independent Expert Mechanism to Advance Racial Justice and Equality in Law Enforcement had also presented a report on the collection, publication and analysis of data, disaggregated by race or ethnic origin, on the interactions of people of African descent with law enforcement authorities and the criminal justice system. Both reports could be a valuable resource for the Committee when tackling questions of excessive use of force and racially motivated violence.
8. He wished to commend the Committee for its work and its commitment and pragmatic approach to maintaining an ongoing dialogue with States parties. Its upcoming meeting with the Subcommittee on Prevention of Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment would be particularly important, since cooperation between all treaty bodies and human rights organizations was the only way to maximize their impact in combating and preventing torture.

9. **The Chair** said that recent reports submitted to the Human Rights Council were extremely important and helped to inform the Committee's deliberations. That was particularly true of reports regarding the excessive use of force, which had been an unfortunate hallmark of law enforcement activity in recent years.

10. *The representative of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights withdrew.*

Adoption of the agenda (CAT/C/75/1)

11. *The agenda was adopted.*

Organizational and other matters

12. **The Chair** said that the Committee would consider six State party reports during the current session. The Government of El Salvador had requested that its delegation should be allowed to attend via video link. In order to grant that request, the Committee would carry out a focused country review consisting of two hybrid meetings, each lasting two hours. The focused review would deal with five thematic priorities that had been selected in advance.

13. The Committee would also hold private briefings with representatives of the national human rights institutions of Australia, El Salvador and Malawi and with representatives of the national preventive mechanism of Australia. In addition, it would prepare a number of lists of issues and lists of issues prior to reporting and would consider a number of individual communications during the session. Follow-up reports would be presented by the rapporteur for follow-up to concluding observations and the rapporteur for follow-up to decisions on complaints. Cases and allegations of reprisals against individuals and organizations cooperating with the Committee would be presented by the rapporteur on reprisals.

The public part of the meeting rose at 10.25 a.m.