



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

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**Committee against Torture**  
**Seventy-third session**

**Summary record of the 1893rd meeting**

Held at the Palais Wilson, Geneva, on Friday, 29 April 2022, at 10 a.m.

*Chair:* Mr. Heller

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*Third periodic report of Cuba (continued)*

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

**Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under article 19 of the Convention** (*continued*)

*Third periodic report of Cuba (continued)* (CAT/C/CUB/3; CAT/C/CUB/Q/3; CAT/C/CUB/RQ/3)

1. *At the invitation of the Chair, the delegation of Cuba joined the meeting.*
2. **Mr. Benítez Verson** (Cuba) said that he trusted that his delegation's exchange with the Committee would enable it to demonstrate his country's progress in implementing the Convention and pave the way for a collaborative approach to the challenges it still faced, without politicization or false claims.
3. Replying to the questions put by members of the Committee at its meeting of 21 April 2022 (CAT/C/SR.1881), he said that his delegation had been taken aback at some of the sources quoted by one of the Committee members. The non-governmental organizations (NGOs) cited were not based in Cuba, did not know the country and had failed to identify their sources of information. In addition, one of the reports, on trafficking in human beings, had been prepared by the United States Government. It was not acceptable to evaluate his country based on the legislation of another State, and Cuba did not recognize the moral authority of the United States to judge other States and place them on arbitrary and defamatory listings. Cuba acted solely in accordance with its obligations under the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and other international obligations on trafficking in persons established by the United Nations General Assembly and the Human Rights Council.
4. The Committee was aware that it was exceeding its mandate under article 22 of the Convention in considering individual communications relating to Cuba. The cases referred to by a member of the Committee on the first day of consideration of his country's report were not credible. No one in Cuba was deprived of their liberty for exercising their human rights or for their political positions. It was regrettable that individuals who failed to respect the security of the community, the general well-being, public order and the Constitution and laws should be presented as prisoners of conscience or human rights defenders.
5. The exercise of individual human rights, in accordance with the principles of progressivity, equality and non-discrimination, and the limitations to those rights, were set forth in law, in accordance with the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and other international instruments. His country cooperated fully with the Human Rights Council special procedures mandate holders and provided information as requested on alleged violations.
6. Harassment, threats, violence and intimidation were not practised in Cuba, and the forces of law and order conducted themselves in accordance with the highest international standards and with due respect for individual freedoms, regardless of political beliefs. Under article 72 of the Constitution, no citizen, whether free or in detention, was denied medical attention. To claim that individuals had been denied medical care was a blatant lie. The statistics on detention and the allegations that detention was in some cases arbitrary, were likewise false. All detention was carried out in accordance with the law.
7. With regard to the demonstrations of July 2021, it was important for the Committee to be cognizant of the truth, which had been blatantly manipulated by certain media organizations. The United States Government had attempted to overthrow the Cuban revolution by means of an intensive and well-funded political media campaign, provoking violent acts, threatening lives and resulting in material damage and destruction. Such events would not be described as peaceful demonstrations anywhere in the world. No one had been, and no one would be, arrested or punished for exercising their rights under the Constitution. The trials of those involved had been conducted in accordance with due process, constitutional safeguards and the law.
8. He wished to point out that the current global economic and health crisis was exacerbated in his country by an intensification of the United States embargo, which had

been in place for more than 60 years. The cost to his country had recently been estimated at around US\$ 150.4 billion. In the first seven months of 2021, the country had lost millions of dollars a day, totalling an estimated \$2.5 billion.

9. **Ms. Pérez Rodríguez** (Cuba) said that no one in Cuba was detained except in accordance with the Criminal Procedure Act and the Constitution, which guaranteed the right to due process. No person who had not committed a crime was detained. There was no secret or arbitrary detention and no detained person was subjected to torture or ill-treatment. There were no enforced disappearances, and Cuban law was aligned with the provisions of the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance. All detained persons were informed of the charges against them within 24 hours of arrest and had the right to communicate immediately with family members, to be represented by counsel of their choice and to have confidential meetings with counsel.

10. Under the Criminal Procedure Act, pretrial detention was used only exceptionally, when there was sufficient evidence to indicate that the accused person was criminally liable for the offence. Alternative measures could be ordered by the prosecutor or the court in accordance with the law. When the accused had been in pretrial detention for one year, the measure would be re-evaluated; indeed, the Criminal Procedure Act required the measure to be regularly reviewed. If it was revoked or modified, the court could order the accused's immediate release. In addition, a writ of habeas corpus could be lodged by any detained individual, or any other person acting on the individual's behalf, to remedy any failure to follow due process or respect constitutional safeguards and obtain the individual's release.

11. Any omissions or errors in the detention records kept by the Ministry of the Interior were investigated and disciplinary measures or criminal action initiated as appropriate. Personnel from the Office of the Attorney General inspected places of detention to monitor compliance with the relevant legal requirements concerning conditions of detention, verify that detainees had been informed of the charges against them and allowed to communicate with their families, and determine whether they had been subjected to any ill-treatment. Where violations in those areas were identified, an order was issued to restore legality and, where any criminal act was suspected, the case was referred to the Military Prosecutor's Office for investigation. Under the new Constitution, legal remedy and reparation were available to any person who suffered harm as a result of a violation of their constitutional rights by organs or officials of the State. The concept of "social dangerousness" would no longer exist under the new Criminal Code, which would further strengthen due process protections.

12. Domestic violence and any form of violence against children and adolescents were offences punishable by law. The Comprehensive Strategy on Prevention and Support in Relation to Gender-Based and Family Violence was designed to reinforce the protection available to those most at risk and to strengthen the relevant legal framework.

13. The new Criminal Code treated gender-based and family violence as an aggravating factor in cases where physical harm was caused to another person. Victims were entitled to bring complaints in accordance with article 61 of the Constitution and were given advice on the legal remedies available to them. A telephone hotline, operated in coordination with the Federation of Cuban Women, was available for reporting incidents of violence, although complaints could also be made through many other channels and would trigger action by prosecutors and other officials to investigate and launch criminal proceedings where appropriate. The penalty provided for in the Criminal Code was from 3 months' to 30 years' imprisonment, with violence against a minor counting as an aggravating circumstance.

14. The new Criminal Code merged the crimes of rape and pederasty with violence into a single offence of "sexual assault", which also included serious forms of sexual abuse and other acts, imposing penalties of 7 to 15 years' deprivation of liberty where the victim was aged over 12 and under 16. Femicide was not defined in the Criminal Code, but women were protected under various provisions of that Code and the Criminal Procedure Act. Also under the new Criminal Code, the crime of murder was aggravated where discrimination or gender-based violence was a motive or cause, or where the perpetrator was under a restraining order in relation to the victim. Under the Criminal Procedure Act, persons at risk were afforded various protections, including the right to become a party to the proceedings,

to be represented by counsel, to be protected from the accused, to submit evidence and to consult the case file.

15. The Office of the Attorney General was empowered to receive and deal with complaints as part of its mandate to oversee citizens' and the State's compliance with the Constitution and the law. In the light of their inspections of prisons and places of detention, carried out together with military prosecutors, health and employment specialists and psychologists, among others, prosecutors could order the director of a given establishment to take steps to rectify any legal breaches and apply disciplinary measures. In addition, complaints could be lodged at all administrative levels by means of a 24-hour hotline, by electronic or regular mail, through a web portal or using social media. Between 2017 and 2021, the Office had assisted 658,534 individuals and received 11,151 complaints from prisoners, detainees and family members, of which 7 per cent had been upheld following investigations, resulting in a prosecutorial order to restore legality.

16. The conditions under which persons subject to deprivation of liberty served their sentences were governed by the Prison System Regulations. A bill on the enforcement of sentences would shortly be considered by the parliament. The Regulations protected the right of prisoners to challenge decisions taken while serving their sentence. Any disciplinary measure could be challenged in writing to the Provincial Director of Prisons within 48 hours; the complaint would be resolved within 72 hours.

17. **Mr. Rodríguez Hernández** (Cuba) said that, since the age of criminal responsibility was 16, no minor under that age could be held in prison. The justice system dealt with children between 16 and 18 years of age in accordance with the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The Criminal Procedure Act, which had entered into force in January 2022, provided for special treatment of all accused minors under 18 years old. When participating in investigative proceedings, minors were entitled to have their lawyer or legal representative and their parents present. At oral hearings, minors had the right to be accompanied by a parent or a legal representative and to request that the hearing should be held in camera. The law required that a minor's parents or legal representatives must be informed immediately if they were arrested. Custodial sentences were given to persons aged 16 to 18 only in extreme cases; alternative measures, such as the limitation of freedom, correctional labour, community service, house arrest or fines, were preferred. Families were informed of the location in which their relatives were being held and were able to travel to places of detention and provide the detained person with personal hygiene items and medications.

18. **Ms. Rodríguez Sánchez** (Cuba) said that under the new Criminal Code there would be no statute of limitations for crimes against humanity and other crimes covered by the international treaties to which Cuba was a party; crimes of torture would therefore not be subject to any statute of limitations. The administration of justice in Cuba was governed by the rule of law and the principles of judicial independence and direct citizen participation. Under the Constitution, the courts constituted a structured system of independent bodies, with the People's Supreme Court exercising the highest level of judicial authority. Act 140/2021 established that the mission of the courts was to dispense justice in accordance with the Constitution, the international treaties to which Cuba was a party and domestic laws.

19. The independence of judges in the administration of justice was recognized in article 150 of the Constitution. Judges owed allegiance to the law alone and were prohibited from receiving instructions from others regarding the cases before them or from issuing recommendations to other judges about the matters under their consideration. Judges were obliged to immediately report any attempt to interfere with their independence to the head of their court, chamber or section. It was an offence to obstruct their work, and bribery and influence peddling were criminalized. Judges enjoyed security of tenure and could only be removed by the body that had appointed them.

20. Membership of the National Organization of Collective Law Practices was voluntary and was not always required in order to practise law. For example, lawyers who worked for legally recognized legal services firms (*sociedades civiles de servicios jurídicos*) could practise law. The only requirement for practising law was that lawyers must hold a law degree from a higher education institution, whether located in Cuba or abroad. Lawyers enjoyed independence in the exercise of their functions, and neither the Ministry of Justice nor the

National Organization of Collective Law Practices could influence lawyers in the exercise of those functions.

21. The alternatives to imprisonment and their application were set out in articles 32 to 34 of the Criminal Code. In the period from 2017 to 2021, the courts had sentenced approximately 41 per cent of convicted persons to deprivation of liberty; 20 per cent had been sentenced to correctional labour; 10 per cent had been sentenced to correctional labour with detention; and 6.5 per cent had been sentenced to measures limiting their freedom.

22. Training for persons working in the judicial system covered international law and the Convention in particular. A training school for the court system created strategies for the professional development of judges and offered a variety of diplomas and postgraduate courses with human rights content, including on the Convention.

23. Following the ratification of an international treaty, the Government took immediate action to ensure that there was no contradiction between domestic and international law. Article 8 of the Constitution established that the provisions of international treaties to which Cuba was a party were part of the national legal system, and it was a practice in the judicial system to employ arguments based on the provisions of such treaties. Nevertheless, the Constitution took precedence over international treaties.

24. **Mr. Álvarez Valle** (Cuba) said that there were 239 police stations in the country. The National Revolutionary Police units ensured that detainees were treated with dignity and respect, were able to contact their families and had access to legal counsel. Detainees were provided with a mattress, adequate food and access to medical care. Places of detention had sanitation facilities, natural ventilation, lighting and potable water, and most had a dining hall for meals. Persons who had been arrested were processed in an expeditious manner and were therefore only held in police custody for a brief period. Detainees could participate in socially useful labour on a voluntary basis, and their labour was remunerated in accordance with the legal standards established for the general population. Information on detainees' rights and obligations were posted visibly in detention centres.

25. Arrests were carried out on the basis of the presumed commission of a criminal act or a verified claim of participation in criminal activity, and with respect for the physical integrity and dignity of the person. Every effort was made to cause the least possible harm to citizens and their family members. Persons detained had to be informed of the charges against them and of their rights. At the time of the arrest, the full name of the detainee and the time, date and place of the arrest and the reason for it were recorded, and the record was signed by the person who had made the arrest and the person who had been arrested.

26. Continuous improvements had been made to the detainee record system, including the introduction of an automated information system that was updated in real time and indicated whether a person was being held in any detention facility of the Ministry of the Interior. That information was made available to relatives, lawyers and other interested parties in response to requests made either in person or by phone, and there were plans to make it available online. The data entered into the records were verified using identity documents or data already in the system. Prisons also maintained records of incarcerated persons that included data on their identity, the offences they had committed, their court sentences, their next of kin and details of their time in prison, including educational and labour activities.

27. Dignified living conditions were ensured in all places of detention, including through the application of personal and collective hygiene rules and protocols for the detection of HIV/AIDS and other communicable diseases and testing for coronavirus disease (COVID-19). Detainees were entitled to family and conjugal visits, telephone calls and the exchange correspondence. Contact with social, religious and State organizations was encouraged in order to reduce the negative impact of social isolation.

28. Detainees were provided with the same standard of medical and dental care as the general population, and the relationship between doctors and prisoners was subject to the same ethical and professional standards as such relationships outside the prison system. Prisoners had been vaccinated against COVID-19 free of charge and booster vaccinations had been given on request. More than 500 doctors, 1,000 nurses and 120 dentists were available through the prison health care service. Although specific units for antenatal,

postnatal and infant care were available at detention facilities for women, births took place in ordinary hospitals. Vulnerable persons were evaluated every 24 hours and their condition and treatment recorded. Prisoners' participation in medical research or experiments that could be harmful to their health was prohibited, as was the donation of blood, cells, tissue or organs by prisoners.

29. For the period 2016 to 2021, an average annual investment of 19 million Cuban pesos had been allocated to the master plan for investment in the prison system, the aim of which was to improve living conditions in prisons. There were no plans to construct new prisons because the number of prisoners was declining.

30. Training on human rights, the prohibition of torture and the use of force had been provided to all units of the National Revolutionary Police and the criminal investigation agencies. The training had included a focus on the action to be taken in specific situations, procedural guarantees and due process, and other issues related to acts prohibited by the Convention.

31. **Mr. Quintanilla Román** (Cuba), reiterating that the scope of his country's periodic report (CAT/C/CUB/3) did not include the Cuban territory that was illegally occupied by the United States of America at Guantánamo, said that during the COVID-19 pandemic, in keeping with the recommendations of the World Health Organization, restrictive measures had been adopted in strict compliance with the law to preserve lives and contain the spread of the virus. Legal and administrative complaint mechanisms were available to persons who believed that their rights had been violated by the application of those measures. Cuba promoted and protected the exercise of all human rights, including civil and political rights, but their enjoyment was subject to the limits established by law. The right to freedom of assembly was recognized under article 56 of the Constitution. The practice was to respect the right to peaceful protest, in line with existing laws and the maintenance of security and public order. The violation of those rights and freedoms was punishable by law.

32. Article 51 of the Constitution made it clear that persons should not be subjected to enforced disappearance, which was criminalized under the Criminal Procedure Act and would be an offence punishable under the draft new Criminal Code. A zero-tolerance approach was taken to all forms of trafficking in persons; further information on that matter was available in the annual national report on trafficking in persons.

33. With regard to the creation of a national human rights institution, as the Committee was aware, there was no single model for such institutions and there was no proof that countries that had established a national human rights institution had achieved better results in terms of the enjoyment of human rights by citizens. Cuba had a national system for the promotion and protection of human rights that had produced tangible results. Measures were under consideration, however, to strengthen the legal and institutional framework for the protection of human rights.

34. Cuba did not consider it necessary to ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention because the remedies established under national legislation were sufficiently effective to prevent violations of the Convention. For example, between 2017 and 2021, the prosecution service had carried out over 39,000 inspections of places of detention, and all violations detected had been addressed.

35. When the conditions were right, it would be possible to abolish the death penalty, in line with the ethical and moral convictions of the Cuban Government and people. However, until the United States of America ended its policy of hostility against Cuba, it would be necessary to retain strict laws against terrorist activities and crimes aimed at destroying the State or the lives of its citizens. The death penalty was only imposed in exceptional circumstances and with full respect for legal safeguards. Moreover, the death penalty had not been imposed for many years and a death sentence had last been carried out in 2003. The last remaining persons sentenced to death had all had their sentences commuted in 2009. As part of efforts to move progressively towards the abolition of the death penalty, Cuba had received a visit from the President of the International Commission against the Death Penalty in 2019. The new draft Criminal Code provided for the abolition of the death penalty for four criminal offences.

36. **Mr. Berti Oliva** (Cuba) said that the Government was currently reviewing the possibility of acceding to several international conventions as part of a process of improving the institutional framework. Ratification of the Convention and the Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees would be considered when the competent authorities determined that the country was in a position to meet the relevant obligations. However, Cuba was already complying with the letter and spirit of those instruments, including by ensuring dignified and humane treatment for refugees and asylum seekers in the country. According to the latest statistics, there were currently 201 refugees in Cuba.

37. Refugees and asylum seekers received free education and health care and had access to the items in the basic basket of foodstuffs on an equal footing with Cuban nationals. Anyone being assessed by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) could remain in Cuba until the refugee status determination procedure was complete. Persons who had not been granted refugee status by UNHCR might be returned to the country they had departed from before arriving in Cuba, but they would not be forced to return to any country where they claimed they would be at risk of persecution. Haitian nationals who ended up in Cuba after making a perilous attempt to emigrate from their country by boat received all necessary support, including accommodation, free of charge. The national authorities coordinated with Government of Haiti and the International Organization for Migration to ensure their safe and voluntary return to Haiti.

38. On 21 April 2022, migration talks had been held between Cuba and the United States. Cuba had reiterated its concern about measures by the United States Government that encouraged emigration, which caused loss of life and led to migrant smuggling and trafficking in persons. It had urged the United States to stop violating the right of Cubans to travel to other countries in the region and demanded full compliance with the migration accords.

39. The Criminal Procedure Act set out clear procedures and grounds for extradition. Before a person could be extradited, an assessment was carried out of the risks he or she might face in the requesting State, including because of serious violations of human rights or international humanitarian law. Extradition would not be granted if the person might face the death penalty or if he or she would be at risk of being subjected to torture or ill-treatment. Between 2011 and 2021, 13 extradition requests had been received, none of which had been refused on the grounds that extradition would be a violation of the Convention.

40. **Mr. Touzé** (Country Rapporteur) said that the Committee was not a political or diplomatic body but a body of independent experts. Its analysis was not based primarily on the political and historical situation of a State party, but on the report submitted by that State. Like all treaty bodies, the Committee received information from a number of sources, including reports of civil society organizations. He had been careful to cite his sources precisely in order that the Government might respond to them. Many of the delegation's replies had consisted in describing the legal framework; however, the Committee was more interested in how the law was applied in practice.

41. He would like to be provided with up-to-date statistics on the numbers of persons held in pretrial detention, the grounds on which they were detained and the specific facilities where they were located. He would appreciate clarification of the criteria used to assess the "dangerousness" of a person and of the definition of "socialist morality" used to determine whether deprivation of liberty was justified. He would also like to know the average duration of pretrial duration and the average duration of the period between arrest and the start of detention.

42. He would be interested in hearing more about measures being considered to improve the legal framework for the prevention of gender-based violence. It would also be useful to have clarification regarding the specific role of the Federation of Cuban Women at the national level.

43. He would like to have more information about the decisions adopted following visits to places of detention by the prosecution service and the consequences, including the changes made and any disciplinary procedures initiated. He wondered whether the Government had considered allowing the involvement of civil society partners in such visits. He would be grateful if the delegation would provide clarification regarding the number of complaints

submitted by detained persons, which appeared rather high. Reports indicated that investigations were initiated in only 7 per cent of cases. He wondered whether that was true. He wished to reiterate his request for a response to allegations of violence committed against prisoners and to know whether any proceedings had been opened in the individual cases he had raised. It remained unclear whether the Ministry of Justice was able to interfere in the exercise of lawyers' functions. He would appreciate a comment from the delegation in that regard.

44. It would be useful to have further information on the various categories of alternative sentences that could be imposed. He wished to know what practical mechanisms were in place to ensure that relatives were informed of a person's arrest or detention, the reasons for it and the place of detention and to allow them to remain in contact with the detained person. He would also like to have more details on the remedies available to prisoners to assert their rights, including specific information about the relevant procedures and how access to counsel was ensured.

45. He would appreciate up-to-date statistics on the number of places of detention and the number of persons currently in detention, disaggregated by sex and age group. He would be interested to how the Government intended to reduce the prison population. For example, did it plan to introduce legislative reforms or increase the use of alternatives to detention? Lastly, he would appreciate more specific information on extradition practices.

46. **Mr. Heller** (Country Rapporteur), affirming that the Committee was not a political body, said that its role was to formulate recommendations to help States parties improve their implementation of the provisions of the Convention. He wished to encourage the State party to consider setting up a national human rights institution to better coordinate its interactions with international human rights mechanisms, including those of the United Nations. It would also be helpful for the Government to consider ratifying the Optional Protocol to the Convention, with a view to improving conditions of detention. Establishing a national preventive mechanism could help the authorities counter any reports published outside the State party that they deemed to be politically motivated.

47. With regard to the events of July 2021, he would like data on how many individuals had been detained, how many had been prosecuted for sedition and how many had been released. He would appreciate clarification of how the authorities determined which individuals had engaged in peaceful protest in exercise of their constitutional rights and which of the protesters should be prosecuted for sedition. While the Committee recognized that the State party had faced hostility for decades and had been subjected to unilateral sanctions, it was concerned about the authorities' blanket objection to any form of protest or independent opinion. Lastly, given that the death penalty had not been applied in the State party since 2003, he wished to encourage the Government to work towards a formal moratorium, in line with the provisions of the Convention.

48. **Mr. Liu**, welcoming the steps taken to stem domestic and gender-based violence, said that he would be interested to learn more about the procedure for submitting draft laws for approval via popular referendum. He would welcome some examples of how the computerized information system operated by the Ministry of the Interior had been used to improve the registration of detainees. It would also be useful to hear more about how the embargo imposed by the United States on the State party negatively affected its implementation of the Convention. In particular, with regard to the events of July 2021, he would be grateful for details of any evidence that proved that they had occurred as a result of the politicization of human rights. How did such politicization affect the State party's implementation of the Convention?

49. **Mr. Rouwane** said that he wished to strongly encourage the State party to consider establishing a national human rights institution, which could play an important role in advising the authorities and act as a counterweight in evaluations of the situation of human rights in the country.

*The meeting was suspended at 12.30 p.m. and resumed at 12.50 p.m.*

50. **Mr. Benítez Verson** (Cuba) said that, while the Government recognized the importance of considering other sources of information, it objected to the Committee's



reliance on information solely from NGOs that were based outside Cuba and funded by foreign governments. The Government would welcome a more balanced approach to the sources used by the Committee.

51. **Ms. Pérez Rodríguez** (Cuba) said that individuals who were arrested could be held in police detention for a maximum of 24 hours and must be brought before a police investigator within 72 hours. The investigator would then decide whether to impose pretrial detention or a non-custodial measure, taking into account the seriousness of the alleged offence and any possible flight risk. If the investigator requested pretrial detention, the prosecutor had 72 hours to decide whether to grant the request. The time spent in pretrial detention must never exceed the minimum length of the custodial sentence applicable to the relevant offence. Pretrial detention orders were regularly reviewed to ensure that they were still necessary and that they were being applied in line with the applicable legislation. The size of the prison population had been reduced through the use of alternative measures and the application of judicial oversight, as provided for in the new Criminal Procedure Act.

52. Prosecutors and court officials were responsible for visiting detention facilities to ensure that penalties were being enforced in accordance with the law. Social organizations were legally permitted to visit prisons to conduct educational, sporting and cultural activities with detainees.

53. All of the 11,151 complaints of ill-treatment submitted by detainees had been investigated by the Office of the Attorney General, and 7 per cent of them had been upheld. All complaints received under article 7 of the Constitution were investigated and a personal response was provided within the established time frames. A mechanism was in place to allow individuals to challenge the response to their complaint and ensure that their rights were properly protected.

54. Membership of the Federation of Cuban Women was open to all women and girls over the age of 14 years. The organization's aim was to undertake concrete action on women's rights, including support for women who had been victims of violence or discrimination. Effective interinstitutional mechanisms were in place to deal with complaints of violence.

55. **Mr. Benítez Verson** (Cuba) said that the delegation had taken note of the Committee's comments in respect of national human rights institutions, national preventive mechanisms and the Optional Protocol. The National Assembly would soon consider draft legislation designed to further strengthen the protection of human rights.

*The meeting rose at 1 p.m.*