



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

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Summary record of the 1185th meeting

Held at the Palais Wilson, Geneva, on Wednesday, 6 November 2013, at 3 p.m.

Chairperson: Mr. Grossman

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The meeting was called to order at 3 p.m.

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

Third periodic report of Belgium (continued) (CAT/C/BEL/3, CAT/C/BEL/Q/3, HRI/CORE/BEL/2012)

1. *At the invitation of the Chairperson, the delegation of Belgium took places at the Committee table.*
2. **The Chairperson** invited the delegation of Belgium to reply to the questions raised by Committee members at the 1182nd meeting.
3. **Ms. de Souter** (Belgium) explained that the Crown Prosecutor was informed immediately when a suspect was taken into police custody since only he could authorize a suspect's deprivation of liberty. Suspects deprived of their liberty must be brought before an investigating judge within 24 hours for the judge to issue a detention order, which he or she could do only after having questioned the suspect in the presence of a lawyer.
4. In its ruling on actions to have certain provisions of the Act of 13 August 2011, known as the "Salduz" Act, declared void, the Constitutional Court had nevertheless preserved the essence of the Act through the introduction of a framework for the assistance of counsel based on new deprivation-of-liberty and seriousness-of-charges criteria. On the other hand, the Court had declared void three specific provisions of the Act, concerning which it stipulated the following: the Act should provide that suspects subject to questioning who had not been arrested must be informed of that fact, and of the fact that they were free to come and go as they pleased; the Act could not deny suspects not deprived of their liberty the right to a prior confidential consultation with a lawyer when they were liable to be charged with certain prescribed offences, including serious traffic offences; and any self-incriminating statement made in violation of the right to counsel could not be used as a basis for conviction. Those decisions had had *erga omnes* effect as from 1 September 2013, and a bill was currently under preparation in order to bring the relevant provisions of the Act into conformity with the Court's ruling.
5. The effects of the "Salduz" Act had been subject to a thorough evaluation by the Criminal Policy Unit that had been made available on its website. One indirect benefit of the Act's entry into force had been that its preparation had fostered close cooperation between the police, judges and lawyers, resulting in increased mutual understanding and respect.
6. Every effort had been made to ensure that in police stations and Justice Department buildings the confidentiality of meetings between accused persons and their lawyers was preserved. Any problems that had been reported in that regard stemmed from temporary difficulties in adapting to the entry into force of the "Salduz" Act. The Act stipulated that such meetings were to take place prior to the issuance of a detention order by the investigating judge, and thus before indictment. All persons deprived of their liberty had the right to medical assistance if necessary. The statement of rights, which was required by law to be given to any person subject to questioning, was written in simple and understandable language; it had been translated into 52 languages and made available on the website of the Federal Public Justice Department. She would supply the Committee with a copy. Persons subject to questioning were also read their rights prior to proceedings.
7. The reform of the legal aid system was under way but had not yet yielded any definitive results. Procedures relating to case-file access by persons deprived of their liberty had not been affected by the "Salduz" Act and were governed by the Pretrial Detention Act, which provided for the right to review the entire case file prior to any hearing before a court

with jurisdiction to rule on the maintenance of pretrial detention. An Act of 27 December 2012 had amended the rules governing the right to consult the case file and to obtain a copy of it, which was exercised by the parties directly concerned through an application to the investigating judge. An Act of 24 October 2013 provided for the amendment of the Code of Criminal Procedure with regard to evidence ruled inadmissible and incorporated elements of the jurisprudence of the Court of Cassation in the “Antigone” case.

8. Her Government considered that legislation and punishment were not the most suitable tools for addressing the problem of female genital mutilation. It had therefore opted for a holistic approach that focused on prevention and the provision of services to victims. Two pilot projects had been designed to address honour-related violence, and the recommendations of a study ordered in 2011 were currently under consideration.

9. **Mr. Sempot** (Belgium) said that the purpose of the prison database was for case-file management and did not include personal data such as prisoners’ ethnic origin. Overcrowding in Belgian prisons (current rate: 24.5 per cent), was a long-standing and acknowledged problem. In order to address it, various initiatives had been taken with a view to increasing the effective use of alternative sentencing. Beginning in January 2014, it would be possible for pretrial detention to be served using electronic monitoring, and discussions were under way in parliament on making electronic monitoring a penalty in its own right. A project had been initiated to streamline procedures for enforcing the penalties of community service and probation. The idea was to promote greater efficiency and effectiveness in the execution of those penalties, thereby demonstrating to judges that they offered valid alternatives to imprisonment. A series of measures were also being taken to streamline prison administration procedures in order to eliminate delays in processing prisoners’ release, thereby creating more space in prisons.

10. What was known as the Master Plan had been implemented in order to increase prison capacity, primarily through the construction of new prisons and new areas in existing facilities. Accordingly, Marche-en-Famenne and Beveren prisons had each added 312 places; Leuze prison would add 312 places in July 2014; and Haren prison would open in 2017, at which point Forest prison would be closed. The measures taken had helped to ease overcrowding somewhat. The Master Plan had given rise to an in-depth debate on the concept of imprisonment itself, and there were additional plans to build a number of open prisons.

11. The Master Plan also called for the construction of facilities to hold mentally ill-offenders, who were currently placed in ordinary prisons. Two new forensic psychiatry centres were under construction in Ghent and Antwerp, and additional facilities were planned for the Walloon and Brussels-Capital region. The secure psychiatric facilities were financed by the public health system and managed in accordance with public health standards.

12. Tilburg prison was in the Netherlands and was run by Dutch staff, but it housed Belgian prisoners under Belgian legislation and the direction of a Belgian governor. Its role had been to relieve overcrowding in Belgian prisons; it had proved to be a positive experience in that it had permitted an exchange of good practices and greater international cooperation. Indeed, the Belgian prisoners interviewed in Tilburg prison did not wish to leave, and some of the new prisons being built in Belgium would be modelled on Tilburg. The violent incidents in Tilburg referred to by the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture (CPT) in its report had been the result of tension that had built up in some of the eight-person dormitories rather than unprovoked violence, which was minimal. Discussions were under way with the Government of the Netherlands to determine the future of the arrangement, but it was not the intention of the two Governments to prolong it indefinitely.

13. The basic training programmes for prison staff had been reviewed and updated; they included modules on ethics, communication, conflict resolution, and general principles for the treatment of prisoners. There was no special code of conduct for prison officers; they were in fact subject to the more general code of conduct for civil servants.

14. The various bodies that monitored prisons were not yet competent to receive complaints from prisoners. In the meantime, prisoners could lodge a complaint, including for ill-treatment or torture, with the Council of State or with the ordinary courts. Imprisoned terrorists were not subject to a special regime; rather, the security risk they posed was assessed on a case-by-case basis, as it was for other prisoners. If considered necessary, imprisoned terrorists were placed in isolation for a limited period, but the imposition of such regimes was quite rare.

15. **Ms. Rochez** (Belgium) said that the prohibition of torture and ill-treatment was a fundamental principle that was regularly instilled in police officers through training programmes and other measures, despite the fact that it was not explicitly mentioned in the police code of conduct. To include it in the code was not inconceivable but would require revising the code as a whole; thus, her Government preferred to maintain the code as it stood. The code did, however, refer explicitly to fundamental rights and to the prohibition of inhuman and degrading treatment, and thus contained an implicit prohibition of torture. Similarly, despite the lack of a specific reference in the police code of conduct to penalties, for violations of the prohibition of torture, police officers could be punished for such violations under the Criminal Code, which stipulated the corresponding penalties.

16. Likewise, although police training programmes did not include specific modules on the prohibition of torture, officers did receive training in fundamental human rights, which encompassed that prohibition. Training in fundamental rights, including in the areas of non-discrimination and respect for diversity, had recently been strengthened, and training programmes as a whole were subject to regular evaluations in order to ensure their regular improvement. Figures concerning complaints lodged against police officers for violations of fundamental rights, including allegations of torture and ill-treatment, were indeed available, but it was difficult to establish a causal link between them and the quality or effectiveness of training provided.

17. There were strict legal provisions pertaining to the use of force by the police, which conformed to national and international regulations concerning the protection of human rights, including the prohibition of ill-treatment and all forms of torture. Such provisions were made known to police officers through in-service training programmes. The Government considered that the national legal framework was sufficient to prevent the excessive use of force by the police. Various oversight mechanisms had been set up to work on an occasional, regular or systematic basis, depending on the case, in order to ensure the appropriateness of police action in relation to the use of force. Aside from the criminal or disciplinary sanctions that could be applied, acts involving the excessive use of force could be sanctioned through the standard procedures for the preparation of officer performance reports.

18. Firearms could be used against individuals only in prescribed circumstances; police officers authorized to use them were trained to do so; and the types of weapons that could be used, as well as details concerning their storage, cleaning and maintenance, were closely regulated. Tasers could be used only by certain special units of the federal and local police. She read out statistics on the use of Tasers in various parts of the country and noted that there had been no serious incidents resulting from their use by the police; nor had there been any complaints about their use by the federal police.

19. A number of protections were provided for law enforcement officials who refused to carry out a manifestly illegal order. The police code of conduct established the principle

that no sanctions should be applied in such cases, and the relevant legal and disciplinary procedures required legal grounds for imposing sanctions against any police officer, including an officer who had refused to carry out an illegal order. The Act on workers' well-being also afforded protection to workers who lodged complaints of moral or sexual harassment in the workplace, including any that might be related to a refusal to carry out superior orders.

20. **Ms. van Lul** (Belgium), referring to the length of detention of foreigners permitted under the Dublin Regulation, read out paragraphs 66 and 67 of the third periodic report. Following the entry into force on 1 January 2014 of Regulation (EU) No. 604/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 June 2013 establishing the criteria and mechanisms for determining the EU member State responsible for examining an application for international protection lodged in one of the member States by a third-country national or a stateless person, article 51/5 of the Act of 15 December 1980 would be amended to bring it into line with the aforementioned Regulation. The latter provided that where there was a significant risk of absconding, member States could detain the person concerned in order to secure transfer procedures in accordance with the Regulation, on the basis of an individual assessment and only in so far as detention was proportional and other less coercive measures could not be applied effectively. The Regulation also provided that the period for submitting a take-charge or take-back request should not exceed one month from the lodging of the application; the reply must be given in two weeks; and the transfer must take place within six weeks of the acceptance of the request by another member State.

21. Legislation on foreign nationals would be adapted in 2014 to provide for the temporary detention of asylum seekers who had been designated for transfer to another EU member State under the Dublin Regulation and were considered likely to attempt to escape before their transfer. The entire process and, therefore, the period of detention should not exceed two and a half months.

22. The State party no longer carried out mass deportations and had amended its legislation with regard to the deportation of minors. Since the General Inspectorate of the Federal and Local Police (AIG) had become responsible for monitoring forced returns, no untoward treatment or actions on the part of the police had been reported. The AIG was obliged to suspend forced return in cases of improper conduct by law enforcement officials. Of 1,385 forced returns carried out in 2012, two thirds had not required the use of force or restraints. The AIG had monitored 162 of the remaining forced returns. It submitted individual reports on each monitoring exercise to the appropriate authorities and an annual report to the Ministry of the Interior.

23. Under the Eurodac finger-printing system, "no Member State may conduct searches in the data transmitted by another Member State, nor may it receive such data apart from data resulting from the comparison" referred to in article 4 of Council of Europe regulation No. 2725/2000. Of five persons who had received a deportation order in 2010, one was currently serving a prison term in the Czech Republic, one had been repatriated, one had received a residence permit in Belgium and another had remained as an irregular immigrant.

24. The Complaints Commission was competent to hear complaints from inmates of all closed centres for foreign nationals. More information could be found in the periodic report (paras. 128 et seq.). Independent bodies dealt with asylum seekers from Afghanistan. Around 60 per cent of asylum applications by Afghan nationals had been accepted. Not all Afghan applications were accepted because the situation in Afghanistan varied greatly from one region to another.

25. Victims of domestic violence held in closed centres could lay charges against the perpetrator and/or inform the official in charge of the centre; immediate measures would

then be taken to end the violence. Migrants in an irregular situation were entitled to file complaints on grounds of discrimination, violence or other violations of their rights. Families in an irregular situation were housed near the border in accordance with the 1944 Chicago Convention on International Civil Aviation. Roma from EU member States had the same rights with regard to residence in Belgium as other nationals of the same States. The French and Flemish Communities had developed action plans to promote the integration of Roma into local society.

26. **Mr. Limbourg** (Belgium) said that in recent years the State party had requested and received diplomatic assurances in only three extradition cases. They had all been in line with the provisions of the European Convention on Human Rights and the case law of the European Court of Human Rights. Diplomatic assurances could be accepted, after consideration by the justice authorities and the Council of State, on condition that they excluded application of the death penalty and left open the possibility of parole in cases where the extradited person faced a life sentence in prison. In the case of Mr. Nizar Trabelsi, the State party had obtained assurances from the United States that he would be tried by a civilian court and held in a civilian detention centre, would not face the death penalty, could be pardoned by the President of the United States should he receive a life sentence, and would not be extradited to Tunisia.

27. **Ms. Gallant** (Belgium) said her Government held the view that article 417 bis of the Criminal Code addressed all possible acts of torture and inhuman or degrading treatment. Under article 405 of the Code, the motive of discrimination was deemed to be an aggravating circumstance with regard to offences relating to torture and ill-treatment.

28. Initial steps had been taken to raise awareness of the Istanbul Protocol in the State party. All medical students learned to detect signs of ill-treatment and emergency services medical staff were specially trained in that area. Manuals had been published on the detection of signs of violence in general and in domestic violence cases in particular. A brochure designed to raise medical staff's awareness of trauma suffered by victims of human trafficking had been distributed to hospitals around the country in 2012. Details of prison terms and other penalties handed down in cases of human trafficking in 2010 were provided in paragraph 42 of the periodic report. Charges relating to trafficking had been brought in 873 cases in 2011 and 704 in 2012.

29. Committee P had a mandate to conduct overall supervision of the activities of the police, but not to examine specific cases. Nor was it mandated to assess the treatment of complaints against police officers by the courts. With regard to the incidents that had occurred at Bruxelles-Midi railway station in 2006, charges had been laid against 13 police officers and 1 had been acquitted. Some had resigned and others had received disciplinary penalties. The AIG had submitted a report on its investigation into the circumstances of the death in custody of Mr. Jonathan Jacob to the justice authorities. Committee P had launched an inquiry into police approaches to prisoners with psychological and medical problems. The Belgian authorities cooperating actively with the Extraordinary African Chambers in Senegal on court proceedings against Hissène Habré.

30. Her Government was not currently considering accession to the Optional Protocol to the Convention. There were, however, plans to establish a federal umbrella human rights institution, which would increase the visibility of specific vulnerable groups in the community and work with existing human rights institutions. The Government would not ratify the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families for the reasons set out in its periodic report (para. 175). It was prepared to consider amending civil legislation so as to include a specific prohibition of corporal punishment.

31. **Ms. Belmir** said that she would like further clarification on the Committee's concerns with regard to the juvenile justice system. Solutions were needed to counteract the slowdown in the administration of criminal justice. Body searches, especially of foreign nationals, were conducted in a humiliating manner. The State party made frequent reference to the European Convention on Human Rights but she wondered why it seemed reluctant to refer to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment. By the State party's own admission, the AIG did not monitor all forced returns, meaning that in some instances they took place in the absence of any independent witness.

32. **Mr. Bruni** said that no direct reference was made to the use of torture for obtaining evidence or testimony in the recently introduced article 32 of the Code of Criminal Procedure. Rather, it referred to evidence that was "obtained improperly". There was a significant difference between the two terms, which could have legal repercussions for victims. It was one thing for public officials to be found guilty of having obtained a confession under torture and quite another to be found to have done so "improperly". There appeared to be a marked reluctance to employ the term "torture" in any of the State party's legislation.

33. He asked whether it was true that prison overcrowding was worse than average in the biggest facilities. He also asked whether prisoners whose release was delayed beyond the expiry of their term for bureaucratic reasons were entitled to demand compensation. Noting that a new prison had been opened recently in the State party, he asked whether, in general, the number of beds per cell in Belgian prisons would be reduced in line with recommendations by the CPT. He would like to know why the police had a code of conduct while the prison service did not, and why including mention of torture in the police code would require its complete overhaul. He also asked why the agreement in principle of April 2010 on prison visits between the State party and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) still had not been formalized. It was difficult to see how Committee P, whose members were former police officers, could be impartial in its monitoring of police activities.

34. As to purported difficulties with measuring the effectiveness of training for law enforcement officials, he said that if there was no change in the number of complaints filed about police actions in the area covered by the training programme in question, it could probably be deemed ineffective.

35. By the delegation's own admission, it appeared that physical force had been used in one third of cases of forced return. Diplomatic assurances should in no circumstances be accepted as a pretext for failure to observe the principle of non-refoulement. Where the person being deported faced the risk of ill-treatment or worse in the destination country, the principle of non-refoulement was paramount. The State party had extradited Nizar Trabelsi in spite of a request by the European Court of Human Rights not to do so until it had completed its consideration of the case.

36. **Mr. Mariño Menéndez** asked the delegation to provide further information on the national Roma integration strategy. On the question of asylum seekers, he wished to know why Afghans had been denied asylum in the light of the political instability in their country of origin and the risk of torture they faced upon return. He enquired whether the State party took responsibility for asylum seekers subject to the Dublin Regulation who, for various reasons, could not be returned.

37. **Ms. Sveaass** requested further information on the State party's prevention and prosecution of corporal punishment of children. Regarding mental health treatment in prison, she wished to know whether there were sufficient mental health professionals for the number of prisoners requiring assistance. As to asylum seekers, she enquired whether

State officials had received in-depth training to ensure that documentation concerning cases of torture was collected and evaluated pursuant to the provisions of the Istanbul Protocol. What procedures were in place to offer redress and rehabilitation to victims of torture and how many had received compensation to date? Lastly, she wished to know whether the Government intended to introduce any alternatives to strip searches in prisons, such as the use of body scanners, and whether the prior consent of the prison governor was sought before resorting to such searches.

38. **The Chairperson** asked the delegation to confirm the circumstances surrounding, and the exact date of, the death in prison of Mr. Jonathan Jacob. He enquired whether reports that the Belgian authorities had only launched an investigation following the broadcasting of a television documentary on the case were accurate. On the question of the State party's response to cases of torture involving discrimination, he wished to know why the Flemish parliament had failed to support the ratification of Protocol 12 to the European Convention on Human Rights. Regarding cases of extradition, he enquired whether the Government had ever modified a decision not to return an individual to his or her country of origin based on diplomatic assurances. Lastly, he asked why the police code of conduct did not contain an explicit prohibition of torture together with appropriate sanctions.

39. **Ms. Gallant** (Belgium) said that a written reply would be sent to the Committee concerning the circumstances surrounding the death of Mr. Jonathan Jacob. The independence of Committee P, was an issue that had been discussed at length during the consideration of the State party's second periodic report and the delegation would be happy to provide additional written information if required. Committee P had sufficient resources at its disposal to carry out its mandate, which was to conduct investigations into alleged cases of torture or ill-treatment. It was important to note, however, that its role did not extend to monitoring every police force or conducting an overall assessment of the functioning of the law enforcement system.

40. On the question of the national Roma integration strategy, she confirmed that all EU member States were obliged to put in place a comprehensive strategy. Her Government would be happy to provide the Committee with additional written information on the question at a later date. As to the dissemination of the Convention, public officials were fully aware of its provisions but there was a tendency for the courts in particular to refer to the European Convention on Human Rights rather than the Convention against Torture. Regarding the lengthy delays in considering the legal cases of torture victims, steps had been taken at the national level to expedite court proceedings. Victims could also pursue their cases through international legal bodies. With regard to the corporal punishment of children, national laws were in place to prosecute such cases where necessary but a holistic approach was taken to that question.

41. **Ms. Moncarey** (Belgium) said that the Walloon parliament had taken numerous steps to prevent violence against children and several protocols had been established to enhance intersectoral cooperation on the matter. A telephone hotline had been introduced to provide children with access to professional counsellors, an awareness-raising campaign had been conducted and childcare professionals had received extensive training on the subject.

42. **Ms. Bynens** (Belgium) said that the Flemish parliament had set up a multi-stakeholder forum comprising representatives of the police and the judiciary in an effort to strengthen the Flemish community's response to cases of violence against children. Instructions had been drafted for the relevant authorities on the effective handling of such cases, a wide range of assistance services had been made available to victims and their families, and awareness-raising campaigns had been conducted to prevent recourse to corporal punishment and promote the use of other disciplinary measures.

43. Lastly, on the question of the ratification of Protocol 12 to the European Convention on Human Rights, she said that acts of discrimination were already covered under the provisions of article 26 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Belgian Constitution. Although the federal Government intended to ratify the protocol, the Flemish parliament preferred to follow the example of several other EU member States and await the jurisprudence of the European Court of Human Rights on that matter.

44. **Mr. Sempot** (Belgium) said that the country's newest prison would help to reduce overcrowding in the short term but would not solve the long-standing capacity problems in the prisons in large cities. The federal Government had taken measures to address prison overcrowding and had devised a strategy to create 1,100 extra prison places over the next few years. The number of prisoners in Tilburg prison in the Netherlands could not, however, be reduced until there was a significant increase in overall prison capacity in Belgium.

45. Complicated administrative procedures had resulted in a number of prisoners being released after their scheduled date. The federal Government had taken a series of steps to reform the relevant legal procedures in an effort to ensure that release orders were prepared well in advance. There were several legal provisions in place for prisoners whose release had been delayed and they had been invoked on a number of occasions.

46. Efforts had been made to limit recourse to strip searches in prisons and specific instructions on their use had been issued to all prison officers. When conducting strip searches, prison officers followed the older version of the prison regulations, which stipulated that prior authorization must be obtained from the prison governor. The federal Government had undertaken a review of its decision concerning body-scanners: the purchase of such equipment had not been considered financially viable at present but the matter would be kept under regular review.

47. **Ms. Haven** (Belgium) said that the police code of conduct appeared as an annex to a Royal Decree and would have to be completely reviewed and amended if a specific reference to torture were to be included. Such a process would be costly and time-consuming, and so the federal Government had decided not to proceed with an amendment at present. Although there was no definition of torture as a separate offence in the Criminal Code, any act amounting to torture could be prosecuted and punished under existing legal provisions and police officers were fully informed of the appropriate procedures for investigating such cases.

48. **Ms. Van Lul** (Belgium) said that there had been only one case of an asylum seeker being detained for over nine months and the federal Government had subsequently brought national legislation into line with the provisions of the Dublin Regulation to ensure that such a case did not occur again. The federal Government ensured that all asylum applications were considered on a case-by-case basis, including those from Afghan nationals, and in 2012 around 21 per cent of Afghan applicants had been granted refugee status, 39.5 per cent had been offered complementary protection and only 38.7 per cent had been denied asylum.

49. On the question of the establishment of an independent monitoring body for forced returns, NGOs had been unable to assume responsibility for the process owing to a lack of time and resources and so the federal Government had decided to strengthen the mandate of the AIG. It had also considered whether video recording should be used during the expulsion process but had rejected the idea on the grounds of practicality and an individual's right to privacy. Every effort had been made to ensure that the process was as efficient and humane as possible: the accompanying border officials wore civilian dress and every step was explained in advance to the deportee.

50. As to the high number of forced returns, she said that around 75 per cent of cases took place without an escort, and of the 1,300 cases which required an escort 30 per cent were monitored by the AIG.

51. **Mr. de Crombrughe** (Belgium) confirmed that the European Court of Human Rights had provisionally stated that the extradition of a United States citizen should not go ahead. However, it had failed to reach a final judgement on the case until after the extradition had taken place. The federal Government had decided to proceed with the extradition in the absence of a ruling as the person concerned had exhausted all domestic remedies and the national courts had concluded that he faced no risk of torture or ill-treatment.

52. **Ms. Gallant** (Belgium) said that although the relevant agreement in principle with the ICRC had yet to be formalized, wherever possible the federal Government endeavoured to respond in full to its recommendations, particularly concerning the regimes covering detainees. In the event of an asylum seeker alleging that he had been the victim of an act of torture or ill-treatment, the federal Government acted as quickly as possible to consider his request, in accordance with the provisions of the Istanbul Protocol. As stated in paragraph 138 of the periodic report, no data were currently available on the number of compensation cases brought by victims of torture or ill-treatment by police officers. And the statistics produced on the number of convictions of police officers in recent years had not been disaggregated by type of offence and did not provide information on the compensation awarded to victims.

53. **Mr. de Crombrughe** (Belgium) said that his Government remained committed to the implementation of the Convention and would provide additional written replies to the Committee's questions as requested.

54. **The Chairperson** thanked the delegation for their detailed answers and expressed the hope that due consideration would be given to the Committee's concluding observations.

The meeting rose at 5.55 p.m.