



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

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COMMITTEE ON THE ELIMINATION OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION

Sixty-fifth session

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 1663rd MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Monday, 16 August 2004, at 10 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. YUTZIS

later: Ms. JANUARY-BARDILL
(Vice-Chairman)

later: Mr. YUTZIS
(Chairman)

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

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

Initial, second and third periodic reports of Kazakhstan (continued) (CERD/C/439/Add.2)

1. At the invitation of the Chairman, the members of the delegation of Kazakhstan resumed their places at the Committee table.

2. Mr. ABDILDIN (Kazakhstan), introducing his delegation's replies to the questions asked at the Committee's previous meeting and the questions contained in the list distributed informally, said that the dialogue with the Committee had already been most instructive. The questions asked and the recommendations made would enable his Government to improve the content of Kazakhstan's next periodic report. Moreover, his delegation now had a clear picture of those aspects of the situation in Kazakhstan with respect to racial discrimination that required greater attention.

3. The national Commission on Human Rights was an advisory body established in 1994 within the Office of the President of the Republic. Under the Constitution, the President was the guarantor of the human rights and freedoms of all Kazakh citizens, irrespective of nationality. The role of the Commission was to assist him in carrying out that important function. Its 21 members included the Procurator-General, the First Deputy Minister of the Interior, parliamentary deputies and leaders of the main faiths in Kazakhstan. Almost 50 per cent of the members were representatives of NGOs, a fact which reflected his Government's recognition of the vital role of NGOs in the development of civil society. As to the ethnic composition of the Commission, the current membership consisted of Kazakhs, Russians, Jews, Ukrainians and Koreans. The Commission produced an annual report on the human rights situation, which was submitted to the President; an abridged version was published in the media. The Commission had received around 700 individual complaints of human rights violations in the past year.

4. In addition, the Ombudsman's Office, an independent body established in 2003, had received some 2,000 complaints. The allegations that the President had issued a decree suspending the consideration of individual complaints were unfounded. The legislation relating to the establishment of the Ombudsman's Office had been reviewed by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Centre in Kazakhstan, which had found it to be consistent with international norms.

5. The Majilis, the lower house of parliament, consisted of 77 deputies, 58 of whom were Kazakhs. There were no restrictions on the right of any ethnic minority to vote or stand for election. Currently, there were only eight women deputies. Women's underrepresentation was perhaps attributable to the persistence of traditional attitudes: few women ran for public office, and women themselves preferred to vote for male candidates.

6. He agreed that the virtual absence of complaints of racial discrimination did not mean that the problem no longer existed. At the same time, the situation of ethnic minorities in Kazakhstan was relatively satisfactory. Members of the Russian minority, in particular, felt that their conditions compared favourably with those of the Russian diaspora in the Baltic States, for example, and were thus unlikely to complain of minor incidents involving racial discrimination.

7. The national language of Kazakhstan was Kazakh. Russian had the status of an official language, while other minority languages were used in the administration as necessary. Members of ethnic minorities living in compactly settled groups had the right to study in their native languages. Most, however, studied in Kazakh or Russian.

8. Kazakhstan had signed the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and would ratify it as soon as the relevant formalities had been completed. It was not yet a party to the two Optional Protocols. The possibility of acceding to the First Optional Protocol was currently under discussion, and he was optimistic regarding the outcome. As to the Second Optional Protocol, while the President had recently declared a moratorium on the death penalty, the impact would have to be carefully considered before any decision on accession was reached.

9. Ms. January-Bardill (Vice-Chairman) took the Chair.

10. Mr. RYABCHENKO (Kazakhstan) said that, of the total number of students in higher education, 68.7 per cent were ethnic Kazakhs, 21.9 per cent Russians, 1.8 per cent Ukrainians, 1.3 per cent Tatars, 1.2 per cent Germans and 1.1 per cent Koreans. He had no data on levels of morbidity among the different ethnic groups, as patients were not required to state their ethnic origin when receiving medical treatment.

11. He was pleased to note that Kazakhstan had experienced strong economic growth in the period 1999-2003. Gross domestic product had increased by 9-10 per cent a year and real income by 10 per cent, while the unemployment rate had fallen from 13.5 to 8.8 per cent. He was aware, however, that, in other developed market economies, the rate was typically around 5.6 per cent. Given the continuing decline in joblessness, Kazakhstan was expected to achieve a similar figure in the near future.

12. Unemployment was a regional phenomenon in Kazakhstan. Thus, joblessness was relatively low in the west of the country, in regions bordering the Caspian Sea, where the oil and gas sectors were booming, and higher in the central and southern regions. In rural areas, the problem was of a seasonal nature. There was no evidence that ethnic minorities had been disproportionately affected by the collapse of the economy. Likewise, all ethnic groups had experienced improvements in their living conditions as the economy had begun to recover. No preference had been given to any particular ethnic group during the privatization process, which had been effected on the basis of market principles. In that connection, he noted that a number of major enterprises had been sold to multinational corporations.

13. There were 5,130 Roma in Kazakhstan. Most lived in large cities, where they led a settled way of life.

14. He wished to emphasize that, when it had characterized some religions as “non-traditional”, his delegation had not used the term in a pejorative manner. It should have stated that the teachings of certain faiths, Wahhabism and Mennonism, for example, were new to Kazakhstan. He noted that, under Kazakh legislation, no one could be subjected to discrimination on grounds of religion.

15. Reverting to the issue of complaints of racial discrimination, he said that two such complaints had been lodged with the Ombudsman’s Office in 2003, but both had been declared unfounded. Four persons had complained that their right to freedom of religion had been violated, and one of those complaints had been upheld. In his opinion, the low number of complaints indicated that, while there were isolated incidents in Kazakhstan, there was no systematic pattern of racial discrimination.

16. He was not aware of any measures taken by his Government to restrict the activities of human rights defence organizations. Given that there were more than 4,000 NGOs in Kazakhstan, of which some 10-15 per cent were human rights organizations, any attempts to control them would be futile. In fact, his Government actively promoted the development of NGOs as a vital component of civil society. Currently, parliament was considering legislation that would enable projects implemented by NGOs to be funded directly from the State budget. Several ministries already gave grants to NGOs, including human rights organizations.

17. Regarding the use of minority languages in schools, he said that Kazakh was the language of instruction in 3,390 schools and Russian in 2,376 schools. There were also 2,049 so-called mixed schools, where instruction was provided in Kazakh and one other language, as well as Uzbek, Tajik, Uighur, Ukrainian and German schools. In addition, ethnic minority children could study their native language in some Kazakh schools. Many minority communities provided classes in their respective languages at Sunday schools. There were more than 300 such schools, which received funding from the State budget.

18. His Government sought to promote the preservation and development of the languages and cultures of all of Kazakhstan’s ethnic groups. Education was an important instrument in that regard. Another was the State ethnic and cultural policy. Under the Culture Act, all persons of any nationality had the right to participate in the development of their national culture, and all citizens were required to respect the language, culture, customs and traditions of the Kazakh people and the other peoples of Kazakhstan.

19. Mr. RYABCHENKO (Kazakhstan) said that the integration of minority cultures was based on the principle of harmonization, rather than assimilation into the Kazakh culture. The term “Kazakhstan culture” referred to all national cultures within the territory of Kazakhstan, rather than simply Kazakh culture. Financial support from the State budget was granted to ethnic minority groups for education. Some ethnic minority groups were given the opportunity to participate in decision-making processes that affected them, particularly in relation to education. Sunday schools, funded by the National Union of Cultures, were held for ethnic minorities, for the teaching of their national languages and cultures. The development of the State language was an independent process, which would not impede the development of other national languages.

20. Regarding religious and national self-identification, the periodic report stated that it was possible for citizens to combine their national and religious identification, which was customary among the larger communities - the Kazakhs, Russians, Ukrainians, Germans and Koreans. However, there was no objection to representatives of certain ethnic groups converting to a religion that was not typical of their ethnic origin, such as Russians and Ukrainians converting to Islam. All persons had the right to untrammelled religious affiliation.

21. Mr. OTTO (Kazakhstan) explained that the population of his country had declined considerably over recent years because when it had regained its independence, its borders had opened and almost 1 million Greeks and Germans had returned to their homelands. There had also been a mass exodus of former Soviet citizens, such as Russians, Belarusians and Ukrainians, who had suddenly found themselves classed as “foreigners” in Kazakhstan. Another reason for the considerable outflow had been Kazakhstan’s transition to a market economy and the beginning of privatization. Those processes, in particular the privatization of agriculture, had had serious consequences for the country’s economy and the general standard of living, thus causing many people to leave in search of greater economic stability. Over the past two years, the situation in Kazakhstan had stabilized and a number of people had returned.

22. Quotas for the number of Kazakhs allowed to return to the country were set by a special agency for migration and demography, which based its calculations on the maximum budgetary allocations that could be devoted to providing documents, housing and loans for returnees. The annual quota usually allowed for the return of 10,000-15,000 families.

23. Russians and Chechens were not granted residence permits in Kazakhstan because Kazakhstan and the Russian Federation were members of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). Citizens of those States were free to travel between them with no visa requirements. Chechens were citizens of the Russian Federation and enjoyed the same rights in Kazakhstan as all other Russian citizens. There were currently 30,000 Chechens resident in Kazakhstan, many of whom had lived there for a considerable period. Approximately 12,000 Chechens had migrated to Kazakhstan in order to escape the conflict in Chechnya. The majority of the Chechen population was not seeking Kazakh citizenship, and the registration process to enable them to legally reside in the country was straightforward.

24. The geographical situation of Kazakhstan meant that it was a crossroads between Asia and Europe. The country had suffered wars with Tajikistan and Afghanistan, as well as having been affected by external conflicts in neighbouring countries. His Government had therefore been compelled to enact a law on terrorism and to ratify the International Convention on the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism. None of the official documents on terrorism in Kazakhstan made specific reference to particular States or nationalities and there was no discrimination against specific peoples or religions in the anti-terrorism measures.

25. Mr. STAMKULOV (Kazakhstan) said that active measures had recently been taken to deal with the problem of trafficking in persons, including a series of legislative amendments. In 2003, the Kazakh parliament had established an interdepartmental commission against trafficking in persons, the members of which were representatives of State bodies and NGOs. The commission coordinated the work of all State bodies dealing with trafficking in persons. It was regulated by the Government and reported on the situation to the President of the Republic and parliament. The Government had devised an action plan to combat trafficking in persons

for 2003-2005, under which eight criminal proceedings had been initiated in 2003 and five in the first half of 2004 in relation to the smuggling of persons for exploitation abroad. Further legislative amendments were currently being made, and rehabilitation centres had been opened in all major towns to provide assistance to victims.

26. It was still difficult to detect cases of trafficking since the crimes were clandestine and many victims were afraid to report cases to the authorities. The Government and NGOs had therefore initiated awareness-raising programmes through the media in an attempt to prevent such practices. A law on the rights of the child had been passed in 2002 to prohibit trafficking in minors and child exploitation, and that had led to the recent enactment of a law on the prevention of crimes involving children.

27. Turning to the question on whether measures would be taken to incorporate the constitutional definition of discrimination in the Criminal Code, he said that, as in all other States, the Constitution was the highest form of domestic legislation and was enforced nationwide. The Convention, which had priority over domestic legislation, contained a comprehensive definition of racial discrimination, so no such definition had been included in the Criminal Code. However, since a recommendation had been made by the Committee, the Government had decided to incorporate a definition of racial discrimination in the Criminal Code and the relevant amendments would be made in due course.

28. Mr. Yutzis (Chairman) resumed the Chair.

29. Mr. KIM (Kazakhstan) said that several articles of the Constitution prohibited discrimination on grounds of origin, social or professional status, property, sex, race, nationality, language, attitude to religion, beliefs, place of residence or other circumstances, and the Criminal Code contained provisions concerning offences motivated by social, national, religious or racial hatred. Over recent months there had been an increase in the number of discrimination cases brought before the courts.

30. Statistics on cases of discrimination that had arisen during the period of privatization did not exist. Measures were being taken to establish a database for collecting and storing such statistics in future.

31. Mr. ZHANABILOV (Kazakhstan) said that over recent years there had been considerable legislative reform which had been carried out with technical cooperation from United Nations organs and other international bodies. In December 2000, a constitutional act had been adopted on the legal system and the status of the law. Judicial power could only be exercised by the courts, and all other bodies were prohibited from making judgements or assuming other responsibilities of a court. The act prohibited all interference in legal practices and provided for the independence of the judiciary. Under the act, disciplinary responsibility was exercised by disciplinary commissions, which worked at both the national and regional levels to oversee disciplinary cases.

32. Legal personnel must have the endorsement of a qualified school of justice. The High Legal Council would then send the court a recommendation, which would be assessed by the president of the High Court. All candidates for posts in the legal profession had equal rights irrespective of their origin, social or professional status, property, sex, race, nationality,

language, attitude to religion, political affiliation, place of residence or other circumstances. The Criminal Code contained a separate chapter concerning offences against the justice system. All questions relating to the independence of the judiciary were provided for in the constitutional act, and all other matters regarding the functioning of the judicial system were provided for by that and other legislation.

33. Mr. ABDILDIN (Kazakhstan) thanked the Committee members for their interest in his delegation's replies. Although he could not say that Kazakhstan had a perfect anti-discrimination record, efforts were being made to improve the situation, and the Committee's questions and recommendations were taken very seriously.

34. The CHAIRMAN thanked the delegation of Kazakhstan for its comprehensive replies to the Committee's questions. He invited members of the Committee to ask further questions.

35. Mr. BOYD thanked the delegation for its comprehensive replies and for providing detailed information on the various government and judicial organs entrusted with the promotion and protection of human rights. It would be useful to learn how the procedures for resolving complaints of racial discrimination were applied in practice and how the results of such proceedings were communicated to the general public.

36. Considering the varied composition of the population, he was somewhat sceptical about the virtual non-existence of complaints of racial discrimination received by the Kazakh Commission on Human Rights. In the two cases brought to the Committee's attention, the Commission had found the charge of discrimination unsubstantiated and the complainants had subsequently conceded that their complaints had been unjustified. While inadmissibility for lack of substantiation was not unusual, the small number of complaints and the complainants' concessions were surprising.

37. He supported the view of Mr. Valencia Rodríguez that the absence of such cases might be attributable to the victims' ignorance of their rights, a lack of confidence in the law enforcement authorities or the authorities' failure to give due attention to cases of racial discrimination. In that connection, he asked how, if at all, the work of the Commission on Human Rights was publicized.

38. He noted with satisfaction the diverse composition of the Commission and the inclusion of NGO representatives, and encouraged the State party to provide in its next report information on developments in legislation and progress in the work of the Ombudsman's Office.

39. Mr. ABOUL-NASR asked the delegation to clarify the meaning of the term "Wahhabi" education. He also wished to know the reasons for the absence of Arabic language education in the State party, given that the overwhelming majority of the population was of the Islamic faith and children's study of the Koran required fluency in Arabic.

40. Mr. AVTONOMOV commended the State party for the establishment of the Ombudsman's Office and for its commitment to enacting necessary legislation. However, the equal participation of women of all ethnic groups in public life was not yet a reality. There was

thus a need to include a gender perspective in all efforts to promote and protect the full enjoyment of human rights by all persons. It would be useful to explore the issue of possible dual discrimination experienced by women belonging to ethnic minority groups.

41. While he had followed the delegation's account of the situation of the Roma minority with interest, he would welcome further information on the matter. In addition, it would be useful to learn about the specific reasons for migration and the treatment of migrants in the reporting State.

42. Mr. KJAERUM said that he had been somewhat confused by the delegation's replies concerning the protection of Chechen refugees. He took it that an agreement between CIS member States served as the legal basis for the non-recognition of Chechen refugees. However, the reporting State had ratified the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, and the Kazakh Constitution provided for the direct application of international treaties by domestic courts. He wished to know how the State party's refusal to assess Chechen refugees' need for protection in the context of an asylum procedure was compatible with the non-refoulement principle embodied in the Convention. The automatic refusal of refugees posed a legal problem in terms of both international law and the Kazakh Constitution, and he asked the delegation to comment.

43. Information from reliable sources suggested that, while some NGOs were allowed to operate freely, others might be subject to surveillance and harassment. He requested clarification of that question.

44. Mr. de GOUTTES welcomed the State party's intention to include in national legislation a definition of racial discrimination consistent with article 1 of the Convention. The measures taken to reinforce the independence of the judiciary and the proposed establishment of a databank on judicial proceedings involving discrimination were also positive developments. Receiving detailed information on jurisprudence relating to complaints of discrimination would enable the Committee to assess the implementation of the Convention more effectively. He encouraged the State party to include such information in the next periodic report. Further information was also required on developments with regard to the treatment of asylum applications from Chechen and Uighur refugees.

45. The CHAIRMAN invited the delegation to reply to the Committee's questions.

46. Mr. ABDILDIN (Kazakhstan) said that, while a considerable number of labour-related complaints had been filed with the national Commission on Human Rights, charges brought in connection with racial discrimination were indeed rare. His country considered itself fortunate to have been largely spared ethnic and nationality-related conflict. The lack of complaints of racial discrimination in spite of the availability of legal recourse might reflect the population's recognition of that circumstance.

47. Wahhabi education was provided by the followers of the Wahhabi movement, which was one of the Islamic groups that had emerged after the country had gained independence. He stressed that the Arabic language was crucial to the study of Kazakh history and recognized as such. A significant number of people studied Arabic at university, especially students of philosophy and history. The reason why Arabic was not taught in primary and secondary schools was the absence of an Arabic-speaking ethnic minority in the national territory.

48. Women were active in many sectors of public life, including as NGO representatives. It was true, however, that women's participation at the parliamentary and governmental levels remained unsatisfactory. Additional studies would be undertaken to identify shortcomings with a view to devising remedial strategies.

49. The question of refugee protection required particular attention and refugee legislation was currently being debated.

50. The Government's position on NGOs had changed considerably over the past two years. Specific NGO legislation was currently in the drafting stages and the Government was considering granting financial support to NGOs in recognition of their vital role in society.

51. He thanked the Committee for its comments and recommendations, which would prove useful in the further implementation of the Convention in Kazakhstan. His delegation would transmit the outcome of its debate with the Committee to the Government.

52. Mr. VALENCIA RODRÍGUEZ (Country rapporteur) stressed the importance of Kazakhstan's report to the Committee as an important milestone in the elimination of discrimination in the State party.

53. Some Kazakh citizens who had emigrated prior to the country's independence were currently returning, while others were leaving the country. He requested the State party to provide detailed information on those phenomena in its next report.

54. He commended the reporting State for its recognition of a variety of national languages, while stressing the need for legislation to regulate the use of those languages. The Committee had noted with satisfaction the efforts made to provide minority language teaching and he encouraged the State party to proceed in that endeavour.

55. While existing domestic legislation contained a number of references to racial discrimination, a specific law that would include a definition of racial discrimination and take account of the obligations resulting from articles 4 and 6 of the Convention was required.

56. It was important to grant all members of ethnic minorities equal access to public office so as to ensure proportional representation of those minorities at all levels of government.

57. He encouraged the State party to extend the competence of the national Commission on Human Rights and to ensure its independence in conformity with the Paris Principles. Guaranteeing the independence of the judiciary was equally important.

58. He noted with satisfaction the establishment of the Ombudsman's Office, which could receive complaints of human rights violations, including complaints relating to racial discrimination, and stressed the importance of enacting legislation on the Ombudsman's functions.

59. While Kazakhstan's ratification of the Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees was commendable, measures must be taken to eliminate the automatic refusal of asylum applications submitted by Chechen and Uighur refugees.

60. He welcomed the State party's respect for religious freedom and, in that connection, took note of the recent conference of the world's major religions held in Kazakhstan. The increased access of ethnic groups to education was also a positive development.

61. Greater emphasis needed to be placed on the dissemination of the Convention and the Committee's recommendations, and also of information relating to citizens' access to a legal remedy in cases of racial discrimination. The Committee had taken note of the declaration made by the State party under article 14 of the Convention.

62. He thanked the delegation for the information provided on the Roma minority and commended the Government for its support of human rights organizations.

63. The delegation of Kazakhstan withdrew.

Review of the implementation of the Convention in States parties whose periodic reports are seriously overdue

Mexico

64. The CHAIRMAN said that he had received a letter from the Permanent Mission of Mexico in which the Government had undertaken to submit its twelfth to fifteenth periodic reports in one document by the end of 2004.

65. Mr. CALI TZAY (Country rapporteur) asked whether he should communicate his findings on Mexico to the Committee.

66. The CHAIRMAN said that the Committee should take a decision on whether it agreed to the request for postponement of submission of the periodic reports. If the Committee decided to refuse the request, Mr. Cali Tzay would be called on to address the issue.

67. Mr. LINDGREN ALVES said that, since Mexico had been through a period of significant change, it would be reasonable to agree to the request for postponement. It might, however, be useful for the Committee to hear the information that Mr. Cali Tzay had prepared.

68. The CHAIRMAN suggested that, if the Committee agreed to the request, the information would be more significant once the periodic reports had been submitted.

69. Mr. PILLAI noted that, according to document CERD/C/478, periodic reports from several States parties had been submitted and asked when the Committee would consider them. He also requested clarification of Mexico's proposed timescale for submission of its periodic reports, and when the Committee would consider them.

70. Mr. SICILIANOS considered that, since the State party had undertaken to submit the reports before the end of 2004, the Committee could agree to a postponement. In his reply to the Mexican Government, the Chairman should insist that the Committee received the reports by March 2005 at the latest. That would enable the necessary translations to be done in time for the Committee to consider the reports during its August 2005 session.

71. The CHAIRMAN said he took it that the Committee agreed to the postponement of submission of Mexico's outstanding periodic reports until the end of 2004.

72. It was so decided.

Saint Lucia

73. The CHAIRMAN recalled that the Committee had drawn up provisional observations on Saint Lucia at its sixty-fourth session. The State party had been informed that those observations would remain confidential until 31 July 2004, after which they would be formally adopted by the Committee unless a letter was received indicating when Saint Lucia would submit its initial to seventh periodic reports. A letter dated 7 April 2004 had been received from the Permanent Mission of Saint Lucia in New York claiming that the provisional observations conveyed a false picture of the State party, but it gave no indication of a date by which the reports would be submitted. The Committee should decide whether to adopt and publish the provisional observations or to follow a different course of action.

74. Mr. de GOUTTES (Country rapporteur) asked whether the secretariat had entered into any further correspondence with the State party following the receipt of the above-mentioned letter.

75. Ms. PROUVEZ (Secretary of the Committee) replied that no other communication had been sent or received.

76. Mr. de GOUTTES said that it was a difficult case. If the Committee wished to act in accordance with the Chairman's letter of 15 March 2004, it should adopt the provisional conclusions. Given that a letter had been received from the Permanent Mission, however, Committee members could discuss amendments to the provisional conclusions and then decide whether to adopt those conclusions.

77. Mr. TANG Chengyuan said that the provisional conclusions should remain confidential until the Committee had entered into dialogue directly with the State party, as opposed to the Permanent Mission.

78. Mr. de GOUTTES concurred, saying that the Committee should continue to foster dialogue and a spirit of cooperation for as long as possible. If the Committee decided it was going to adopt the provisional observations, it would be appropriate to send the Permanent Mission an urgent letter advising the Government that unless a response was received, the Committee would proceed as it had indicated in the letter of 15 March 2004. In that way, every possible effort would have been made to elicit a response from the Government.

79. Mr. HERNDL said that while he shared the concerns voiced by his colleagues, the Committee had taken a decision to adopt the provisional observations, and that decision had been communicated to the Government. The letter from the Permanent Mission did not indicate when the first to seventh periodic reports would be submitted. Rather, it was a typical letter from a Government in default. A last attempt should be made to contact the Government, insisting that it should submit the reports as requested, and expressing in the strongest terms the Committee's disapproval of the reasons given for non-submission of the seven reports.

80. Mr. AMIR said that the case of Saint Lucia was typical of the small countries with limited resources that did not have a permanent mission in Geneva. As had been discussed before by the Committee, measures should be taken to ensure more effective cooperation between the Committee and those countries.

81. When taking a decision on the best course of action vis-à-vis Saint Lucia, the Committee should bear in mind that in similar situations it had taken decisions that had not resulted in the submission of periodic reports. The Committee should continue to strive for open-minded cooperation with States parties. It was not necessary to send strongly worded letters to Governments, particularly those of countries with significant economic problems. Every effort should be made to keep all channels of communication open.

82. Mr. ABOUL-NASR said that the Committee had precedents for cases such as that of Saint Lucia. The Chairman need only draft a letter to the State party clarifying the current situation. The letter should then be submitted to the Committee for consideration.

83. The CHAIRMAN replied that such a course was not possible given that Committee members had not reached a consensus on what procedure to adopt in relation to Saint Lucia. Consideration of the case would have to be continued.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.