



International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination

Distr.: General

20 July 2026

Original: English

Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination 117th session

Summary record of the 3200th meeting

Held at the Palais Wilson, Geneva, on Wednesday, 15 April 2026, at 10 a.m.

Chair: Mr. Kut

Contents

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

Combined sixth to ninth periodic reports of Serbia (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.



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 sixth to ninth periodic reports of Serbia (continued) (CERD/C/SRB/6-9; CERD/C/SRB/Q/6-9)

1. *At the invitation of the Chair, the delegation of Serbia joined the meeting.*
2. **Mr. Diaby**, speaking on behalf of the Country Rapporteur, Mr. Guissé, said that, while the Committee acknowledged the measures taken to improve the situation of refugees and asylum-seekers in Serbia, it had a number of concerns in that regard. The State Party's legislative framework provided for the deprivation of liberty of asylum-seekers and migrants, who were subjected to de facto detention in reception centres for foreigners. Article 121 of the Law on Foreigners criminalized irregular entry, which was punishable by fines and removal orders. The Committee had been informed that, while 436 migrants and asylum-seekers had been detained in 2023, only 11 had appealed against their detention and only one such appeal had been accepted. Migrants and asylum-seekers in detention reportedly did not have access to legal assistance or interpreting services. In the light of those concerns, he would appreciate information on the legal framework for the deprivation of liberty of non-citizens, including measures to ensure that it was in line with international standards and that detention was always a last resort. He wondered what had been done to improve the conditions in which migrants were detained, including to address the lack of food and access to health services. He would like to know whether any investigations had been conducted into ill-treatment or abuses committed against asylum-seekers and migrants in detention, and what penalties had been handed down in such cases. The delegation might also comment on the alleged informal detention of non-citizens in ad hoc facilities, said to include abandoned police stations in the towns of Kanjiža, Kikinda and Subotica.
3. In its 2026 judgment *O.H. and others v. Serbia*, the European Court of Human Rights had considered the case of a group of Afghan nationals who had been expelled from Serbia after stating their intention to seek asylum. The Court had found that, despite a national court decision discontinuing misdemeanour proceedings against those persons and ordering that they be accommodated, the Serbian police had expelled them at night, in freezing temperatures and without an individual assessment of their circumstances, in violation of international standards. Indeed, the Court had found the Serbian authorities to be in breach of several articles of the European Convention on Human Rights. He would be grateful if the delegation could provide details on the enforcement of the Court's judgment.
4. Between 2022 and 2024, the Serbian border authorities had reportedly refused entry to more than 70,000 persons because the purpose of their visit was unclear or they did not have the necessary travel documents. He would like to know whether the State Party observed the prohibition on collective expulsion and whether any law enforcement officials had been investigated and punished for carrying out collective expulsions or pushbacks. He would be interested to learn whether the Law on Asylum and Temporary Protection had been reviewed and amended pursuant to the National Programme for the Adoption of the Acquis 2024–2027.
5. The Committee had been informed that several asylum-seekers had died because they had not been provided with adequate medical care in asylum centres. He would be grateful if the delegation could provide information on the legal framework on asylum-seekers' and migrants' access to healthcare, and on any investigations conducted into deaths in asylum centres, notably that in Sjenica.
6. As only 89 of the 1,054 asylum applications submitted between 2020 and 2024 had been approved, he wished to know why the acceptance rate – just 3% in 2024 – was so low. He also wished to know whether the asylum procedure was available in airports, at border crossings and in police stations.
7. Given that Roma persons were at heightened risk of statelessness owing to the lack of identity documents, he welcomed the adoption in December 2025 of amendments to the Law on Registry Books that provided for registrars to commence the birth registration procedure

immediately after birth. He was eager to learn whether the amended Law would ensure universal birth registration, with no requirement for parents to present their identity documents. Information on the State Party's procedure for the determination of statelessness would also be welcome.

8. The Committee was aware that Serbia was primarily a country of origin for trafficking in persons and that children – especially Roma girls and girls living in rural areas – were particularly vulnerable to trafficking for the purposes of sexual exploitation and child labour. It wished to know what progress had been made towards the adoption of a law on the prevention of trafficking and the protection of victims, and whether the State Party had taken any steps to evaluate and renew the National Strategy for Exercising the Rights of Victims and Witnesses of Criminal Offences 2020–2025. The Committee would also appreciate information on the procedure for identifying trafficking victims and measures to improve access for victims, especially women and children, to healthcare, legal assistance and other forms of support. In addition, it would be useful to know what steps had been taken to evaluate access to justice and victim support, and whether legislation provided for legal aid for victims and witnesses of trafficking.

9. **A representative of Serbia** said that the Law on Asylum and Temporary Protection enshrined three basic principles that were strictly observed: non-refoulement, non-discrimination and non-punishment for unlawful entry or stay. Serbia was the central country in the Western Balkans and was located on one of the main migration routes in Europe. Migrants entered the country from Bulgaria and North Macedonia and travelled on to Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia and Hungary. In order to regulate such migration, the Government coordinated its efforts with neighbouring countries, including through cooperation with the European Union Agency for Asylum and various multilateral and bilateral projects. Such initiatives, including a road map agreed with the Agency for the period 2024–2027, were designed to improve the asylum system of Serbia and align it with that of the European Union.

10. The first stage of the asylum procedure was the registration of intention to seek asylum. Persons entering Serbia who registered such an intention had 72 hours in which to present themselves at an asylum centre, failing which they would be subject to the procedures and measures envisaged in the Law on Foreigners. However, very few persons arriving in Serbia expressed their intention to seek asylum, and even fewer filed an application. In 2020, 2,813 people – mostly citizens of Afghanistan, Pakistan and the Syrian Arab Republic – had registered their intention to seek asylum and only 147 had filed an application. In 2025, 627 people had registered their intention to seek asylum and 133 had filed an application. Articles 33 and 34 of the Law on Asylum and Temporary Protection established grounds for exclusion from the rights to asylum and subsidiary protection, which included threats to national security and public order.

11. The Ministry of the Interior did not have any informal or secret detention centres or units. Regional police directorates operated 217 detention units with capacity for 338 persons. The Border Police Directorate operated three reception centres for foreigners, located in Padinska Skela, Dimitrovgrad and Plandište, with a total capacity of about 300 places. Residents were not admitted under a detention order but were placed in the centres as an administrative measure while awaiting the completion of their asylum procedure.

12. According to the Ministry of the Interior, foreign nationals accounted for only 2,184 (8.8%) of the 24,883 detention orders that had been issued in 2025. Only 3% of detentions related to violations of the Law on Foreigners. Foreign nationals in Serbian territory were subject to the law of the land and would be treated in the same way as Serbian citizens if they committed an offence.

13. Persons detained in reception centres for foreigners currently received treatment when needed at local primary healthcare centres. In 2025, the Ministry of the Interior and the Ministry of Health had begun to implement an agreement on the provision of healthcare in reception centres, and it was expected that an annex to that agreement would be signed in 2026 in order to ensure systematic healthcare for all persons held in the centres.

14. The Ministry of the Interior, the Protector of Citizens (Ombudsman), the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Human and Minority Rights and Social Dialogue had drawn up a plan for the prevention of abuse and torture in police activities, which included a comprehensive set of measures. The plan was being actively implemented in order to protect the fundamental rights of migrants and asylum-seekers, including freedom from discrimination and abuse.

15. **A representative of Serbia** said that the Law on Free Legal Aid stipulated that free legal aid should be provided to asylum-seekers, who could request it through an application to the relevant local government. Article 13 of the Law on Asylum and Temporary Protection provided that applicants who did not understand the official language of the asylum procedure must be provided with free interpretation into their native language or a language they could understand.

16. Serbia had detailed regulations on the protection of victims and witnesses. In December 2024, a rule book had been adopted to guide the work of information and support services for witnesses and injured parties in the higher courts, and it had since been successfully implemented by all courts in Serbia. The National Strategy for Exercising the Rights of Victims and Witnesses of Criminal Offences was accompanied by an action plan setting out the measures and activities to be carried out. All authorities covered by the action plan were obliged to draw up quarterly reports that were considered by a coordination body and then reviewed and adopted by the Government. The Law on Free Legal Aid expressly provided that victims of trafficking in persons were entitled to free legal aid.

17. **A representative of Serbia** said that informal detention centres or units did not exist in Serbia; however, during the period of high migratory pressure, camps had appeared in the towns of Kanjiža, Kikinda and Subotica, from which organized criminal groups had smuggled migrants across the border. In some cases, migrants had been abducted or falsely imprisoned. The authorities had established operational instructions on how to proceed when migrants, asylum-seekers or other foreign nationals were found to be living in camps. If there was prima facie evidence that they had been abducted or deprived of liberty, a criminal investigation would be opened.

18. Police action was subject to multiple layers of internal and external oversight. At the national level, the police internal affairs unit was empowered to act upon complaints submitted by all persons, whether nationals or foreigners, and to take action if there had been discrimination or disregard for human rights. Breaches of the code of conduct for police officers might result in disciplinary or criminal proceedings. At the international level, border control operations undertaken by the Serbian police with the European Border and Coast Guard Agency (Frontex) were monitored by the Fundamental Rights Office.

19. According to figures from the Ministry of the Interior, the reception centres for foreigners had admitted 609 persons and released 636 in 2023. Forty-one individuals had been deported; 157 had been returned to other States under readmission agreements; and 11 had benefited from assisted voluntary return. Only two persons had expressed their intention to seek asylum after being placed in a reception centre for foreigners.

20. **A representative of Serbia** said that, regarding the deaths at the Sjenica asylum centre, run by the Commissariat for Refugees and Migration, a non-governmental organization had submitted a report to the Ombudsman alleging neglect of persons with mental health disorders. On 7 August 2025, the Ombudsman had issued a report stating that no further action was necessary, as no evidence had been found to support the allegations.

21. **A representative of Serbia** said that the Government had made progress towards universal birth registration. In December 2020, an instruction had been issued on how to proceed in the case of children born to parents – whether Serbian or foreign nationals – who did not have identity documents.

22. **A representative of Serbia** said that the Government had taken steps to strengthen its system for combating trafficking in persons. A bill on the prevention and suppression of human trafficking and the protection of victims had received a positive assessment from the European Commission and was pending adoption by the National Assembly. Once enacted, the law would empower victims of trafficking, irrespective of their participation in criminal

proceedings. Anti-discriminatory principles and an inclusive, social approach were embedded in the text, which drew on the contributions of national authorities and civil society organizations. The Roma national minority council had made a special contribution to the drafting process, ensuring that the law addressed the specific needs and rights of the Roma community.

23. **Mr. Diaby** said that he would like a fuller answer to the question he had posed at the previous meeting ([CERD/C/SR.3199](#)) regarding the low vaccination rates of Roma children. He would appreciate further details of the European Court of Human Rights judgment in the case of *O.H. and others v. Serbia* and the procedure for the determination of statelessness.

24. **Mr. Guissé** (Country Rapporteur) said that the Committee had received reports suggesting that the conduct of the Serbian police was far from exemplary. He would be grateful for information on the punishment, if any, of police officers who had allegedly engaged in the extortion of migrants and asylum-seekers.

25. **Ms. Esseneme** (Country Task Force) said that she would welcome additional details regarding the support provided to victims of trafficking in persons, especially women and children. In particular, she would be interested to know whether victims could sue for damages and what been done for the victims in cases that had been adjudicated.

26. **Ms. Tebie** said that she welcomed the substantial efforts made by the State Party for the protection of persons displaced from Ukraine. She wondered whether the same protection and access to rights were guaranteed for persons arriving from other regions of the world.

27. **Mr. Tlemçani**, noting that the Committee had received consistent reports that, in the context of border management, the authorities targeted individuals deemed “foreign-looking” for identity checks, said he wished to know whether law enforcement agencies were provided with any written instructions explicitly forbidding that practice. He wondered how many complaints of racial profiling or ill-treatment during police checks had been recorded. He would be interested to hear more about the procedure for expressing the intention to seek asylum, including the time limit for registering as an asylum-seeker, guarantees to prevent removal before registration and the availability of legal assistance. He would also be interested to know whether the Government considered neighbouring countries such as North Macedonia to be safe and, if so, whether it conducted follow-up or reviews of cases of individuals who had been returned under readmission agreements.

28. **A representative of Serbia** said that the Programme for Combating Trafficking in Persons 2024–2029 was accompanied by an action plan that set out key measures and activities, with high implementation rates reported in 2024 and 2025. The action plan had had a direct positive impact on the situation of victims, especially those belonging to vulnerable groups. Training on topics related to violence and discrimination had been delivered for relevant actors. In 2025, the Ministry of the Interior had organized 25 training sessions in 25 districts, in which 1,500 participants from various sectors had learned how to identify victims of trafficking in persons.

29. The Centre for the Protection of Victims of Trafficking in Human Beings played a key role in assisting victims, including through the operation of a shelter for female victims aged 16 and over, with capacity for six persons. The protection system provided services to all victims without discrimination, including access to healthcare, education, psychosocial and other forms of support, interpretation, safe accommodation and food. Foreign nationals were assisted with voluntary return to their country of origin. Following a review in 2025, the Government recognized the need to improve its response to certain challenges, such as by increasing shelter capacity for child victims aged 12 and over.

30. In 2024, the Centre for the Protection of Victims of Trafficking in Human Beings had developed a rule book for the preliminary identification of victims and the coordination of victim protection. The Government was developing a booklet for victims of trafficking in persons with the aim of providing them with clear, accessible and timely information on their rights. Since 2021, contact points on trafficking in persons had been nominated in various institutions. The Ministry of the Interior had issued an instruction on police action in trafficking in persons cases, requiring the non-discriminatory and equitable treatment of all confirmed or potential victims.

31. **A representative of Serbia** said that, as the judgment in the case of *O.H. and others v. Serbia* was not yet enforceable, the delegation could not discuss it in detail. Once the judgement became enforceable, the Government would have three months in which to enforce it and to provide reparation for harm incurred by the victims.

32. In more than 80% of trafficking in persons cases, victims were given the status of especially vulnerable witnesses, which meant that they benefited from State-funded legal assistance and that their hearings were held in accordance with special rules designed to prevent revictimization.

33. **A representative of Serbia** said that Roma health mediators, who provided significant healthcare support in Roma settlements, had conducted almost 102,000 visits to families in 2025. Birth registration rates among Roma were very high: 96% of children and 98% of men were registered. Vaccination rates, too, were generally high. However, the percentage of Roma children older than 24 months who had received their first dose of the measles/mumps/rubella vaccine by their first birthday was just 63%, lagging behind that of the general population (93.4%).

34. **A representative of Serbia** said that, in 2022, the Ministry of Education had reviewed the list of indicators for the preliminary identification of victims of trafficking in persons in the education system. To raise awareness of those indicators, which had been published online, training had been organized for 1,200 school staff. A mobile telephone application had been developed to assist teachers and staff in identifying children as potential trafficking victims and referring cases to the competent authorities.

35. The Government was proud to report that migrant children were fully included in the education system, where they followed a curriculum – developed after the 2016 migration crisis – for the study of Serbian as a foreign language. Schools had been allocated grants in order to provide extracurricular activities and support for migrant pupils. In March 2026, the Government had distributed laptops to all high school students from the migrant population. Many learning materials had been translated into the respective languages of migrant pupils.

36. **A representative of Serbia** said that the vaccination of children was carried out in Roma settlements in line with the country's immunization schedule, and the Government was working to increase the immunization coverage of Roma children.

37. To address statelessness, future mothers were provided with timely information and guidance on how to register the births of their children and obtain identity documents for them. From December 2026, under the recently amended Law on Registry Books, registrars would initiate birth registration procedures for persons born in Serbian territory, meaning that the State assumed part of the responsibility in that regard.

38. **A representative of Serbia** said that asylum applications were assessed by the Asylum Office, whose decisions were reviewed by the Asylum Commission. Because Serbia was in the process of European integration, the Government was obliged to align its actions with European Union directive 2008/115/EC on common standards and procedures in member States for returning illegally staying third-country nationals. The Law on Asylum and Temporary Protection provided that asylum-seekers' movement might be restricted for a maximum period of three months, which could be extended for another three months. The grounds for restriction of movement included the necessity of establishing the asylum-seeker's identity and nationality. Asylum-seekers were entitled to legal aid at the border. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) had provided instructions and Quick Response Codes to inform foreigners, migrants and asylum-seekers of their rights. The Ministry of the Interior had adopted standard operating procedures for dealing with irregular migrants and foreign nationals who intended to seek asylum, which included guidance on how the police should act, especially towards minors. The principle of family reunification was upheld, and asylum-seeking children were not separated from accompanying family members.

39. **A representative of Serbia** said that the reception centres for foreigners should not be confused with asylum centres. The six asylum centres operated by the Commissariat for Refugees and Migration were open facilities for asylum-seekers and migrants who had not regularized their status. Reception centres for foreigners were closed facilities.

40. **A representative of Serbia** said that, between January 2022 and April 2026, about 770,000 citizens of Ukraine had entered Serbia, while 755,000 had left the country. Most, therefore, had been in transit, and the authorities had monitored their movements so as to be able to provide increased resources if necessary. Between 2022 and 2026, only four decisions had been taken on asylum applications by Ukrainian nationals, compared with 5,358 decisions on temporary protection. Temporary protection for all persons fleeing Ukraine had been extended as the conflict had continued.

41. The Government was aware of two serious allegations of excessive use of force by law enforcement at the border with Hungary. The police internal affairs unit was independently verifying those allegations, in line with its methodology for the effective investigation of such cases.

42. **A representative of Serbia** said that, in 2025, the Ministry of the Interior had received 1,067 complaints of excessive use of force, 67 of which had been deemed well founded. Allegations of police abuses were investigated by specially trained prosecutors and officers from the internal affairs unit.

43. **A representative of Serbia** said that persons displaced from Ukraine had the same rights to stay and to work in Serbia as Serbian citizens. The Commissariat for Refugees and Migration provided accommodation for those who needed it. For example, the asylum centre in Vranje currently had 64 Ukrainian nationals staying there. Residents enjoyed all forms of protection and exercised all rights, including the rights to health and to education.

44. **A representative of Serbia** said that the legal framework enshrined the principle of non-refoulement and ensured at all procedural stages that asylum-seekers could not be removed from Serbia if doing so would place them at risk of serious harm. That principle was also included in police operating procedures. Progress had been made in providing clearer guidance on the prohibition of refoulement, and police officers had attended training on that subject with UNHCR, Frontex, the International Organization for Migration and civil society organizations. Registered civil society organizations were granted access to reception centres for foreigners and provided the persons detained there with assistance.

The meeting was suspended at 11.20 a.m. and resumed at 11.30 a.m.

45. **Ms. Esseneme** said that she wished to know what steps the State Party had taken to prevent and punish racial profiling, including in the context of law enforcement, investigations and border operations. She would like to hear more about the content of the specialization course for community policing and about the role and powers of the police officers involved in community policing.

46. In the light of the information provided in the State Party's report (CERD/C/SRB/6-9, para. 68), she would like to better understand how the independence of the judiciary functioned in the State Party. In particular, she wished to know how the independence of the Public Prosecutor's Office was respected, since its senior prosecutor was elected – and held accountable for her activities – by the National Assembly. She wondered, too, whether criminal proceedings could be instituted against serving prosecutors, whether prosecutors enjoyed immunity and whether they received professional training at a judicial training college.

47. She would be grateful for information on the constitution of the body of persons responsible for electing the members of the High Judicial Council and on the profiles of the candidates for election. Information on the process used to elect the President of the Supreme Court would also be welcome.

48. It would be interesting to know in what way the amendments made to the Law on the Prohibition of Discrimination in 2021 had strengthened the role of the Office of the Commissioner for the Protection of Equality, particularly in tackling racial discrimination and hate speech. It would be interesting to know, too, how the Office collaborated with the Ombudsman and how those two institutions collaborated with the judiciary in combating racial discrimination.

49. She was eager to learn what types of citizen petition the National Assembly could examine and how victims of racial discrimination could submit petitions to the Assembly. She wondered what criteria were used to select the members of the Council for Monitoring the Implementation of Recommendations of United Nations Mechanisms for Human Rights and whether the members were appointed on a permanent or ad hoc basis depending on the matter to be discussed.

50. She would appreciate information on the measures taken to build the capacity of the judiciary, the police, the media, local communities and civil society organizations with a view to strengthening law enforcement, preventing and punishing hate speech and hate crime more effectively and improving the handling of cases. Information on the outcome of the capacity-building measures taken for each institution and the progress made in that regard would be welcome.

51. It would be useful to know how the Strategy for Prevention and Protection against Discrimination implemented until 2018, and the accompanying action plan, had strengthened the prevention of discrimination and the protection of vulnerable groups and what the situation of those groups had been prior to implementation. It would be useful to know, too, what measures for tackling racial discrimination were provided for in the current strategy, which would run from 2022–2030, and what steps it envisaged to promote a culture of diversity and tolerance among the general public, the public authorities, civil servants, the police and the judicial authorities.

52. She would appreciate information on the training provided by the National Academy for Public Administration in the area of racial discrimination and on the different types of training provided by the Judicial Academy. She wondered how many people had been trained by the two establishments during the reporting period, whether the training covered the Convention and its implementation and what positions the personnel trained at the National Academy for Public Administration held. Lastly, she wished to know what measures had been taken to introduce a culture of human rights, with a particular focus on non-discrimination and the equality of human beings, into the education system, including school and university curricula and teacher training programmes.

53. **A representative of Serbia** said that, under the amendments made to the Constitution in 2022, all judges and chief justices were appointed by the High Judicial Council, which was an independent State authority. The Council comprised six judges elected by their peers and four eminent lawyers elected by the parliament, along with the President of the Supreme Court, who served ex officio. The members of the Council who were judges each represented a different type of court and were directly elected by the judges of those courts, which included the Supreme Court, the Court of Appeal, the Administrative Court, the high courts, the commercial courts and the Commercial Court of Appeals.

54. All judges and prosecutors enjoyed immunity under the Constitution. They could not be held accountable for any opinions they expressed or decisions they took in the performance of their duties unless they broke the law, for example by abusing their authority. In such cases, the immunity of judges was determined by the High Judicial Council and that of prosecutors by the High Prosecutorial Council.

55. The President of the Supreme Court was selected following a public call for candidates issued by the High Judicial Council. All judges of the Supreme Court were eligible to apply. Following interviews and a competitive procedure, a shortlist of candidates was drawn up, from which the President was chosen. The President and the judges of the Supreme Court were appointed for five-year terms.

56. The High Prosecutorial Council consisted of five public prosecutors from different prosecutor's offices. The Council proposed a single candidate for the post of Chief Public Prosecutor, who was required to obtain a three-fifths majority in a parliamentary vote. If the candidate in question failed to obtain such a majority, a five-person panel selected a candidate from among all those who met the requirements. The Chief Public Prosecutor and public prosecutors served for six-year terms.

57. Under the Constitution, the Public Prosecutor's Office was an independent public authority responsible for the criminal prosecution of offenders and other duties relating to the protection of the public interest. The Office performed its duties in accordance with ratified international treaties, the Constitution and laws of Serbia, and international rules and standards. Prosecutors' offices were bound only by court decisions and decisions taken within the prosecutorial system and other parts of the judiciary. They were not subject to any other influence on their work, including any undue political influence. The Public Prosecutor's Office submitted reports to the parliament that addressed questions relating to the protection of the public interest but did not contain information on specific cases.

58. The Judicial Academy conducted training sessions on anti-discrimination legislation for students at different levels. The curriculum covered the concept of discrimination, legal forms of protection from discrimination, and discrimination based on personal characteristics or directed against groups. Training sessions had been held on case law, the implementation of anti-discrimination legislation, legal remedies and judicial protection from discrimination. The Academy had developed a publication on case law related to protection from discrimination and had set up a distance learning platform with courses on anti-discrimination legislation for judges, judicial assistants and participants in basic training. In addition, the Academy had conducted an analysis of case law on reparation in cases of discrimination. Publications and guidelines on claims for non-material damage were issued to expand the knowledge of judges, judicial assistants, public prosecutors and other judicial staff.

59. **A representative of Serbia** said that the Ministry of Human and Minority Rights and Social Dialogue was responsible for developing and disseminating guidelines on implementing the recommendations of United Nations human rights mechanisms. The Ministry also prepared reports for the human rights treaty bodies and other international bodies and familiarized the national authorities with their recommendations. Public hearings were organized to monitor the implementation of the recommendations. Whenever the status of certain vulnerable groups was considered at such hearings, the relevant parliamentary committees were invited to participate. When new legislation was developed, the Ministry drew attention to the recommendations made by international bodies. The process of monitoring the implementation of such recommendations also formed part of the accession negotiations between Serbia and the European Union. The Ministry submitted quarterly reports to the Secretary-General of the Government on the implementation of recommendations. All strategic papers on matters affecting vulnerable groups invoked the provisions of the Convention.

60. **A representative of Serbia** said that the National Academy for Public Administration was a central institution responsible for the professional development of civil servants. The curriculum taught at the Academy covered international obligations, including under the Convention, and the roles of the Commissioner for the Protection of Equality, the Ombudsman and other independent authorities. The curriculum was published every year on the Academy's website, which featured a visual tool showing the relationship between the different courses and the Sustainable Development Goals. In 2025, 14 training courses relating to the reduction of inequality had been offered.

61. Besides in-person training, the Academy provided online training on subjects such as gender-responsive budgeting and protection from discrimination before the public authorities. Judges, prosecutors and police officers received training in dealing with hate crimes. Training in tackling discrimination had been delivered to 100 staff members of the National Employment Service. Efforts were made to improve the curriculum every year.

62. **A representative of Serbia** said that the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development had reformed the curriculum to include a number of cross-cutting competencies, including knowledge of human rights, that all students were expected to acquire. Students following the curriculum were taught to show respect for others and respect for diversity and intercultural dialogue. Civic education had been an optional subject for a number of years and, recently, a new subject that emphasized tolerance had been incorporated into all three stages of the education system. Extracurricular activities that taught students to develop tolerance and show respect for diversity had been added to the programme. Between 2022 and 2025, over 735 accredited training activities had been

conducted in that area. A programme for promoting democratic culture was being implemented in collaboration with the Council of Europe. In that connection, two Council of Europe handbooks on democratic culture had been translated into Serbian and counsellors for democratic culture had been appointed in a number of schools. Consideration was being given to the possibility of using artificial intelligence tools to develop classes relating to democratic culture.

63. **A representative of Serbia** said that the Judicial Academy used its website to publish guidelines for counsellors and coordinators working in the field of human rights, as well as materials relating to relevant United Nations treaties. The case law, decisions and recommendations of different courts, treaty bodies and other authorities were available online.

64. The curriculum used to train police officers included elements intended to promote tolerance and respect for diversity and human and minority rights, along with the code of conduct for police officers and material on combating discrimination. Trainee police officers also received specific training in responding to reports of intolerance. Police officers collaborated with municipal security councils to tackle incidents involving discrimination and violations of human rights.

65. **Ms. Esseneme** said that she wished to know why young people's interest in becoming judges and prosecutors appeared to be waning. She wondered whether the State Party would consider making civic education a mandatory part of the school curriculum rather than an optional subject, as it was currently. She would like to know what powers were granted to community police officers. Lastly, she would welcome an answer to her question regarding the appointment of the members of the Council for Monitoring the Implementation of Recommendations of United Nations Mechanisms for Human Rights.

66. **Mr. Diaby** said that he wished to know whether the State Party intended to set up a mechanism for combating impunity among police officers to complement the human rights training provided to them. At the same time, he would appreciate details of any human rights training provided to soldiers posted at border crossings and prison officers and any measures taken to combat impunity among those personnel.

67. **Ms. Stavrinaki** said that she wished to know whether the Convention was covered in the training provided to civil servants and judges, including judges who oversaw legal cases between private individuals. She would welcome information on any efforts made to ascertain whether acts of violence carried out by police officers were motivated by prejudice, including racial prejudice. She would be grateful to learn how the movements of migrants were monitored. She wondered whether police officers were made aware of the Committee's general recommendation No. 36 on preventing and combating racial profiling by law enforcement officials. Lastly, she would appreciate details of the specific measures taken to monitor the health of Roma communities.

68. **Ms. Tlakula** said that she wished to know whether the database being developed by the Council for Monitoring the Implementation of Recommendations of United Nations Mechanisms for Human Rights had been launched yet.

69. **A representative of Serbia** said that the website of the Judicial Academy could be used to compare the provisions of national laws with those of international conventions and treaties. With regard to young people's interest in joining the legal professions, it should be noted that judges and prosecutors were required to undergo long periods of professional development as those roles were very demanding.

70. **A representative of Serbia** said that the National Academy for Public Administration trained civil servants and members of local councils in the international treaties, protecting human rights, combating discrimination and protecting personal data, among other subjects. Indicators linked to the Sustainable Development Goals had been established to monitor the implementation of the recommendations made by the treaty bodies. The results of the monitoring were accessible to the public and were used in the accession negotiations between Serbia and the European Union. Reports on the implementation of recommendations were typically compiled in coordination with an independent institution, which was responsible for determining the extent to which a particular recommendation had been implemented.

71. **A representative of Serbia** said that 25,000 police officers underwent training in combating discrimination every year. The code of conduct for police officers was one of the tools used to combat impunity. In considering the question of impunity, a distinction should be made between violations of human rights and violations of the code of conduct as the applicable penalties differed in each case. Police officers were required to comply with certain international instruments, including the Convention, wherever they operated. They also received training in safeguards and protection measures.

72. A consultative process on the independent monitoring of the borders had taken place. The Government was currently working with different stakeholders, including Frontex and the International Centre for Migration Policy Development, to develop a road map for supervision of the borders based on respect for human rights. The road map would be designed to ensure that the rights of migrants, asylum-seekers and other vulnerable groups were not violated. Feedback from the ground was filtered back into the curriculum used for training.

73. **A representative of Serbia** said that monitoring of the health of Roma communities was undertaken by the 67 healthcare mediators working on the ground with Roma families, who reported back to local healthcare centres and to the Ministry of Health.

74. **A representative of Serbia** said that students were required to study either civil education or religious education, which were therefore classed as “mandatory optional” subjects. It was mandatory for teachers to acquire competencies that enabled them to promote a culture of tolerance among students.

75. **A representative of Serbia** said that contact points, State secretaries and deputy ministers participated in the selection of the members of the Council for Monitoring the Implementation of Recommendations of United Nations Mechanisms for Human Rights. A fast-track procedure had been established to appoint new members of the Council or to reappoint existing ones when it was necessary to do so quickly.

76. **Ms. Esseneme** said that, where efforts to combat racial discrimination were concerned, she wished to know what forms of collaboration took place between the Office of the Commissioner for the Protection of Equality and the Ombudsman and between those two institutions and the judiciary. It was still not clear what types of petition could be examined by the National Assembly and how victims of racial discrimination could submit petitions to the Assembly. It would be interesting to know what the Office of the Commissioner for the Protection of Equality did with the anonymized court decisions in discrimination cases that were sent to it.

77. **A representative of Serbia** said that the Office of the Commissioner for the Protection of Equality was responsible for protecting human rights and dealing with reports of violations of human rights. In 2021, the mandate of the Office had been expanded to cover preventive actions against torture and monitoring of the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The Office issued recommendations relating to human rights and designed initiatives to improve the human rights situation of particular groups. It also issued warnings in situations where acts of discrimination had been identified and conducted training in the detection of such acts. Over the course of the reporting period, the Office had issued 3,690 recommendations, 703 of which had referred to the situation of Roma men and women. It had also issued three warnings relating to discrimination against Roma persons.

78. **Mr. Diaby** said that it remained unclear what measures were taken to combat impunity among police officers and whether officers who committed serious human rights violations faced criminal penalties.

79. **Ms. Tebie** said that she still wished to know whether the Commissioner for the Protection of Equality had been granted the authority to initiate investigations into cases of discrimination ex officio.

80. **A representative of Serbia** said that public consultations on amendments to the legislation on the prohibition of discrimination were currently taking place. When the amendments became law, the Office of the Commissioner for the Protection of Equality would be authorized to initiate investigations into cases of discrimination ex officio, in line

with recommendations made by the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance. Currently, the Office could initiate proceedings if the case in question was deemed to be of strategic importance.

81. **A representative of Serbia** said that he wished to express his gratitude to the Committee for the extremely useful dialogue.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.