



**International Convention on
the Elimination
of All Forms of
Racial Discrimination**

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COMMITTEE ON THE ELIMINATION OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION

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Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva
on Monday, 7 August 2006, at 3 p.m.

Chairperson: Mr. de GOUTTES

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The meeting was called to order at 3.15 p.m.

CONSIDERATION OF REPORTS, COMMENTS AND INFORMATION SUBMITTED
BY STATES PARTIES UNDER ARTICLE 9 OF THE CONVENTION (agenda item 4)
(continued)

Initial report of Oman (CERD/C/OMN/1; a list of questions, an unclassified document, was distributed at the meeting in English only)

1. *At the invitation of the Chairperson, the delegation of Oman took their places at the Committee table.*

2. Mr. AL-HADRAMI (Oman) briefly mentioned the history and geographic situation of the Sultanate of Oman (paras. 1-5 of the report). According to information from the 2003 census, 2,340,815 persons lived in Oman, including 1,781,558 Omani citizens and 559,257 foreigners. The official language was Arabic, and the great majority of the population Muslim. The non-Muslims were mainly foreign workers who came from various regions of the world. All residents of the country lived in total harmony, demonstrating religious tolerance. No expressions of religious fanaticism or inter-faith dissension were permitted. Because it was a coastal State, the Sultanate assimilated many waves of immigrants from Asia and Africa and itself became a transit point for many immigrants heading towards those continents. Nevertheless, these processes had no impact on the social harmony of the country.

3. The Basic Law established the fundamental principles of State structure as well as the basic rights and obligations of citizens. It guaranteed the equality of all before the law, as well as freedom of religion. It especially highlighted the fact that justice and equality were keystones in political, economic, and social life. Article 5 of the Basic Law established that the State structure of the country was a hereditary Sultanate. The country's governmental system was made up of the following basic elements: the Sultan, who was the head of State and supreme commander; the Council of Ministers, which was responsible for setting general State policy; and the Council of Oman, which included the Shura Council and the State Council. Their functions were described in paragraphs 11 to 15 of the report.

4. In 1970, the Sultanate of Oman accepted the obligation to guarantee respect for the basic rights set out in fundamental international agreements. As a result, laws were adopted guaranteeing many human rights, such as the free choice of place of residence, freedom of movement, individual liberty, and freedom of expression and of belief. The adoption of the Basic Law, which specifically guaranteed respect for human dignity and freedom, provided the impetus for passing these laws. Thus the Basic Law forbade any infringement of individual liberty with the exception of the cases established by law. The primacy of law was made into a fundamental principle of criminal justice, in accordance with which actions were considered crimes and led to punishment only on the basis of law. In this process, Omani women did not remain on the sidelines and were able to enjoy all the rights that the law and Sharia accorded them. They played a more and more active role in the process of national development, and were represented in the State Council and the Shura Council, while also occupying leadership positions in administrative and other areas. They also distinguished themselves in higher education, gaining knowledge that permitted them to become doctors, social workers, State officials, teachers, and even policewomen. Many women were working as teachers and civil servants and also occupied various positions in the private sector. They had the same rights and obligations as men, performed the same work, and received the same remuneration in both the public and private sectors.

5. Providing State social services was only one of the ways in which the Government was providing the citizens of Oman with dignified living conditions throughout life, regardless of their own opportunities and place of residence. These services were evidence of the interest of the State in the person and of the atmosphere that predominated in the Sultanate, where families helped each other now as before. The social protection of the people embraced many areas and initiatives, both direct and indirect, and was an integral part of the general system of social solidarity, including social security mechanisms, special programmes of assistance, job creation programmes, a national programme of local development, programmes for integrating women in public life, and a programme for creating associations for social protection. The State also helped meet the basic needs of underprivileged families. In social integration programmes in the provinces, the State provided assistance to the disabled and those with special needs and provided them with all the necessary structural support, thus improving their living conditions.

6. One of the strongest aspects of the Sultanate was the fact that it satisfied the basic needs of its citizens. The State provided free medical care of the highest quality in all regions of the country, including the most remote. The State owned 87 per cent of the hospitals and 90 per cent of the health centres and sanitariums.

7. The greatest successes were probably being achieved in the area of education. The State did everything possible to expand coverage and improve the system of education, which it considered the most important instrument to develop the human being and society in general. The number of schools grew by a factor of 322, but the number of pupils grew by a factor of 510. This quantitative and qualitative leap ahead in the area of education was not an end in itself but a necessary means of guaranteeing that all Omani citizens would participate in the process of national development.

8. Therefore, the Basic Law guaranteed to all citizens the right to an education. Article 13 stipulated that education was the most important part of social progress and that the State sought to make it generally available. Today the Omani system of education was being improved in all its parts through a general strategy for the development of education. Subjects such as natural sciences and mathematics have been added to the curriculum and in the context of new methods, special emphasis has been placed on teaching English starting at an early age and on the step-by-step acquisition of information science. Oman sought to create a system of education that would be multifaceted, unified, logical and progressive.

9. The Basic Law established that judicial authority was to be independent and that judges in their decisions were to follow only the requirements of the law. In accordance with Law No. 90/99, a multipart judicial system was created, made up of a Supreme Court located in Muscat, six appeals courts in each of the provinces, and 40 courts of the first instance, located in various *wilayas* (districts). These courts were authorized to hear criminal, civil, commercial, and other cases. The Supreme Court, charged with the unified application and interpretation of the law, was authorized to handle any criminal, civil, commercial, or other case associated with personal status and tax assessment. In 1999, an administrative court was created, consisting of two chambers and charged with handling administrative disputes. It examined the decisions of the Government and had the authority to nullify them and to set compensation.

10. Oman had an open, market economy that was very much dependent on oil. After 2000, the general economic situation in the country improved, due to the rise in the price of oil, the development of the production of liquefied natural gas, increased investments in infrastructure and the ongoing process of diversifying the economy, which was reducing the dependence of the country on oil. Economic policy was set in

the context of five-year plans, in which the Government established plans for all sectors. General directions for the development of the country were formulated for the next 20 years at the conference “Oman 2020”, taking into account the evolution of the world economy and the influence of the information and communications revolution on productive activities and services. One of the goals adopted at the conference consisted in reducing the percentage of oil in the GDP from 41 per cent in 1996 to 9 per cent by 2020. After the unhappy year 1999, the growth of the private sector accelerated, driven by the development of human resources and infrastructure and by the continuing diversification of the economy – one of the three most important goals of the sixth five-year plan (2001-2005).

11. After its rebirth in 1970, the Sultanate of Oman made every effort to lay the foundations for justice and equality for all citizens. It reinforced such values as patience, brotherhood, and solidarity, with which the entire culture was imbued and which were protected by a whole range of laws and measures that guaranteed fundamental rights to all Omani citizens without discrimination of any kind. Since Islam forbade discrimination in any form and rejected it regardless of motives, it was understandable that discriminatory practice was foreign to Omani society and to the majority of its population. To promote the application of the provisions of the Convention, which guaranteed to all people and groups equal enjoyment of human rights and basic freedoms without discrimination, a series of laws was adopted in the Sultanate, specifically the Basic Law, in which rules and procedures were clearly established promoting respect for these rights. Article 17 of the Basic Law asserted that all citizens were equal before the law and that they had equal rights and obligations. Discrimination was prohibited with respect to gender, origin, skin colour, language, faith community or sect and place of residence or social status. The Basic Law also established the constitutional monitoring of the administration of justice, the functioning of the judicial system, the application of the laws and the organization of judicial authority.

12. Existing legal norms regulating the administration of justice and prohibiting discrimination applied to all physical persons and a priori to State mechanisms and institutions. State institutions and agencies refrained from any actions or methods that presupposed, encouraged, supported or legitimized discrimination, whatever the motive. Thus, article 80 of the Basic Law stipulated that no one had the right to accept rules, regulatory norms, decisions, or instructions contradicting the existing laws, decrees or international agreements and accords incorporated in domestic law. In the entire history of the Sultanate of Oman, not one law or act was adopted that encouraged discriminatory practice. Article 130 bis stipulated that encouraging religious or inter-faith conflicts or inflaming the public to hatred and unrest, or encouraging the same were punished by imprisonment for 10 years. The Sultanate had no interracial, integrative organizations or movements or any barriers between the races of any type or form. The Sultanate never knew either racial discrimination or segregation or the practice cited in article 4 of the Convention, which would require prohibition or elimination. Such practice was prohibited by the criminal law of the Sultanate and was decisively condemned in all of its expressions, both by official agencies as well as by the public of the Sultanate.

13. Penal law prohibited participating in racist and discriminatory acts, as well as supporting or inciting them. The Sultanate did not have even a single case of distributing, propagandizing, publishing, or encouraging ideas of racial superiority or racial hatred or the participation of individuals, groups, institutions, organizations or State agencies in activities of this type. There was also not even a single case of violence or incitement to violence against individual persons, groups or organizations

for reasons of ethnic or racial group, skin colour or origin. The Sultanate also had no experience of similar crimes, or organizations and propaganda campaigns, whether organized or not, which sought to justify racial discrimination or which encouraged, propagandized, financed or in any way supported activities associated therewith, which were incompatible with the national traditions and the requirements of law. For this reason, the Sultanate did not need to declare illegal or to prohibit organizations of this type or participation in them.

14. The human being was the central focus of the country and the most important factor in its development. In the spirit of this principle, the national legislation and bylaws emphasized the importance of human beings and respect for their rights, regardless of whether they were Omani citizens or not. The laws and bylaws of the Sultanate were designed to guarantee equality and justice and the rule of law, to encourage tolerance and brotherhood and to defend the social structure of Oman, at the foundation of which lay knowledge and Islam.

15. With regard to the right to personal inviolability, Mr. Al-Hadrami referred to article 18 of the Basic Law, which guaranteed individual liberty to all persons and prohibited their arrest, search, detention, imprisonment and restriction of their freedom of movement, except as stipulated by law. The law also guaranteed to all citizens the enjoyment of political rights, including the right to take part in elections without any discrimination, in accordance with the conditions and rules stipulated by law (para. 69). Article 11 of the Basic Law stated that State property was inviolable, and private property was protected. No one could hinder property owners in the use of their property, except in the public interest in cases stipulated by law and under the condition that the person relinquishing property was fairly compensated (para. 71). According to article 35 of the Basic Law, all foreigners lawfully residing in the territory of the Sultanate had the right to defend their liberty and their property (para. 72).

16. Article 17 of Law No. 3/38 on citizenship established the conditions for receiving Omani citizenship, while asserting the principle of the equality of men and women in this area (para. 75).

17. Article 209 of the Penal Code stipulated imprisonment for up to 10 days and a fine of 500 reals for blasphemy, for insulting attacks on religion in public places or publications, and for inappropriate behaviour during religious meetings (para. 76).

18. Mr. Al-Hadrami stated that economic, social and cultural rights were guaranteed by articles 11 to 13 of the Basic Law. Article 11 listed a series of economic principles on which the system of administration was constructed and which defended the justice, equality, freedom and dignity of the person (para. 79). The rights to a job and to housing were guaranteed by article 12, in which it was also stated that the State adopted laws to protect both hired workers as well as employers and to regulate their interrelationships. In order to strengthen the provisions of this article, the Sultanate ratified the 1930 Convention No. 29 of the International Labour Organization (ILO) on forced labour, the 1999 ILO Convention No. 182 on the worst forms of child labour, and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (para. 80).

19. The 2003 Labour Law contained many provisions guaranteeing the equality of all workers, regardless of nationality, gender or faith. The definition of the term “workers” contained in the first article of this law was extended to all workers, regardless of gender or nationality (para. 81).

20. As regards the freedom of peaceable assembly and association, many articles of the Labour Law were devoted to the procedure for creating representative committees, which were called upon to defend the labour and other rights of workers (para. 82).

21. Regarding the right to education and professional training, article 15 of the Basic Law stated that education, which was the most important element of social progress, was called on to raise the general cultural level and to create conditions that made it possible to promote social equality and a spirit of toleration (para. 85).

22. Responding to the first question on the list, regarding the composition of the population, Mr. Al-Hadrami said that Oman collected no statistics on the racial or ethnic structure of the population. With regard to the place of the Convention in domestic law, article 72 of the Constitution stated that national law could not contain any norms contradicting the international obligations of the State.

23. Mr. Al-Hadrami noted that Omani law had no definition of racial discrimination. There was no necessity for such a definition, due to the absence in the Sultanate of cases of racial discrimination and practices as defined in article 3 of the Convention, requiring prohibition or elimination. The law prohibited practices of this type, but the Penal Code set forth punishments up to and including imprisonment for 10 years for incitement to racial discrimination in connection with religious or inter-faith conflicts (para. 60).

24. Responding to questions regarding the application of article 2 of the Convention, Mr. Al-Hadrami stated that the Labour Law strengthened the principle of the equality of all workers regardless of nationality, gender or faith. At the same time, no targeted policy for eliminating racial discrimination was being carried out in light of the fact that this phenomenon did not exist in the country.

25. In response to the eighth question on the list, the Omani representative declared that women in the Sultanate enjoyed the same rights as men in all areas, including obtaining citizenship. In the Sultanate, marriages between Omani women and foreigners were permitted but legalizations were required on the basis of a special procedure. The purpose of this procedure was not to prohibit mixed marriages but to regularize this process. Women also had the same rights as men in matters of inheritance.

26. In regard to the application of article 4 of the Convention, Mr. Al-Hadrami recalled that Omani criminal law prohibited participating in racist or discriminatory acts, or supporting or inciting them; he also emphasized that domestic judicial authorities had never once heard cases of this type.

27. With regard to the implementation of article 5, the Omani representative indicated that all citizens were equal before the law regarding employment and working conditions and that the Labour Law established for workers a series of important rights, which were directly connected to obligations. He did not know of any cases where foreign workers were not promptly paid their wages or their documents had been confiscated. The speaker never heard of cases of sexual violence against migrant workers.

28. Mr. Al-Hadrami noted that the Sultanate was currently studying the possibility of ratifying the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families. He added that persons in the country illegally, awaiting return to their country of origin, were placed in reception centres in which all standards of security and hygiene were observed. This work was coordinated with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. Assisting migrant workers in illegally entering the country was a criminal offence. On the other hand, foreigners in the country legally had the same rights to housing as Omani citizens, without any discrimination.

29. As to the implementation of article 7 of the Convention, the Ministry of Education organized training for police employees, teachers and social workers on the protection of human rights and the fight against racial discrimination. School programmes developed in cooperation with UNICEF especially emphasized the fight against racial discrimination, respect for human rights and the encouragement of tolerance.

30. Mr. AVTONOMOV (Rapporteur for Oman) applauded the submission by the State party of its first report, which gave the Committee the opportunity to enter into a dialogue with it, despite the delay. He noted generally that the State party had been conducting a policy of reform for at least 10 years so that Omani society might be in step with the times, while respecting its own traditions.

31. The population of the Sultanate, currently at a crossroads of various routes, was quite heterogeneous, made up of Arabs, Pakistani immigrants who had settled in Oman many centuries ago, and immigrants from East Africa, India, Pakistan, and Middle Eastern countries who had arrived in the country during the last 30 years. Omanis of Arab descent, which applied to the majority of the population, could be divided into various groups, each having its own traditions and linguistic peculiarities. Inasmuch as all the preconditions for racial discrimination were present, the Rapporteur asked whether the statement as to the absence of cases of racial discrimination in the Sultanate of Oman had not been made too categorically (para. 91 of the report). The Committee would be better able to evaluate the situation if the State party would provide it with detailed information regarding the ethnic composition of the population, as well as statistical data on the representation of various groups in central and provincial governmental bodies and in the liberal professions.

32. In addition, the Rapporteur referred to the fact that the State party had not submitted any basic documents with its report. Although this insufficiency was remedied by separate, general information at the beginning of the report, he emphasized that the State party would be well advised to prepare a basic document, since this would permit the appropriate contractual agencies to better evaluate the situation of interest to them, while taking account of all the political, economic, and juridical conditions in the country. With regard to water supply, one of the most important problems in the country, the State was obligated to guarantee general access to water resources without discrimination. In this connection, the Committee wished to know whether equal access to water was available to all underprivileged groups in the population, including women, children, refugees, immigrants, minorities, rural inhabitants and nomadic peoples.

33. Finally, Mr. Avtonomov wished to know whether Oman was a participant in the regional human rights agreements, specifically the Arab Charter of Human Rights, and whether the country was in accord with the amendment of article 8 of the Convention, which had been recommended by the General Assembly at its forty-seventh session.

34. Mr. SICILIANOS noted that in its responses to the third question, the Omani delegation indicated that, although domestic law did not provide a clear definition of racial discrimination, any and all expressions of it were severely punished. Since actions which were not clearly defined juridically could not be punished, he wished to know which legal norms made it possible to fight against racial discrimination and to guarantee respect for the principle of non-discrimination. With regard to paragraph 56 of the report, where it was stated with reference to article 17 of the Basic Law that all citizens of the country were equal before the law, and the assertion of the Omani delegation that no distinctions were made between citizens and non-citizens, he asked in what way the article in question could be applied to foreigners who were living in Oman and who made up 24 per cent of the population. In this connection, were there

any contradictions between the Constitution, domestic law and practice? In addition, the speaker applauded the practical examples of implementing the right to participation in the judicial process, which was strengthened in article 25 of the Basic Law (para. 57).

35. Confirming that the Penal Code prohibited any incitement to racial discrimination in the context of enflaming religious or inter-faith conflicts, Mr. Sicilianos asked the Omani delegation to explain whether the law would punish similar incitements which were made in a different context, and if so, on the basis of which legal norms. With regard to the assertion made in paragraph 62 of the report regarding the fact that ethnic groups did not exist in the Sultanate of Oman, the speaker asked for more detailed information regarding the definition of the term ethnic group by the State party, as well as regarding the ethnic composition of the population.

36. In addition, Mr. Sicilianos emphasized that the absence heretofore of cases of incitement to racial hatred in Oman did not exempt the State party from the obligation stated in article 4 of the Convention to adopt legislation prohibiting racist organizations, regardless of whether they existed in a country or not, since this had to be done if only for purposes of prophylaxis.

37. Finally, Mr. Sicilianos wished to know whether citizens and foreigners were equally guaranteed the right to private property, as well as economic, social and cultural rights. In addition, he requested specific information regarding the application of the 2003 Labour Law (para. 81 of the report).

38. Mr. VALENCIA RODRIGUEZ, turning to the high percentage of foreigners among the population of the State party, asked the Omani delegate to indicate what percentage of the members of the Shura Council and the State Council were not native born Omanis, and what percentage were women. He also asked for clarification on whether foreign women were also subject to the important measures that had been adopted to improve the situation of women in Oman, basically to improve their literacy rate and whether foreigners had access to the services that were provided, specifically health-care services and education.

39. Noting with satisfaction the efforts made by the State party in the new policy in education (para. 33 of the report), Mr. Valencia Rodriguez suggested including in the curriculum courses that had the goal of encouraging respect for and expansion of human rights. He also wanted to know whether article 130 bis of the Penal Code, which prohibited the incitement to religious and inter-faith hatred, was also applicable to cases of incitement to racial hatred.

40. With regard to the equality of all workers, regardless of nationality, the expert posed the question as to the way in which the opportunity to enjoy the rights set out in article 5 of the Convention was being assured to foreigners, especially with regard to access to employment, property and housing. In addition, he wished to know whether the principle of equality in the application of the law regarding social security was being observed, which would guarantee social services to eight categories of persons (para. 83). With regard to the application of article 6 of the Convention, Mr. Valencia Rodriguez requested that information be supplied regarding the payment of compensation and damages to victims of racial discrimination. Finally, with respect to article 7 of the Convention, the speaker wished to understand the role of the programmes described in paragraphs 87 and 88 of the report in supporting an atmosphere of tolerance, friendship, and harmony among the residents of the Sultanate.

41. Mr. LINDGREN ALVES recalled that Oman became a participant in the Convention only in 2003 and noted with satisfaction that the country was making an exemplary attempt to satisfy all the obligations deriving from the Convention. Having

read in the report that the thriving civilization of the Sultanate went into decline in the nineteenth century and that the revival of the country began only in 1970 (para. 1), the speaker asked about the causes of this decline and revival and the role that colonization played therein.

42. Mr. Lindgren Alves said that the Sultanate of Oman deserved praise for the fact that it had signed the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court but at the same time he noted that Oman was a participant in only two important international agreements: the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. It was all the more surprising to read in paragraph 16 of the report that the State party affirmed that since 1970 it had paid great attention to protecting the rights that were enunciated in international agreements. No less surprising was the fact that the Shura Council was made up of members who were selected democratically (para. 11), since it was known that political parties did not exist in the State party. The question arose as to how the voters could elect their representatives under these conditions.

43. Mr. Lindgren Alves asked the delegation to confirm that only native born citizens had the right to vote in the country, and also to explain to the Committee the distinctions that were made between revealed and other religions. Finally, asserting that, in accordance with article 35 of the Basic Law of the Sultanate of Oman, “foreigners respected the values of the society and its traditions and customs”, the speaker asked the delegation to explain whether this demand was also extended to other immigrants, including Muslims, who had settled in Europe.

44. Mr. EWOMSAN thanked the delegation for the high quality report of the State party. He agreed with the comments that other members of the Committee made in connection with the statements of the State party regarding the fact that racial discrimination did not exist in Oman. Whatever the case may be, educational work was necessary, if not for purposes of eradication then for purposes of preventing discriminatory sentiments. In this connection, the speaker posed the question as to why the international agreements, including the Convention, were not mentioned in any of the subjects included in the curriculum and described in detail in paragraph 89 of the report.

45. Mr. KJAERUM asked how the report had been prepared, specifically, whether civil society had been involved in its preparation. Since non-citizens made up nearly a quarter of the population, he forcefully suggested that the State party familiarize itself with General Recommendation XXX formulated by the Committee regarding discrimination against non-citizens and pay particular attention to its paragraph 6, which calls on the State party “to analyse and review laws in the relevant cases for the purpose of ensuring that they have completely reflected the Convention, specifically as regards the effective realization of rights set out in article 5, without any discrimination”.

46. The expert asked the delegation to explain the assertion according to which citizens and non-citizens could enjoy the rights to such services as education and health care without any discrimination. He asked the delegation to clarify whether a tourist who was travelling through the country and a worker who had been in the country for 10 years had the same rights or whether these rights were obtained gradually. In addition, it was to be wished that the State party explain whether it considered as contradicting the requirements of the Convention the fact that children could not automatically become citizens of Oman if both of their parents were not citizens of this country, as well as the reasons why naturalized citizens did not have the right to vote and run for office. Similarly, the State party might expand on the meaning of paragraph 69 (c) of the report, in which it was stated that any Omani could run in elections to the Shura Council if he had “a sufficient level of cultural

development and the appropriate practical experience”. On the basis of what examination or of what other kind of method was this “sufficient level” determined?

47. In conclusion, noting that independent, national human rights institutions played an important role in monitoring human rights today in more than 100 countries, Mr. Kjaerum asked whether the State party planned to create such an institution.

48. Mr. TANG Chengyuan noted that, regardless of the shortness of the report, a wide range of questions had been addressed in it. It would be useful to become familiar in greater detail with the situation of the approximately 24 per cent of the population who did not have Omani citizenship. The speaker said that, if he understood correctly, these people were basically foreign workers; at the same time, he wished to know what their origins were and whether they were included in the number of those requesting asylum. Oman, which was not a participant in the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, might communicate whether it was doing everything necessary in order to keep from sending people to countries where they were threatened by persecution. The question arose as to the legal-protection measures that were at the disposal of foreign workers in cases where they were subjected to discrimination regarding payment for work, working conditions and working relationships. The Committee member specifically asked whether such cases were reviewed in the courts and if so, what the results were.

49. Mr. PILLAI noted with satisfaction that the Sultanate of Oman had presented its first report by the deadline. The speaker was struck by the determination reflected throughout the report to modernize the country and to raise the quality of life of its residents. According to individual indicators, such as the rate of infant mortality or the participation of girls in elementary and secondary education, Oman had reached the level of industrially developed countries. He regarded as positive the fact that the minimum age for participation in camel races had been raised. At the same time, considering the percentage of the foreign population, the State party was urged to remedy without delay the absence in the Basic Law of the definition of discrimination based on racial group or origin. According to paragraph 74 of the report, the first article of the Citizenship Law stated that citizenship should be afforded without any manner of discrimination “on the basis of skin colour, gender or religion”. Was discrimination prohibited only on the basis of these three classifications? The speaker also requested information as to whether mechanisms existed for reviewing complaints regarding violations of the principle of equal pay for equal work.

50. Ms. JANUARY BARDILL also expressed interest in the question of why an Omani woman who married a foreigner could not transfer her citizenship to children and whether the State party planned to modify this regulation. She requested information as to whether workers from Southeast Asia and Africa were protected by specific laws or administrative norms, whether institutions had been created for these persons, especially with respect to working conditions and whether mechanisms existed for filing complaints regarding illegal firing. She recommended that the State party in its next report take a more critical stance with regard to itself, since the preparation of reports was more than anything else a mechanism for analysis, which would not be useful to the State party if it were not absolutely objective.

51. Mr. AL-HADRAMI (Oman) thanked members of the Committee for their questions, to which he promised to respond at the next meeting. He assured the Rapporteur that he would be very welcome in the Sultanate.

The meeting rose at 5.55 p.m.