



International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination

Distr.: General
9 August 2017

Original: English

Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination

Ninety-third session

Summary record of the 2553rd meeting

Held at the Palais Wilson, Geneva, on Friday, 4 August 2017, at 10 a.m.

Chair: Ms. Crickley

Contents

Consideration of reports, comments and information submitted by States parties under article 9 of the Convention (*continued*)

Combined twenty-third and twenty-fourth periodic reports of the Russian Federation
(*continued*)

This record is subject to correction. Corrections should be set forth in a memorandum and also incorporated in a copy of the record. They should be sent within one week of the date of the present record to the Documents Management Section (DMS-DCM@un.org).

Any corrected records of the public meetings of the Committee at this session will be reissued for technical reasons after the end of the session.

GE.17-13560 (E) 080817 090817



* 1 7 1 3 5 6 0 *

Please recycle



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

Consideration of reports, comments and information submitted by States parties under article 9 of the Convention (continued)

Combined twenty-third and twenty-fourth periodic reports of the Russian Federation (continued) (CERD/C/RUS/23-24; CERD/C/RUS/Q/23-24)

1. *At the invitation of the Chair, the delegation of the Russian Federation took places at the Committee table.*

2. **Mr. Barinov** (Russian Federation), responding to earlier questions about the functions of the Federal Agency for Nationalities, said that in light of the national, linguistic, ethnic, religious and cultural diversity of the Russian Federation, clear frameworks for inter-ethnic relations were important. The Federal Agency for Nationalities had been established in 2015 to coordinate the implementation of measures designed to strengthen national unity, promote inter-ethnic and interfaith harmony, protect the rights of small indigenous populations and prevent discrimination based on race, ethnic background, religion or language. The State nationalities policy, which had been developed over the course of several years in order to counter racial discrimination, ethnic strife and extremism, had yielded positive results. A sociological study conducted in 2012 had revealed that 93 per cent of citizens had never experienced any discrimination on grounds of their nationality or other affiliation. A key factor had been the progressive integration of institutions concerned with inter-ethnic relations at the federal, provincial and local levels. The programme to implement the State ethnic policy adopted in 2016 had been launched on 1 January 2017; projected funding for the programme until 2025 amounted to 26 billion roubles. The State programme created an umbrella framework for the work of the Federal Agency for Nationalities and funds were allocated to civil society organizations, projects and regional bodies to implement measures aimed at harmonizing inter-ethnic relations.

3. The monitoring of inter-ethnic relations had also been improved, including by introducing an early warning system for inter-ethnic conflict, with a special focus on identifying extremist Internet sites. The Federal Agency for Nationalities had developed a new model for assessing inter-ethnic relations, which helped identify areas of high tension and facilitated the design of targeted solutions. Staff training had also been made a priority, especially with regard to language-related issues, and the first-ever award for supporting inter-linguistic diversity had been created.

4. In order to build a harmonious inter-ethnic society and respect for the rights of ethnic minorities, it was necessary for children to be introduced to diversity-related concepts from an early age. Therefore, topics relating to ethnic, racial, linguistic and religious diversity were incorporated throughout their education. National unity in a multi-ethnic society could only be achieved if the distinguishing features of each group were preserved. The protection of the rights of the 40 numerically small indigenous peoples of the North, Siberia and the Far East of the Russian Federation had therefore been made a policy priority. The Government had allocated over 1.3 billion roubles to support the culture and traditions and improve the quality of life of those peoples, who often lived in tough environmental and climatic conditions and pursued traditional ways of life.

5. Extensive efforts were also under way to improve legislation. Over the past year, for example, a bill had been prepared on the social development and integration of foreign nationals. The State nationalities policy was not simply concerned with cultural events, festivals and competitions, but focused on everyday life, in recognition of the need for a coherent approach to inter-ethnic relations in order to maintain the delicate balance of Russia's multi-ethnic society.

6. **Mr. Zimnenko** (Russian Federation) said that the Convention could be invoked directly before domestic courts. His delegation had prepared and submitted to members of the Committee a compilation of judicial practice in the Russian Federation relating to the implementation of the Convention. In 2017, there had been thus far 427 convictions for racial discrimination; 49 civil and administrative proceedings had been instituted; and administrative penalties had been imposed on 53 individuals.

7. With regard to the enforcement of sentences, he said that any conviction by a court of law had a profound impact on the convicted person, even if no prison time was served. Judges were encouraged to consider all circumstances of a case, including the age, family situation and character of the defendant and the nature of the crime committed; any decision to suspend enforcement of a sentence must be reasoned. In 2015 and 2016, two persons convicted for racially motivated murder had been sentenced to life imprisonment.

8. The right to protection from discrimination was set forth in the Russian Constitution and domestic legislation, in line with international instruments to which his country was a party. Since 2013, Russian courts had been provided with a summary compilation of international jurisprudence relating to racial discrimination to inform their work. An information database for courts had been created that contained international jurisprudence, views, recommendations and reports of special rapporteurs. A thematic review of legal positions on questions of discrimination had also been prepared.

9. Almost 17,000 persons had been convicted for offences relating to the unlawful employment of migrants; 1,000 persons had been found guilty of incorrect registration. In 2016, 63 per cent of administrative cases brought by citizens' organizations against the State had been decided in favour of the plaintiffs; the same was true in respect of 92 per cent of civil cases. Those figures showed that justice was rendered impartially.

10. **Mr. Gaydov** (Russian Federation) said that the training of law enforcement officers included modules relating to the implementation of international human rights instruments. International human rights standards, including the Convention, respect for dignity, religious issues, psychology, dispute settlement, police ethics, inter-ethnic cooperation and traditions of the peoples of the Russian Federation were essential components of the curriculum. Practical exercises were mostly aimed at developing skills for the prevention of inter-ethnic or interfaith conflict, xenophobia and racism; those topics accounting for 20 to 50 per cent of training time.

11. With regard to allegations of excessive use of force by "Cossack patrols" against persons belonging to ethnic minorities, he said that Federal Act No. 44 of 2 April 2015, on citizen participation in policing, covered the activities of volunteer units recruited from the Cossack communities that worked together with the police to ensure public order, prevent administrative violations and investigate crime. Thanks to their support, more than 4,000 administrative offences had been detected in 2016. The work of the Cossack teams was overseen by the police and the Office of the Procurator-General, and neither had received any complaints of excessive use of force.

12. **Mr. Zhafyarov** (Russian Federation) said that the definition of "extremism" was set forth in Federal Act No. 114 on countering extremist activities and included incitement to social, racial, ethnic or religious hatred and the promotion of the exclusivity, supremacy or inferiority of a person on social, racial, national, religious or linguistic grounds. There had been a slight increase in the number of reported extremist offences in 2016 as compared with the previous year. That increase was not so much due to a real increase in the number of crimes committed, but rather to better police work. Out of some 1,200 extremist crimes committed in 2016, about 250 had been racially motivated and 700 ethnically motivated hate crimes; only 176 of the cases investigated had religious motives. There had been fewer violent crimes in recent years. The Russian Federation had an effective counter-extremism system in place at all levels of law enforcement. Given the multi-ethnic and multi-faith makeup of Russian society, much of the counter-extremism work involved prevention of inter-ethnic conflict.

13. The strategy for a State nationalities policy for the period until 2025 established by presidential decree set out the goals and tasks for State, regional and local authorities in key areas of the policy. Federal Act No. 284 of 22 October 2013 defined the powers and responsibilities of the public authorities of the constituent entities, local authorities and officials in the area of inter-ethnic relations. The Act included an expanded list of the duties of municipal officials, including measures to strengthen inter-ethnic and interfaith harmony; support and develop the languages and cultures of the peoples of the Russian Federation; realize the rights of ethnic minorities; ensure the social and cultural integration of migrants; and prevent inter-ethnic conflicts. The Office of the Procurator-General was responsible for

monitoring the implementation of those obligations by regional and municipal authorities. Failure to perform those duties was liable to legal penalties. In 2016, over 11,500 violations of legislation concerning inter-ethnic relations had been found; more than 3,000 officials had been dismissed, 2,800 had been subject to disciplinary sanctions and 1,000 administrative sanctions had been imposed.

14. In recent years, there had been increased activity of neo-Nazi and other extremist organizations; 61 such organizations had been banned, mostly for propagating Nazi ideology. In a number of instances, the courts had banned organizations for promoting extremist or supremacist ideologies. Court decisions had been handed down in respect of the Russian National Socialist Party, the Slavic Union, Format 18 and others, which had been found to propagate Nazi ideology. In the run-up to the 2018 FIFA World Cup, football fan clubs, several of which propagated extremist ideologies, were being monitored more closely.

15. One of the primary tools for disseminating extremist ideology was the Internet. Efforts had been stepped up to monitor the Internet for extremist content and limit access to websites that propagated racist or extremist ideologies, called for violence or incited racial, ethnic or religious hatred. Access to more than 5,000 websites had been blocked and unlawful information had been removed from over 55,000 sites. All allegations of dissemination of extremist ideologies were duly investigated and the perpetrators were brought to justice. According to statistics of the Ministry of Justice, over 4,000 Internet sites contained extremist materials whose dissemination was prohibited under Russian law. Courts drew on expert assessments before handing down decisions relating to extremist material.

16. **Mr. Barinov** (Russian Federation) said that he wished to apprise the Committee of the true situation of indigenous peoples and of the programmes and activities implemented by the Federal Agency for Nationalities. A comprehensive legislative base had been established to promote the rights of indigenous persons and laws in that area were effectively implemented. The Agency had realized that more extensive legislation was needed to preserve and promote the development of numerically small indigenous peoples and therefore had prepared several legislative initiatives with the cooperation of experts, civil society organizations and indigenous associations. Legislative amendments had been submitted to the Government based on the findings of a review of the 2001 federal law on territories of traditional nature use of numerically small indigenous peoples of the North, Siberia and the Far East; the review had determined that the law did not regulate the use of indigenous territories, provide for their subdivision or limit the exploitation of fauna for the purpose of traditional economic activities. The Agency had also played an intermediary role between indigenous peoples and industrial companies in relation to adverse impacts on areas traditionally inhabited by indigenous communities and had submitted a bill designed to address such issues. The Agency was preparing draft legislation to ensure the simplified registration of people with nomadic and semi-nomadic lifestyles in the places where they lived, and it planned to create a federal register containing information on the rights and economic preferences of numerically small indigenous peoples.

17. As the Committee had recognized, fishing was one of the activities practised by indigenous peoples and some limitations had been placed on traditional forms of fishing, notably in relation to the use of nets. He did not consider that such problems were critical, since restrictions on fishing in certain seas and river basins during the spawning season were necessary to ensure the rational use of natural resources. The Agency was working with the Federal Agency for Fisheries to find a compromise solution that would be satisfactory to indigenous peoples. Furthermore, a council on the economic development of indigenous peoples had been established with the aim of consulting communities on issues of relevance to their lifestyles.

18. The State guaranteed the conditions in which all citizens were able to study languages and learn about their cultural traditions. Accordingly, many indigenous languages and literatures were taught in schools, and parents could choose the school and curriculum that best reflected their child's educational and linguistic needs. Support was provided for the publication of mass media — including newspapers, magazines, websites

and school textbooks — and for teaching, translation and interpretation in indigenous languages.

19. Regarding the village of Kazas and the situation of the Shor nationality, he did not believe the reports of the deliberate destruction of settlements. Although the expansion of coal-related activities had led to the proposal to relocate the village in 2012, mineral exploitation had in fact commenced in the 1980s and had also affected Belarusians, Ukrainians and Russians living near the mine. The proposed location for the new settlement aimed to meet the Shors' cultural and spiritual requirements to the greatest extent possible and had already been identified as suitable for economic activities such as ecotourism. A daily bus service had been organized to take Shor children to school, where they studied in the Shor language. The Agency would continue to work with the local authorities, the association of Shor people and regional public organizations to preserve the unique Shor culture.

20. **Ms. Trinchenko** (Russian Federation) said that mobile schools had recently been introduced as part of a pilot project in the regions of Sakha and Yamalo-Nenets. As part of the scheme, education was provided in one of three ways: at stationary sites attended by the children of reindeer-herders or nomadic peoples passing through the area; through the use of mobile sites that accompanied travelling fishing communities; and through nomadic schools. In the academic year 2016/17, education had been provided at the kindergarten and primary levels to 106 children in Yamalo-Nenets. The results of the project had been positive and had improved education coverage among children from nomadic communities; other advantages were that students remained with their families, continued to speak their native language and maintained their cultural traditions. Participation in such programmes also helped children to integrate into regular schools later in their education.

21. In keeping with the strategic goal of improving the quality of free preschool education in the Arctic and sub-Arctic regions, the Government was implementing the "Children of the Arctic" project in order to address the problem of indigenous children falling behind in school. It would continue to seek new ways of integrating those children into contemporary society while preserving their traditional way of life.

22. **Mr. Lukiantsev** (Russian Federation), speaking about national policy on the Republic of Crimea, said that the Convention had never ceased to be applicable in that territory. Before March 2014, citizens had enjoyed their rights in accordance with the international commitments of Ukraine and subsequently those rights had been upheld by the Russian Federation. Questions pertaining to the status of the territory did not fall within the scope of the Convention; however, it should be noted that the vast majority of the people of Crimea had voted to become part of the Russian Federation. International humanitarian law did not apply to the current situation, since there was no armed conflict or occupation in the peninsula. General Assembly resolutions 68/262 and 71/205, initiated by Ukraine, were strictly of a political nature and were not concerned with protecting the rights and freedoms of the citizens of Crimea. Furthermore, they did not have the support of many United Nations Member States, did not reflect the true situation in Crimea and would have no impact on the future implementation of the Convention there. The legislation of the Russian Federation, including in respect of its international human rights commitments, was fully applied in the territory and any residents believing that their rights had been violated were entitled to use all judicial and extrajudicial means to re-establish those rights.

23. According to a 2012 census, Crimea was home to over 2.3 million people from 175 nationalities. Most had obtained Russian citizenship, although slightly more than 0.1 per cent had opted to retain Ukrainian citizenship. The latter individuals were able to obtain Russian residence permits that allowed them to work, to receive medical assistance, to access education and legal protection and to conduct business transactions. The third most populous group, after Russians and Ukrainians, was the Crimean Tatars, accounting for 10.6 per cent of the population.

24. The Russian and Crimean authorities provided support for the resolution of ethnocultural problems, including through a federal programme to ensure sustainable economic and social development and inter-ethnic harmony, and specific measures for the benefit of citizens and their family members who had been illegally deported from the

Crimean Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic. In April 2014, the President of the Russian Federation had signed a decree on measures for the rehabilitation of Armenian, Bulgarian, Greek, Italian, Crimean Tatar and German peoples, which included steps to re-establish historical truth and ensure the political, social and spiritual rehabilitation of deported peoples. A law had been adopted that granted Crimean Tatars the right to receive benefits awarded to the victims of political reprisals, while the President had also signed a decree amending Federal Act No. 115 on the legal status of foreign nationals in the Russian Federation to give preference to deported citizens and their family members in the allocation of residence permits. Since March 2014, more than 260 families from rehabilitated populations had been allocated housing, including in purpose-built apartments in Bakhchysarai and Simferopol. Public organizations for protection of the rights of Crimean Tatars were functioning and the authorities were cooperating constructively with the Muslim communities in Sevastopol and Simferopol. A Crimean Tatar television and radio company, established as an autonomous non-profit organization, had been broadcasting since September 2015. Financial support was provided for the publication of print media and literature in the local languages, with the result that newspapers and magazines were available in the Crimean Tatar language, Armenian, German and Greek. Russian, Ukrainian and Crimean Tatar all enjoyed the status of official languages under the new constitution of the Republic of Crimea and regular events were organized to promote respect for minority languages and cultures. In the census conducted in 2016 under the auspices of the Federal Agency for Nationalities, the vast majority of Crimean Tatar respondents had reported that inter-ethnic relations were very stable and that they did not encounter ethnic or religious tensions in their daily lives.

25. **Ms. Andreeva** (Russian Federation) said that legislation in the area of sport aimed to guarantee the right of everyone to participate in sport, while prohibiting discrimination and violence. The Ministry of Sport had drafted guidelines on spectator behaviour, with infringements potentially resulting in fines or bans on attendance or participation in sporting competitions. Over 2,000 fines and 661 bans had been issued in the period from 2013 to July 2017. The guidelines also provided for the application of disciplinary and other measures to sports federations that engaged in discriminatory or unlawful activities. Sports governing bodies, including the Russian Football Union, had special offices or committees to combat racism and discrimination. The governing bodies also worked with NGOs on anti-racism awareness-raising initiatives, including videos featuring famous players and teams, meetings with fans and interactive projects. As a result, the number of Russian Premier League matches that had passed without any reported violations by spectators had risen from 89 in the 2015/16 season to 110 in 2016/17.

26. The Russian Federation had recently hosted the 2017 FIFA Confederations Cup as part of its preparations for the 2018 FIFA World Cup. During the tournament, foreign fans had been issued with personalized visitor cards bearing the slogan “Say No to Racism”, which had allowed them to enter the Russian Federation without a visa, to travel by train between host cities and to access stadiums. A system of monitoring had been developed for dealing with racism-related incidents, videos had been shown in several languages before each match and security staff had been hired to maintain order and ensure a welcoming atmosphere during the tournament. There had been no racism-related incidents among Russian spectators, although the fans of one of the visiting teams had chanted racist slogans.

27. **Mr. Barinov** (Russian Federation) said that the Committee’s fears about the possibility of racism and discrimination at the World Cup were unfounded.

28. **Mr. Gaydov** (Russian Federation) said that the chief aim of the Government’s migration policy was to ensure national security and the greatest level of protection, comfort and well-being of the population. Since 2012, many legislative acts had been adopted and a new chapter had been drafted for Federal Act No. 62-FZ on citizenship of the Russian Federation in order to simplify the citizenship application procedures for foreign nationals and those with unregulated legal status. The Government had also reduced the time requirement so that foreign nationals and stateless persons who were qualified experts or specialists, or who had received vocational training in a Russian scientific or professional organization, could receive citizenship more quickly.

29. Asylum was granted on the basis of a comprehensive system that complied with international norms. As of 1 July 2017, there were 589 refugees in the country and about 200,000 persons had been granted temporary asylum. They all had access to social welfare benefits, such as health care and education, exercised diverse social, cultural and civil rights, and could seek employment without any special documentation.

30. A primary goal of the legislation governing citizenship was the reduction of statelessness. In 2016 approximately 265,000 persons had been granted citizenship, including about 245,000 persons by means of a simplified procedure.

31. **Mr. Barinov** (Russian Federation) said that in 2013 the Government had adopted a comprehensive plan of action for the social, economic, ethnic and cultural development of the Roma people, in agreement with the Federal Autonomous Ethnic and Cultural Organization of Russian Roma. The plan was implemented by many different public-sector bodies. A Council of Europe training programme for mediators between the Roma community and law enforcement bodies had been successfully implemented. The Federal Agency for Nationalities had also developed a three-year plan, in agreement with Roma organizations, which would seek to improve preschool education, develop traditional crafts and skills, and implement other ethnic and cultural projects.

32. Roma children were guaranteed equal access to education, textbooks, equipment and school meals. No incidents of segregation of Roma children had been recorded in recent years. Special Roma classes, remote training and after-hours classes were organized in response to parents' requests. Where Roma schoolchildren encountered difficulties, measures were taken to support their integration into the education system with the assistance of experts and psychologists.

33. In 2015 the Federal Agency for Nationalities had conducted a comprehensive survey of the social and economic situation of the Roma community, their cultural identity and their degree of integration into Russian society. The survey had revealed, to the amazement of the sociologists undertaking the study, that 86 per cent of Roma were deeply satisfied with their situation. Another survey would be conducted in 2018. With a view to implementing the best practices of other countries, he had arranged a meeting in May 2017 with the Hungarian Ambassador to discuss the National Social Inclusion Strategy implemented in Hungary, which focused on the Roma community.

34. A number of Roma houses in Tula had been demolished pursuant to a judicial decree because they had been built unlawfully and failed to comply with regulations governing hygiene and sanitation. The Federal Agency for Nationalities had taken action jointly with the local authorities and the Federal Autonomous Ethnic and Cultural Organization of Russian Roma to rehouse the persons concerned. In Plekhanov, 71 out of 256 buildings had since been brought up to standard. He reassured the Committee that nobody would be left homeless.

The meeting was suspended at 11.40 a.m. and resumed at 11.50 a.m.

35. **Mr. Bossuyt** (Country Rapporteur) said that the International Court of Justice had adopted an order on 19 April 2017 in the case concerning the application of the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism and of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (Ukraine v. Russian Federation), setting forth provisional measures to be taken by the Russian Federation. The first measure was to refrain from maintaining or imposing limitations on the ability of the Crimean Tatar community to conserve its representative institutions, including the *Mejlis*, and to ensure the availability of education in the Ukrainian language. He enquired about action taken by the State party in response to the order.

36. He reiterated the Committee's position that the registration of non-profit organizations as "foreign agents" was a troubling development. He also requested information on a law enacted in 2015 which labelled organizations as "undesirable". Such legislation could lead to arbitrary decisions and was particularly threatening for human rights defenders.

37. The definition of extremism in Federal Act No. 114 on countering extremist activities was far too broad and could also lead to arbitrary decisions. The definition should be more precise and linked to incitement to violence.

38. **Mr. Calí Tzay** noted that there were about 5,000 nomads in the Yamal Peninsula but only 14 schools in the area. He asked whether the State party intended to increase the budget and the number of schools for nomads.

39. Noting that, according to the delegation, 86 per cent of Roma claimed they did not suffer from discrimination in their daily lives, he enquired about the methodology on which the survey had been based and about any action taken to support the remaining 14 per cent of Roma.

40. Welcoming the establishment of an expert advisory board on the indigenous minorities of the North, Siberia and the Far East of the Russian Federation, he enquired about its work and the results achieved to date. He asked whether the State party had devised a plan for the resettlement of certain indigenous communities. The Committee had been informed that only one site had been selected and that the persons concerned were dissatisfied with the location. He also wished to know whether the indigenous peoples themselves had decided where the spiritual centre should be located.

41. With regard to education, he noted that attempts to assimilate indigenous children in boarding schools constituted a violation of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and that only two hours per week were devoted to teaching indigenous peoples' native languages as a second language in primary schools.

42. **Mr. Lukiantsev** (Russian Federation) said that steps were being taken to implement the order of the International Court of Justice. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs had forwarded the text to the Ministry of Education and Science, the Procurator-General, the Supreme Court and the Crimean authorities. The representative of the Russian Federation at the International Court of Justice had held a meeting with the aforementioned authorities to discuss the best ways of implementing the order. A representative of the International Court of Justice had visited the Republic of Crimea and held meetings with the authorities, including a representative of the Supreme Court of the Republic, the Chair of the State Committee for International Relations and Deported Citizens, a former member of the *Mejlis*, the Deputy Minister of Education, Science and Youth, a high-ranking representative of the Crimean Tatar society and NGOs representing the interests of ethnic minorities. They had also discussed how best to implement the order.

43. The Ministry of Education, Science and Youth had stated that it would give high priority to the availability of education in the Crimean Tatar and Ukrainian languages. The Ministry had included a special section on the subject on its website, which was updated on a regular basis. The section provided information on establishments providing education in the Crimean Tatar and Ukrainian languages, and in languages of ethnic minorities, such as Bulgarian and Greek. Crimean Tatar was currently taught in 52 schools to 19,254 students and Ukrainian in 13 schools to 12,892 students. Parents stated their language preferences in a questionnaire issued before the beginning of each school year. The Ministry of Education, Science and Youth and the Ministry of Education and Science jointly monitored the situation and acted on complaints lodged by parents whose preference had not been granted. The Deputy Chair of the State Council of the Republic of Crimea, a representative of the Crimean Tatar community and a former member of the *Mejlis* had submitted a bill on the use of various languages. The State Council had adopted it following a first reading on 21 May 2017. Work on the bill was still under way. In September 2017 the Civic Chamber of the State Council, which was composed of representatives of civil society, would discuss the bill with NGOs, representatives of ethnic minorities and academics.

44. The meeting between representatives of the Russian Federation, the International Court of Justice and the Crimean authorities, and representatives of the Crimean Tatar and Muslim communities, had focused on the ability of the Crimean Tatar community to preserve its representative institutions. Former members of the *Mejlis* held high-ranking posts in Crimean State institutions and civil society organizations. The authorities were taking steps to ensure that all ethnic minorities, including Crimean Tatars, were integrated into the political process and were able to defend their lawful rights.

45. The *Mejlis* had never been an official representative body of the Crimean Tatars. Its leaders had simply assumed that role and ignored all opposing views. The decision to ban the *Mejlis* as an extremist organization had been taken on security grounds based on certain actions undertaken by *Mejlis* leaders, some of whom were now resident in Kyiv. One of those leaders had stated on 1 April 2015 that their war would end when Crimea was returned to Ukraine. In September 2015 *Mejlis* leaders and activists belonging to other extremist organizations had blocked checkpoints and roads, and in November 2015 they had cut off the Crimean electricity supply. However, a number of influential members who had not participated in such violent acts were now represented in State bodies in the Republic of Crimea.

46. The Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs had informed the Procurator-General and the Supreme Court that the order of the International Court of Justice was binding on the Russian Federation. The Procurator-General had then lodged an appeal with the Supreme Court requesting recognition of the *Mejlis*. The Supreme Court was currently considering ways of guaranteeing the representative rights of the Tatar people without undermining the security of the Russian Federation.

47. **Mr. Zhafyarov** (Russian Federation) said that the terminology used in legislation aimed at combating extremist activities, including the definition of extremism, was designed to address all manifestations of such conduct. Any narrowing of the scope of the terminology would have an adverse impact on legal practice and, in addition, on action to combat discrimination.

48. **Ms. Shlychkova** (Russian Federation) said that the law regulating the activities of Russian non-profit organizations who received funding from foreign governments or entities and, thus, functioned as foreign agents, was aimed at increasing transparency. In formulating that law, the Government had taken into account the experience of other countries, including in respect of the terminology used. The details of foreign agent organizations were logged in a register set up for that purpose, thereby creating a public record of their activities. Inclusion in the register did not preclude those organizations from carrying out their activities; in fact, they were able to operate without restriction and were able to continue receiving foreign funding. Some such organizations had even been awarded State grants to help fund their activities. In March 2015, a number of exemptions had been introduced, and several NGOs had successfully applied to be removed from the register. Of the 225,000 non-profit organizations active in the Russian Federation, only around 89 were registered as foreign agents.

49. The purpose of the 2015 law on undesirable organizations was to protect State security and public order. An exhaustive list of grounds for categorizing an organization as undesirable had been drawn up and was fully in line with international norms, including the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. Eleven organizations were currently on that list.

50. **Mr. Barinov** (Russian Federation), responding to a question from Mr. Calí Tzay, said that the 14 schools set up in the Yamal Peninsular were in addition to the existing schools for the numerically small indigenous peoples inhabiting that area. There was emerging evidence that nomadic children who were removed from their families and placed in boarding schools not only suffered as a result of losing their connection with their traditional nomadic lifestyles, but also found it difficult to adapt to their new environment, leading many of them to turn to alcohol. As a result, the Government had created nomadic schools in areas with significant nomadic populations, at some considerable cost. Parents, however, often sent their children to boarding schools in an effort to provide them with better educational opportunities and improve their future employment prospects. The Government believed that children should have the right to choose whether to continue with their traditional activities or to get an education and pursue a different profession.

51. The decision on the location of an indigenous people's spiritual centre had been reached jointly with the Shor people. Regarding the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, it was important to point out that most of the 190 or so nationalities and ethnic groups living in the Russian Federation were not indigenous peoples per se, but rather formed part of the country's long multi-ethnic history. Even so,

the Government made every effort to help them preserve their traditional lifestyles. It also provided additional support to populations whose way of life was threatened by climate-related and other challenges, including around 40 different peoples living in the Arctic and far northern reaches of the country.

52. **Ms. Shepherd**, noting the information provided in paragraphs 96 to 98 of the State party's report regarding access to education, said that she would be interested to hear details of the school curriculum itself. In particular, she wished to know what approach was taken to teaching history, how the syllabus took into account the different historical experiences of the country's multi-ethnic, multicultural, multilingual and religiously diverse population, and what methods were used to avoid ideological conflicts and facilitate integration.

53. **Ms. Hohoueto** said that she was concerned at reports of a rise in xenophobic attacks against persons of African descent in the State party, including a recent spate of stabbings. She asked what action was being taken by the State party to protect persons of African descent, particularly foreign students, and whether the perpetrators of those offences had been prosecuted and punished.

54. **Mr. Kut** said that, despite the fact that the Committee had previously raised concerns about the rise in racist political discourse in the State party, and the need to ensure that politicians fuelling intolerance or incitement to racial hatred were adequately punished, the State party's report had been silent on the issue. In the legislative elections of September 2016, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe had observed that patriotism was a notable feature of the campaign discourse. It was important to point out that extreme forms of patriotism often amounted to racism and bordered on hate speech. He noted that the leader of the far-right Liberal Democratic Party was likely to run in the forthcoming 2018 presidential elections; thus, it was possible that racism would be a significant issue during the campaign. With that in mind, he wondered what specific action was being taken to tackle racism in political discourse, in line with the recommendations of the Committee and other human rights treaty bodies.

55. **Ms. McDougall**, referring to paragraphs 203 and 204 of the State party report, said it was difficult to believe that Roma children had equal rights, access and opportunities in the area of education, that their parents specifically requested for them to attend segregated classes and that 86 per cent of Roma were entirely happy with their situation in the State party. She would welcome further information regarding the source of that information and the realities of life for Roma in the country.

56. **Mr. Murillo Martínez** said that he wished to know whether the State party would consider ratifying the International Labour Organization (ILO) Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention, 1989 (No. 169); whether resettlement plans involved prior consultation with the indigenous peoples concerned in order to obtain their free and informed consent, including in relation to the location of their spiritual sites; and what activities the State party had planned within the framework of the International Decade for People of African Descent.

57. **Mr. Barinov** (Russian Federation) said that the results of the survey on the Roma community, which had been carried out by the Federal Agency for Nationalities, would be provided to the Committee in writing. It was important to understand that the Roma community had values and priorities that differed to those of wider society, which perhaps accounted for the fact that they had expressed such a high level of satisfaction with their way of life. That was not to say, however, that addressing the problems faced by the Roma would not be a government priority. For example, efforts had been taken to promote the inclusion of Roma children in education while respecting the Roma way of life. Moreover, arrangements had been made for a delegation from the Russian Federation to visit with Hungarian counterparts in the autumn of 2017 with a view to learning about that country's approach to integrating Roma children into the education system.

58. **Ms. Trinchenko** (Russian Federation) said that a comprehensive plan for the education of Roma included the development of Cyrillic-based dialect dictionaries that would enable Roma children to learn both Russian and their own language.

59. What the Committee viewed as “segregation” in education was not labelled as such in the Russian Federation. The use of classes for children with special educational needs was advocated by psychologists as a necessary means of preparing children in certain situations for integration into the mainstream system. The approach not only benefited Roma children but also children of migrants and refugees, as well as Russian children who had missed significant parts of their education. The aim was to enable them to complete their schooling and go on to attend higher education. In addition, certain school subjects had been adapted to meet the needs of numerically small indigenous peoples, and the entire school curriculum was available across the country in 24 different languages.

60. One of the main objectives of her Government’s efforts to combat extremist ideologies was to help children and teenagers reject racism and intolerance through various social and educational initiatives. A special training programme had also been developed for public officials working in areas such as combating terrorism and ensuring the patriotic upbringing of younger generations. Various measures had been taken in close cooperation with stakeholders with expertise in Islamic history and culture, while an interactive map had been drawn up and posted online with details of more than 1,000 counter-terrorism activities that had been organized in education and science institutions.

61. **Mr. Barinov** (Russian Federation) said that patriotism and racism did not necessarily go hand in hand. The Russian Federation had a long history as a multinational and multi-ethnic state, and patriotism was as keenly felt in the Caucasus as it was in Moscow.

62. **Mr. Zhafyarov** (Russian Federation) said that it was in the nature of election campaigns that candidates on both ends of the political spectrum should make statements that might be considered as offensive but could not be categorized as hate speech. Complaints about such discourse, including allegations of incitement to racial hatred, were duly investigated but, so far, none had been substantiated.

63. It was true that attacks on persons of African descent had occurred during the early 2000s. Since then, concerted efforts had been made to improve law enforcement and education, particularly in areas occupied by large student populations, in order to prevent a recurrence. As a result, no racially motivated attacks on persons of African descent or on any other foreign students had been recorded in the past five years. All attacks were thoroughly investigated and the grounds for those attacks identified. For example, a major investigation had been launched following a spate of attacks on students of African descent, which, it transpired, had turned out to be a settling of accounts between two rival criminal gangs — one a local group, the other of African origin.

64. **Ms. Zabolotskaya** (Russian Federation) said that the Government would continue to evaluate the possibility of acceding to ILO Convention No. 169, a process that included garnering the opinions of various stakeholders. It had been pointed out, for example, that there were relatively few States parties to the Convention. Representatives of indigenous populations had met with members of the Federal Assembly to discuss the merits of accession, and further consideration would be given to accession in view of the Committee’s comments.

65. **The Chair** said that he would like to thank the members of the delegation for a constructive dialogue and invited them to provide any further information in writing within 48 hours.

66. **Mr. Barinov** (Russian Federation) said that his Government would take all the comments and recommendations made by members of the Committee into consideration. He wished to thank the Country Rapporteur, in particular, for his keen understanding of the complexity of the problems faced by the Russian Federation, a vast territory rich in ethnic, religious and cultural diversity.

The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.