



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

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## Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination Ninety-third session

### Summary record of the 2552nd meeting

Held at the Palais Wilson, Geneva, on Thursday, 3 August 2017, at 3 p.m.

*Chair:* Mr. Crickley

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

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*The meeting was called to order at 3 p.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 (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), introducing the combined twenty-third and twenty-fourth periodic reports of the Russian Federation (CERD/C/RUS/23-24), said that his country attached great importance to meeting its obligations under the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, which occupied an important position in the legal system of the Russian Federation and had become an essential component of State policy. The Russian Federation had emerged historically as a multi-ethnic State and had one thousand years of experience in creating the legal conditions for the development and peaceful coexistence of different peoples. Its President, Vladimir Putin, had in his speeches repeatedly emphasized the importance of bringing about peace between ethnic groups and the unacceptability of any form of discrimination.

3. The Government's approach to ethnic issues was set forth in the State ethnic policy and strategy of the Russian Federation for the period up to 2015, the implementation of which had been entrusted to the Federal Agency for Nationalities. One of the main functions of the Agency was to prevent all forms of discrimination and all attempts to incite racial, ethnic or religious discord, hatred or enmity. The programme to implement the State ethnic policy set out a series of measures aimed at ensuring equal rights and freedoms for all, regardless of race, ethnicity, language and religion.

4. Article 13 of the Constitution banned voluntary associations that sought to incite social, racial, ethnic or religious hatred, and the Ministry of Justice closely monitored the activities of such associations. In 2014, a strategy on countering extremism in the Russian Federation up to 2025 had been adopted. In addition, the Russian Federation operated a policy of countering attempts to glorify Nazism and other ideologies that sought to justify or incite racial hatred or discrimination of any form; it was also the author of a resolution submitted annually to the General Assembly of the United Nations on combating glorification of Nazism, neo-Nazism and other practices that contributed to fuelling contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance.

5. The authorities carefully investigated and brought to justice persons who incited racial, ethnic or religious hatred. Law enforcement officials regularly underwent professional training on racial discrimination and profiling and had in recent years begun to achieve greater success in uncovering and suppressing cases of extremism. In 2016, the law enforcement agencies had investigated 1,207 offences of an extremist nature, of which 993 had been prosecuted. In the first quarter of 2017, they had referred 267 such offences to the criminal courts. In 2016, a total of 427 persons had been convicted of criminal offences motivated by racial or ethnic hatred. Overall, the Russian Federation had built a fairly robust system for the judicial protection of all persons whose rights had been violated through discrimination. The courts strictly protected the rights of all persons subject to the jurisdiction of the Russian Federation and made direct reference to the provisions of the Convention.

6. The use of the Internet to plan or commit offences of an extremist nature had become more common in recent years. In 2016, such offences had represented 63 per cent of the total number of offences of an extremist nature as defined in Federal Act No. 114 on countering extremist activities. The relevant authorities worked to identify and block published content that incited racial, ethnic or religious hatred or that promoted the idea that a person's worth depended on his or her race, ethnicity or religion. The Federal Oversight Service for Communications, Information Technology and Mass Media was responsible for taking measures to prevent such activities.

7. The procuratorial authorities of the Russian Federation monitored the media and the Internet in a bid to identify extremist content. Between February 2014 and April 2017, around 42,000 resources promoting racial intolerance, xenophobia or neo-Nazism had been identified. In addition, since October 2014, over 26,000 resources promoting the ideology of Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant had been identified. In many cases, the offending content had been removed; in some cases, restrictions had been imposed on access to the resources.

8. Meanwhile, the Federal Agency for Nationalities monitored the situation of inter-ethnic relations, operated an early warning system to identify conflict situations and maintained a comprehensive database for that purpose.

9. The prevention of racial intolerance and other manifestations of extremism at sports events was a government priority. Sports organizations regularly held events aimed at creating an environment free from discrimination, and seminars and training courses were organized in advance of major sporting events in association with representatives of the sport itself, State bodies, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and relevant NGOs. In July 2017, the Russian Federation had become the third country to ratify the Council of Europe Convention on an Integrated Safety, Security and Service Approach at Football Matches and Other Sports Events. In addition, sports organizations had special units responsible for preventing discrimination. For example, the Russian Football Union had a dedicated inspector for combating racism and discrimination in football.

10. The authorities took measures to tackle racial prejudice and to encourage mutual understanding, tolerance and friendship between ethnic or religious groups, and mechanisms had been introduced to prevent and settle inter-ethnic and interfaith conflicts. The Government supported multiracial organizations and movements, as well as other initiatives designed to overcome racial and ethnic barriers, and offered financial support to autonomous ethnic and cultural organizations and centres.

11. State and municipal education institutions organized special courses to foster a culture of mutual respect and a patriotic worldview, instil traditional cultural, religious and moral values, and raise awareness of the cultural and religious traditions of the peoples of the Russian Federation. The authorities were strengthening cooperation with higher education institutions and voluntary associations with a view to preventing the spread of radicalism among young people, and dedicated centres and clubs were being set up in higher education institutions to that end. There were also programmes to facilitate the integration of foreign students.

12. Great emphasis was placed on the preservation of the historical memory of the Great Patriotic War and the Second World War. In 2016, on the instructions of the President, the Ministry of Education and Science had developed a new educational programme in conjunction with the Russian Historical Society and the Russian Military Historical Society. In the same year, a large number of educational events had been held to commemorate the seventieth anniversary of the establishment of the International Military Tribunal at Nuremberg and to emphasize the importance of its legacy for the suppression of pro-Nazi, radical and extremist activities and of inter-ethnic and interfaith hatred.

13. There were more than 190 peoples and ethnic groups in the Russian Federation, and they enjoyed equal rights to preserve and to develop their respective languages, cultures and traditions. Additional provisions had been introduced to support the numerically small indigenous peoples of the North, Siberia and the Far East of the Russian Federation, as well as other ethnic minorities. Under the Constitution and federal legislation, numerically small indigenous peoples were granted special privileges in terms of access to natural resources and land. Some of the constituent entities of the Russian Federation had taken additional measures, including the formation of mobile medical units, to enhance the access of indigenous peoples to medical assistance. Moreover, in partnership with Russian Railways, medical trains had been introduced in a number of regions, and members of numerically small indigenous peoples represented one third of the patients seen by the medical staff on the trains.

14. The Russian Federation was working to improve the situation of Roma and to integrate them into society. A comprehensive plan for the socioeconomic and ethnocultural development of Roma for 2017-2019 had been drafted and was currently pending adoption. The overwhelming majority of Roma had a settled way of life and were economically, socially and culturally integrated. Roma who had a nomadic way of life required special support, in particular with regard to the education of their children; if necessary, special preparatory classes were organized for Roma children to ensure that they would subsequently be able to join mainstream classes without psychological or other problems.

15. The Convention and the relevant implementing legislation were fully in force in the territory of the Republic of Crimea and city of Sevastopol. Under the new Constitution of the Republic of Crimea, Russian, Ukrainian and Crimean Tatar had for the first time acquired the status of official languages.

16. An action plan had been approved for the implementation of Presidential Decree No. 268 of 21 April 2014 on measures to rehabilitate the Armenian, Bulgarian, Greek, Crimean Tatar and German communities and to provide State support for their revival. The Decree was aimed at restoring historical justice and addressing the consequences of the unlawful deportation of those peoples from the territory of the Crimean Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic. It provided for the preparation of laws and regulations, the sociocultural integration of repatriates, instruction in the official languages of the Republic of Crimea, the teaching of the Armenian, Bulgarian, Greek and German languages, and measures to meet the social and ethnocultural needs of repressed peoples. State support was given to media outlets that broadcast programmes in the Armenian, Bulgarian, German, Greek and Crimean Tatar languages. The broadcasting company Crimea produced programmes in all those languages.

17. **Ms. Goncharenko** (Russian Federation), speaking on behalf of the Office of the Commissioner for Human Rights of the Russian Federation, said that the Commissioner was empowered to consider complaints concerning, inter alia, racial discrimination and to take measures to restore violated rights. From January 2012 to the beginning of July 2017, the Office had examined more than 140,000 complaints. The annual increase in the number of complaints lodged showed that the Russian population was placing greater trust in the Office as an extrajudicial mechanism for the protection of human rights. However, the number of complaints of racial discrimination and related forms of intolerance lodged with the Office accounted for only 0.2 per cent of the total number of complaints received.

18. In response to a joint communication sent in 2015 by the Special Rapporteur on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance and the Special Rapporteur on minority issues, the Office had launched an investigation into the alleged forced eviction of Roma living in the city of Irkutsk and had sent its findings to the Governor of Irkutsk Province. The Office had found that the buildings in which the Roma were living had been unlawfully occupied. The Roma in question had been informed of their housing rights, offered plots of land on which to build new homes and provided with social assistance.

19. The results of the Office's monitoring activities showed that the prevalence of xenophobia and racial intolerance was decreasing. That trend could be attributed to the positive impact of the measures taken by the authorities to foster tolerance and respect among the different ethnic groups.

20. A network comprising regional commissioners for human rights from all constituent entities of the Russian Federation had been established in 2016. The Office of the Commissioner was working with the regional commissioners and OHCHR to organize activities intended to combat racism and different forms of discrimination in sport in the run-up to the 2018 soccer World Cup organized by FIFA. Those activities included a seminar on the role of human rights commissioners in combating racism and discrimination in football and a round table on the role of Saint Petersburg in promoting diversity and in creating an environment free from discrimination in the cities hosting the 2018 World Cup.

21. The Office recognized that upholding the right of the different ethnic groups living in the Russian Federation to preserve and develop their language and culture was essential for maintaining inter-ethnic harmony, and worked with ethnocultural organizations to that

end. A project to strengthen the unity of the Russian nation and to promote inter-ethnic harmony was being carried out in a number of the constituent entities of the Russian Federation as a means of building trust between different ethnic groups.

22. In 2016, the Commissioner for Human Rights of the Russian Federation had visited the Autonomous Republic of Crimea to investigate alleged violations of the rights of Crimean Tatars and ethnic Ukrainians, including those being held in detention facilities. However, no rights violations had been identified on that occasion. The Commissioner had met with representatives of human rights organizations and the Crimean Tartar community and had visited a number of detention facilities. The right of children in the Republic of Crimea to receive preschool, primary and secondary education in their mother tongue and to study their native languages was guaranteed by ensuring the availability of sufficient educational institutions, classes and groups for that purpose. Since 2014, there had been three official languages in Crimea: Russian, Crimean Tatar and Ukrainian.

23. The Commissioner for Human Rights and the regional commissioners were competent to consider any complaints lodged by migrants. Interviews with migrants showed that more efforts were being made to provide them with information about living and working in the Russian Federation. In Moscow Province, workshops on Russian law, history, culture and language were held for migrant workers. Special centres had been established to assist migrants in obtaining a work permit. Representatives of the Commissioner for Human Rights had visited one such centre and had noted positive developments in terms of guaranteeing migrants' rights. Positive trends had also been identified in relation to the social integration of migrants, while the prevalence of intolerance towards migrants among the Russian population appeared to be declining. Although considerable progress had been achieved, the Russian authorities, civil society and the Office of the Commissioner for Human Rights all needed to step up their efforts in that area.

24. The Office of the Commissioner for Human Rights conducted educational activities in the form of lectures and seminars, participated in youth forums and raised awareness through the media and the dissemination of printed materials. It paid special attention to the rights of numerically small indigenous peoples and, in that connection, had appointed special representatives to deal with indigenous issues in three provinces. If necessary, the Commissioner could conduct special visits to those provinces to address alleged human rights violations. The Office would continue its monitoring activities and its efforts to promote the rights and freedoms of each citizen in the Russian Federation.

25. **Mr. Bossuyt** (Country Rapporteur) said that, in its previous concluding observations (CERD/C/RUS/CO/20-22), the Committee had expressed concern over the lack of information on civil, criminal and administrative court cases involving racial discrimination in which the provisions of the Convention had been applied or invoked and on the redress provided to victims. Regrettably, the information requested did not feature in the State party's report. The delegation should provide detailed information on such court cases, their outcome, the redress provided to victims, the training provided to law enforcement officials on the Convention and any measures taken to increase reporting by victims of racial discrimination.

26. He understood from the State party's report that it had not yet adopted comprehensive anti-discrimination legislation, including a definition of direct and indirect forms of racial discrimination, as previously recommended by the Committee. He asked whether the State party had taken any steps to bring the definition of extremism contained in Federal Act No. 114 on countering extremism and in the Criminal Code into line with article 4 of the Convention, as the existing definition of that phenomenon was excessively broad and vague, allowing for arbitrariness in its application. The Federal Act in question should also be amended to include specific criteria for determining whether a given activity or material was extremist in nature. It was regrettable that the State party's report did not include the information requested by the Committee on the complaints of racial discrimination lodged with the Office of the Commissioner for Human Rights of the Russian Federation and their outcome. It would be helpful to receive disaggregated data on such complaints, their outcome and the redress provided to the victims. He asked whether efforts had been made to raise greater awareness of the Office's working methods and

whether steps had been taken to relax its conditions for accepting complaints in order to increase their number.

27. The Committee remained concerned about the growing prevalence of racist hate crime and hate speech, especially by politicians, the State party's failure to unequivocally condemn those phenomena and the leniency shown by the courts in punishing the perpetrators of those offences. It was regrettable that the State party had failed to follow up on the dismissal of court cases against the mayor of Sochi, Mr. Pakhomov, who had made racist statements about the Roma in 2009 and that discriminatory language remained a common feature of electoral campaigns, despite the State party having been called upon to take measures to combat the use of racist hate speech by politicians. The State party should take steps to investigate, deter and punish hate crimes and hate speech, including by politicians, against minority groups, Roma, Muslims and migrant workers.

28. Noting that the media were subject to regular monitoring and inspections and that legal action could be taken against media outlets that broke the law, he said that it would be useful to receive information on the measures in place to prevent manifestations of discrimination, racism and hatred in the media, as well as statistical data on the disciplinary action taken by media regulatory bodies to curb such manifestations. There was evidence to suggest that the media continued to perpetuate negative stereotypes and stir up prejudice against minority groups. He asked what steps the State party had taken to combat and investigate such incidents.

29. The delay in renewing the comprehensive plan for the social, economic, ethnic and cultural development of the Roma had left the State party bereft of a policy aimed at overcoming the structural discrimination facing the Roma population. He would like to receive information on the implementation and overall impact of the plan, the results of the analysis of the ramifications of the inclusion of the Roma in Russian society conducted in 2015 and any action taken subsequently. The delegation should also describe the measures taken by the State party to halt the forced eviction of Roma from their dwellings and the destruction of their settlements without offering them alternative housing or adequate compensation. It might also comment on reports received by the Committee to the effect that the authorities often took punitive measures against the residents of dense Roma settlements, such as removing their access to basic services.

30. Although the State party denied the existence of de facto segregation of Roma children in the education system and had taken steps to improve their access to education, the attendance rate and academic performance of those children remained poor. Noting that the State party did not apply special measures, such as quotas, as to do so would contravene the principle of equality enshrined in the Constitution, he asked what other measures the State party had taken or intended to take to address the barriers preventing the Roma from accessing adequate housing and quality education. He also wished to receive information on the incidence of forced evictions of Roma since 2011, including any alternative housing offered and compensation provided to affected individuals, and on the progress made in legalizing informal settlements.

31. Given the large number of unregistered persons residing in the country, including stateless persons, refugees and persons who had been granted temporary asylum, the State party might consider working with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to begin regularizing their legal status. The Committee was concerned that potential asylum seekers and even recognized refugees and persons who had been granted temporary asylum, not to mention members of minority groups, still struggled to access basic services such as health care and to enjoy their rights under the Convention on account of the administrative obstacles they faced in registering as residents. The situation of stateless persons was particularly grave, as they could be placed in temporary detention for up to two years, face administrative removal or be prosecuted if they attempted to leave the country without the necessary identity and travel documents. He asked what steps the State party had taken to regularize the situation of all unregistered persons living in its national territory and guarantee them their rights.

32. Despite the State party's assurances that the involvement of internal affairs officials in extremist offences was sporadic and isolated, the Committee had been informed that

racial profiling by law enforcement officials against minority groups persisted and that so-called “Cossack patrols”, which frequently committed racist attacks, were still operating. Regrettably, the State party’s report was silent on the measures taken to discipline or punish the members of those patrols for committing racist acts, and the statistical data that it provided on violations by internal affairs agencies did not indicate whether they were racially motivated, whether the perpetrators had been punished or whether the victims had been compensated. The Committee would appreciate detailed statistical information on cases involving abuse of force by law enforcement officials and Cossack patrols against ethnic minorities, the outcomes of any investigations launched, the penalties imposed and the redress provided to victims.

33. Recalling United Nations General Assembly resolution 71/205 on the situation of human rights in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol (Ukraine), which called upon the Russian Federation to, inter alia, put an end to all abuses against residents of the territory, he said that, according to OHCHR, residents who were known to be pro-Ukrainian faced intimidation and discrimination in the areas of education, employment and property rights. Furthermore, the introduction of Russian citizenship had given rise to residency issues and triggered the loss of related economic and social rights for persons opting to keep their Ukrainian citizenship. The Committee would like to receive information on the impact of the conflict between the State party and Ukraine on the enjoyment of Convention rights by the ethnic minorities living in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol, and on the measures taken to prevent, investigate and deter acts of abuse of authority and of force by law enforcement officials against minority groups.

34. The strict criteria that groups had to meet to be considered “numerically small indigenous peoples” and to benefit from constitutional protection and enjoy the rights enshrined in federal law could force them to restrict their growth or to not declare their actual number. The State party should take measures to ensure that all indigenous groups, regardless of population size, enjoyed legal and constitutional protection of their cultural, political and territorial rights. The delegation should also provide information on the impact of existing federal laws and road maps showing the use of traditional lands and resources by indigenous peoples. The Committee had received reports that extractive industries had caused irreparable harm to territories traditionally inhabited by indigenous peoples and that they had exploited natural resources without those peoples’ consent. Moreover, it appeared that legislative amendments which had the effect of further limiting indigenous peoples’ access to their lands and resources had been adopted without consultation with indigenous representatives. The Committee would welcome information on the measures in place to protect the rights of indigenous peoples against the negative impact of extractive activities and on how the principle of free, prior and informed consent was applied in practice.

35. According to information in the Committee’s possession, the State party’s efforts to monitor the observance by employers of migrant workers’ rights were insufficient, as those workers continued to be victims of widespread exploitation, which, in some cases, amounted to slavery. It would be helpful to receive information on the measures taken to address the economic exploitation of migrant workers, hold exploitative employers to account and provide redress to victims, and on the frequency and scope of labour inspections, especially in employment sectors where migrant workers were overrepresented.

*The meeting was suspended at 4.20 p.m. and resumed at 4.35 p.m.*

36. **Mr. Kut** said that the State party was to be commended for submitting the most recent follow-up report on the Committee’s previous concluding observations (CERD/C/RUS/CO/20-22/Add.1) before the deadline. Unfortunately, however, some information was missing from that report, leaving a number of issues pending. Of particular concern were the following: the lack of official public condemnation of racist or xenophobic statements and the inadequacy of sanctions against politicians who fuelled incitement to hatred; the failure to amend the official definition of extremism and to review the federal law regulating the activities of non-profit organizations acting as foreign agents; the insufficient access afforded to the Roma community to residence registration and adequate housing; legislative changes which diminished, rather than enhanced, the rights of

indigenous peoples; and shortcomings in the establishment of “territories of traditional nature use”.

37. **Ms. Dah** said that the Russian Federation was to be commended for numerous positive actions, including the punctual submission of State party reports. However, the spread of neo-Nazism in the State party was a matter of grave concern. It was difficult to understand how such a doctrine could be espoused in the twenty-first century by people whose forebears had sacrificed so much to fight against Nazism decades earlier. She wondered whether neo-Nazi youth had somehow been failed by the preceding generation in terms of the education they had been given.

38. The scourge of hooliganism was also a source of concern, particularly in relation to the soccer World Cup set to take place in the country in 2018. Major sporting events were often disrupted by the destructive behaviour of certain spectators, who frequently directed their aggression at specific groups. The players and foreign visitors at such events were obvious and particularly vulnerable targets. It would be interesting to hear what measures the State party was taking to prevent acts of hooliganism during the World Cup.

39. **Mr. Calí Tzay** said that the Committee was concerned about the effects of open-cast mining on indigenous communities in southern Siberia and their lack of legal security in respect of their lands. Another issue of concern was the threat to the traditional fishing practices of indigenous peoples, who were forbidden from using nets, even though no such prohibition was applied to commercial companies. There were also reports that there were no educational facilities in the territory of certain indigenous communities; given that the languages of many indigenous peoples were at risk of extinction, it would be useful to know how such languages, and by extension, the millennial cultures which they reflected, would be preserved.

40. The settlements of Roma groups which had resulted from a 1956 law prohibiting the free movement of the traditionally nomadic people in the former Soviet Union had undergone unchecked growth. As a consequence, many of the houses built in those settlements in the intervening decades had subsequently been demolished by the authorities. He wished to know what plans the State party had to provide assistance to the Roma communities affected.

41. Lastly, in order to gain a more accurate perspective on the justice system in the State party, he would appreciate disaggregated data on the prison population.

42. **Mr. Murillo Martínez** said that racism in sport in the State party was a matter of great concern. Very often, racist supporters of football teams targeted players of African descent. In 2012, for example, a member of the Zenit Saint Petersburg football club had been subjected to harassment on account of his ethnic origins. The sports minister had even made statements diminishing the significance of the phenomenon. The Committee would like to know what measures had been taken to address the problem. It would also appreciate clarification on the number of racist organizations which had been identified in the country.

43. **Mr. Khalaf** said that he would welcome information on the Government relocation programme for the Shor people from the village of Kazas, which had been razed by a coal-mining company. He wished to know whether the programme had been implemented and what the next steps were.

44. **Mr. Kemal** said that the Russian people had made a great contribution to the security of Europe by fighting Nazism and Fascism. A link could perhaps be drawn between the sacrifices made then and the issues surrounding discrimination against migrants. The Russian Federation was facing a demographic crisis; it was losing an estimated 1 million workers per year. Although there was, indeed, discrimination against migrants, it bore noting that a logical solution to the labour problem was to make greater use of migrant workers. Since they could play an essential role in the development of the economy, perhaps there was a way to bring in workers from abroad without compromising State security.

45. Since the collapse of the Soviet economy, the traditional practices of indigenous peoples, which included hunting and reindeer-herding, had gained importance. He would welcome details on any special measures being taken to assist indigenous peoples and



protect them from commercial activities that threatened their lifestyles. He would also like to hear about the status of other vulnerable populations and about the enjoyment of human rights by the Crimean Tatars and the peoples of the Caucasus, particularly Muslims. He would appreciate some assurance that everything possible was being done to protect all vulnerable communities in the Russian Federation.

46. Lastly, he would like to know more about the Federal Agency for Nationalities, established in 2015. Why had it been established and what had it achieved thus far?

47. **Mr. Marugán** said that, in 2013, the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance of the Council of Europe had expressed surprise at the lack of complaints of discrimination in the field of employment relating to the Russian Federation. Since that time, he had not come across any reports of complaints of racial discrimination in the workplace or any related administrative sanctions or judicial data in that regard. Indeed, the State party had not provided any such information in the report currently under consideration. Building and Wood Workers' International had informed the Committee of the deaths of a number of migrant workers in the Russian Federation caused by their working conditions. Complaints of difficult employment situations had also been received relating to North Korean nationals working on a stadium in Saint Petersburg in 2016 and from a number of migrant workers from a range of former Soviet states. He asked whether national labour inspectors were carrying out sufficient visits and what specific functions they performed. He wished to know whether the labour inspectorate was adequately staffed and funded. Data on the number of proceedings launched over the past four years and the nature of the administrative sanctions imposed would be welcome. It would be useful to know what types of labour issues had been resolved by the criminal courts.

48. The Committee would be grateful for information covering the reporting period on the number of killings and violent assaults motivated by hatred, as well as the number of complaints lodged with the police, legal proceedings initiated and guilty verdicts and acquittals. He asked whether the action plan to improve the socioeconomic situation of Roma communities referred to in paragraph 15 of the Committee's 2013 concluding observations had been implemented and, if so, what results had been achieved. In paragraph 190 of its report, the State party claimed that there were approximately 207,000 Roma in the Russian Federation. However, according to the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance that figure was between 800,000 and 1 million. He therefore wondered whether the data contained in the State party's report on the alarming number of Roma children lacking access to education were correct and whether measures had been taken to remedy that situation. Clarification as to whether Roma and non-Roma students were segregated at certain schools would be appreciated, as the report under consideration appeared to contradict itself in that regard.

49. **Mr. Murillo Martínez** said that the State party was to be commended for its work on promoting the International Decade for People of African Descent. He would be grateful for additional information on Federal Act No. 179 of 2014 with regard to the burden of proof for acts of discrimination and how it affected criminal proceedings. Information on the differences between offences classified in the State party's report as "being of an extremist nature" and those committed "for reasons of hatred" would be useful. Was there any particular reason for the dramatic rise in the number of "extremist" offences in the Russian Federation?

50. **Ms. Li Yanduan** said that the State party had done much to amend national legislation with a view to implementing the provisions of the Convention and to raise awareness of the instrument among students and civil servants. She asked for information on any legislative and administrative measures taken that enabled victims of racial discrimination to seek remedies and on training courses on the Convention for law enforcement officers and judicial officials, in particular members of the Cossack patrols.

51. **Mr. Lindgren Alves** said that, despite the impression given by international media coverage of events in the Russian Federation, a large number of NGOs seemed to be operating freely in the State party. For example, the Saint Petersburg-based organization Citizens Watch was fiercely critical of the Government's human rights record and its observations contrasted starkly with the report currently under consideration. He asked to

what extent the rise of nationalism in the State party was strengthening the current trend towards neo-fascism. He noted that the twentieth-century Russian writer Ivan Ilyin, considered in the West to have held extreme right-wing sympathies, had been rehabilitated in the State party. The State party might wish to consider promoting the significant contribution of the October Revolution to the advancement of human rights.

52. **Mr. Yeung Sik Yuen** said that he welcomed the development by the Russian Federation of a State nationalities policy and its efforts to promote better inter-ethnic relations, in particular in view of the upcoming 2018 World Cup, an event that, it was to be hoped, would be free of incident. He asked whether any public officials had been penalized for failing to implement the State nationalities policy and, if so, whether information was available on the sanctions applied in such cases.

53. **Ms. Dah**, turning to the Committee's 2013 concluding observations, welcomed the fact that the Russian Federation had submitted an updated core document, in line with recommendation 27, and asked whether the State party had implemented recommendation 25 on the ratification of amendments to article 8 (6) of the Convention concerning the financing of the Committee.

54. **Mr. Cali Tzay** said that he wished to know whether the State party planned to make a formal public statement endorsing the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Such a move would be in line with the spirit of the submissions of the Russian Federation under the universal periodic review process and the undertaking it had previously made before the Committee to recognize indigenous territories. He asked for an update on the status of the 500 indigenous territories of "traditional nature use", which still lacked the legal recognition and protection due to them under national law. As a result of that shortcoming, one national court had rejected a complaint filed by an indigenous community relating to a licence for the extraction of natural resources. He strongly encouraged the Government to recognize the territories in question.

55. **The Chair** asked whether the State party intended to launch a new Roma action plan and, if so, whether information was available on the time period it would cover, the targets involved, the monitoring and evaluation of its implementation and its date of publication. She said the Committee would like to hear the delegation's reaction to alarming reports of the segregation of Roma students at school, the removal of Roma children from parental care owing to allegedly poor living conditions, and anti-Roma racism. The European Court of Human Rights had ruled that members of the Roma and Traveller communities living in settlements deemed to be illegal must be provided with adequate alternative accommodation prior to eviction. She would be interested to hear the delegation's views in that regard. Information on any special measures taken to assist Roma women and girls and women migrant workers — in particular, those working in the domestic service and construction sectors — would be welcome. She asked what led civil society organizations operating in the Russian Federation to be branded as "foreign agents" and what the consequences of such treatment were for a free and informed civil society. Given the complex nature of the structure of the Russian Federation, what measures had the authorities taken to ensure that federal laws designed to implement the provisions of the Convention were directly applied on the ground?

*The meeting rose at 5.55 p.m.*