



International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination

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Summary record of the 2990th meeting

Held at the Palais Wilson, Geneva, on Friday, 11 August 2023, at 10 a.m.

Chair: Ms. Shepherd

Contents

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

Combined twenty-fourth to twenty-sixth periodic reports of Uruguay (continued)

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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-fourth to twenty-sixth periodic reports of Uruguay (continued)
([CERD/C/URY/24-26](#); [CERD/C/URY/Q/24-26](#))

1. *At the invitation of the Chair, the delegation of Uruguay joined the meeting.*
2. **Mr. Vega Luna** said that the Committee's requests for disaggregated data on employment quotas and education the previous day had reflected its view that such information was helpful in terms of achieving a more accurate understanding of the progress and impact made under public policies relating to human rights. That information could then be used to help ensure that future policies developed and implemented in States parties were effective.
3. In the light of concerns relating to persistent structural discrimination in Uruguay, he wished to know what measures had been taken to ensure the effective enjoyment of human rights and the provisions of the Convention for those it was intended to protect, including persons of African descent, Indigenous Peoples, migrants and asylum-seekers. He wondered whether such measures had been designed, adopted and implemented in consultation with and with the participation of the groups in question. He would also welcome information about any steps taken to promote the participation and inclusion in political life of persons of African descent, Indigenous persons, refugees and other minority groups, in particular women belonging to those groups, and the employment of members of those groups in decision-making roles in the public and private sectors. Statistics detailing the results and impact of such steps would be appreciated.
4. He would like to receive updated information on the ethnic and racial origin of persons deprived of their liberty. He also wished to know what measures had been taken to address the overrepresentation of persons of African descent in prisons; to prevent overcrowding and its impact on members of disadvantaged and marginalized populations, particularly persons of African descent and Indigenous persons; and to prevent, investigate and punish acts of police and institutional violence perpetrated in prisons against persons of African descent, Indigenous persons, migrants and others protected by the Convention. He would appreciate information about measures taken to explicitly prohibit racial profiling by law enforcement officials. Information on the investigation of cases of racial profiling and on disciplinary and criminal penalties imposed on perpetrators would also be appreciated.
5. The Committee would like to know what results had been achieved under public policies such as the National Social Emergency Plan, the Equity Plan, and the "Social Uruguay" card and whether any lessons learned had been incorporated into the design of subsequent public policies. It would also appreciate information on measures taken to reduce poverty among persons of African descent, Indigenous Peoples, migrants, refugees and other disadvantaged and marginalized individuals and groups and to ensure their effective access to adequate housing, water services and other essential services such as sanitation, electricity, education and health care.
6. He would welcome information about any steps taken to provide judicial and non-judicial reparations and guarantees of non-repetition to the victims of forced displacements that had taken place in Medio Mundo and Barrio Reus al Sur in Montevideo in the 1970s. He wished to know what measures had been taken to restore the social fabric of the communities concerned and whether the State party had assessed how their relocation to the outskirts of the city had affected the victims' enjoyment of their civil, political, cultural, economic and social rights.
7. He wondered whether the State party had disaggregated statistics on educational access and retention in urban and rural areas, and whether they included data on ethnic and racial origin, particularly in Indigenous and Afro-Uruguayan communities. It would be interesting to know how the State party ensured compliance with the provisions of Act No. 19122 of 2013 relating to the participation of persons of African descent in education and employment. Up-to-date information about the allocation of scholarships to persons of

African descent and their participation in training courses over the previous five years would be appreciated. Given the higher rates of unemployment among persons of African descent, in particular women, compared to the rest of the population, he would like to know what measures had been taken to combat racial discrimination in the labour sector and to increase the representation of Afro-Uruguayan people in public sector positions.

8. He would like the delegation to explain why the State party report included no statistics or indicators to help assess the socioeconomic situation of Indigenous Peoples and their participation in political and public life. He wondered whether there were any plans to amend the Constitution to incorporate the recognition of Indigenous Peoples and whether any special measures had been implemented to prevent and combat racial discrimination against Indigenous communities and to protect their rights. He would be grateful for an update on the consultations relating to ratification of the Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention, 1989 (No. 169), of the International Labour Organization (ILO).

9. The Committee would appreciate information on how special and affirmative action measures had been implemented to combat the multiple and cross-cutting forms of discrimination faced by Afrodescendent, Indigenous, migrant, asylum-seeking and refugee women. It would also welcome information on the impact of Act No. 19580, on gender-based violence, on efforts to tackle violence against women, including statistics on cases reported, investigated and prosecuted and on sentences handed down for violence against Afrodescendent, Indigenous and migrant women or women belonging to other disadvantaged and marginalized groups. Information on protection and reparation measures provided to victims would also be appreciated.

10. **Mr. Diaby** said that he wished to know what measures had been taken to combat racial discrimination and xenophobia against migrants, asylum-seekers and refugees, and stateless persons, to facilitate the regularization of their immigration status and to promote their full integration and ensure their enjoyment of fundamental rights. He would welcome information on the impact of and the lessons learned from the policies and programmes implemented in that area, such as the Plan for the Integration of Migrants and Refugees. It would be useful to receive statistics on the access of migrants, asylum-seekers, refugees and stateless persons to health services, education, social security, social housing and the labour market. He would also like to know what measures the State party had implemented to ensure access to fair, transparent and efficient asylum procedures.

11. He would like the delegation to provide updated information on the human, financial and technical resources of the Refugee Commission and details on the measures taken to prevent and combat trafficking in persons. He would welcome information on measures taken to ensure the full and non-discriminatory application of legislation relating to refugees, in particular the provisions on applying for international protection at border entry points. He would also be interested in hearing how the State party ensured full respect for the principles of non-refoulement and confidentiality, in accordance with relevant international obligations and standards. He wished to know whether the State party had statistics on the number of stateless persons in the country, whether its legislation contained any provisions enabling stateless persons to acquire Uruguayan nationality through naturalization and whether any steps had been taken to draw up a national action plan to eliminate statelessness, in line with the Global Action Plan to End Statelessness 2014–2024.

12. Lastly, he wondered what measures the State party had adopted to address the water crisis and ensure that Indigenous and Afrodescendent populations were provided with sufficient water of acceptable quality.

13. **Ms. Ali Al-Misnad** said that she would be grateful if the delegation could clarify the information provided at the previous meeting on school attendance by children of African descent. Having legislation that made education compulsory, though commendable, did not necessarily mean that access to schooling was universal or its quality guaranteed. Reports suggested that children of African descent in the State party remained at a disadvantage in terms of education, having lower pass, attainment and completion rates than children not of African descent.

14. **Mr. Amir** said that he wondered how much awareness there was in the State party that some of its Indigenous Peoples were threatened with extinction. He also wished to know

how much awareness there was of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and of Indigenous Peoples' right to self-determination. He hoped that action would be taken before it was too late to acknowledge the existence of Indigenous Peoples in Uruguay, recognize their rights, protect them and their environment and preserve their ancient civilizations.

15. **Ms. Esseneme** said that she would welcome further information about the support provided by the Public Defender Service to victims of crimes. It would be useful to know whether there were any criteria that victims of racial discrimination must fulfil in order to qualify for such support and at what stage in legal proceedings victims could request the assistance of a public defender.

16. **Ms. McDougall** said that she understood that failing to attend school was considered an offence. She wondered whether the existence of criminal sanctions for non-attendance might be impeding the State party in its efforts to ensure that all children were educated. She would be interested to hear the delegation's thoughts on that matter. She would like to know whether the State party had considered consulting with other Governments in countries where employment quotas had been successfully fulfilled. In that regard, it would be interesting to hear whether the State party had reviewed the level of qualifications that were required for specific positions in the civil service with an eye to determining whether they were appropriate and whether those requirements might be impeding access to employment for persons of African descent.

17. **The Chair** said that she, too, would welcome further clarification regarding any criminal sanctions for failure to attend school. She wished to know what types of penalties might be imposed, how many people had been penalized and what impact the penalties could be said to have had. It would also be useful to know what proportion of those who had been penalized for non-attendance were persons of African descent.

18. **Ms. Lakula** said that she would like to hear what progress the State party had made towards adopting a comprehensive national plan for combating racism and discrimination. It would also be useful to know whether any steps were being taken to prosecute the persons behind the anonymous posting of materials of a racist nature on the Internet. She would be interested in hearing the delegation's views on whether social media companies should be held responsible for discriminatory content posted on their platforms and whether the State party's current legislative framework was sufficiently robust to hold such companies to account.

19. **Mr. Yeung Sik Yuen** said that he wished to know whether legal aid was available in both civil and criminal cases. If so, it would also be useful to hear whether it was available for plaintiffs and defendants alike in civil cases and whether it was provided at all stages of criminal proceedings, including from the moment a person was arrested.

The meeting was suspended at 11.50 a.m. and resumed at 12.10 p.m.

20. **A representative of Uruguay**, referring to the application of the Convention to protect the rights of persons who self-identified as Indigenous, said that the rights of all people in Uruguay, without distinction of any kind, were recognized under various national and international instruments. All people were entitled to lodge a complaint concerning the violation of their rights before a court and were guaranteed protection and due process in all proceedings.

21. The adoption of Act No. 19580, on gender-based violence against women, had marked an important step forward in domestic legislation. According to figures published in 2021, legal proceedings had been initiated in a total of 19,463 cases concerning domestic violence and gender-based violence. Under the legislation, persons found guilty of such acts were ordered to pay the victim a sum equivalent to 12 times their monthly salary or 12 times the monthly minimum wage for those without employment. In the previous five years, up to May 2022, such compensation payments had been ordered in 945 cases. With respect to trafficking in persons, it was stipulated under Act No. 19643 that redress must be provided to all affected persons, including the victim and his or her family. The State was responsible for providing reparations to victims of offences committed by State agents. Under the same legislation, persons convicted of human trafficking offences were ordered to pay their victims

compensation equivalent to 24 times their monthly salary or 24 times the monthly minimum wage.

22. The Public Defender Service was composed of approximately 350 lawyers who provided free legal aid in matters relating to civil, criminal, labour and family law. Any person involved in legal proceedings who could not afford the services of a lawyer and any person wishing to file a claim for damages before a civil court could request assistance from the Public Defender Service. Parties to a criminal case were entitled to request free assistance even if they could afford a private lawyer. The services of a lawyer from the Public Defender Service were also provided to any arrested person who would otherwise be without legal representation. The Victims and Witnesses Unit of the Attorney General's Office was the public body tasked with providing support to victims. Victims were also entitled to be represented by the Public Defender Service when their cases went to trial.

23. It was a criminal offence in Uruguay to incite hatred, contempt or violence towards one or more persons because of the colour of their skin. When racist content was published anonymously online, the Ministry of the Interior was responsible for conducting an investigation aimed at identifying the author so that he or she could be brought to justice. Access to sporting events was prohibited to anyone who incited violence, racism, xenophobia or any form of discrimination, including by wearing offensive clothing or displaying offensive symbols.

24. **A representative of Uruguay** said that migrants and their families were guaranteed the same rights as Uruguayan nationals, without any distinction based on race, skin colour, ethnic or social origin or nationality. In 2021 and 2022, the National Migration Board had published two guides to raise awareness among migrants of their rights and, in particular, to inform them that they were entitled to free access to justice and free legal aid regardless of their immigration status. The Ministry of Education and Culture had also established information centres throughout the country where migrants could request advice on matters related to education.

25. Uruguay would shortly launch its first national integration plan for asylum-seekers and refugees. The plan's aim was to promote harmonious coexistence, diversity and social cohesion and combat racism, xenophobia and other forms of discrimination. The Government also planned to start work imminently on a project, funded by the Inter-American Development Bank, that was intended to promote the integration of migrants and refugees in Montevideo and strengthen their links with the local community. Additional integration measures for migrants that were currently in development included the establishment of an integration reference centre by the Ministry of Social Development and the creation of a pilot programme to provide temporary housing solutions and temporary rental subsidies for migrants in vulnerable situations. Special measures had also been taken to address the needs of migrants during the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, including the adoption of two plans for regularizing the status of migrants in 2021.

26. Uruguay had received an increasing number of applications for refugee status in recent years, owing in part to an upsurge in migratory flows in the region. As a result, article 24 of Act No. 18076, on the right to asylum, had been amended in 2021 to expand the composition of the Refugee Commission with a view to providing a comprehensive response to the needs of refugees and asylum-seekers. They were issued with a provisional identity card that ensured their access to health services, education, the labour market and social protection benefits. Migrants could apply for asylum at any border crossing point and could not be returned to their country of origin or residence if there was a risk to their lives, safety or freedom. Regulations governing the recognition and protection of stateless persons had been established under Act No. 19682 of 2018. As of 2022, the Refugee Commission had dealt with only five cases of statelessness.

27. Health care was universally accessible, public and provided free of charge without discrimination. Specific steps had been taken to facilitate access to sexual and reproductive health services for persons of African descent, Indigenous persons, migrants, asylum-seekers and refugees. Those included measures to promote access to affordable contraception, safe termination of pregnancy and maternal health care. the National Neonatal Screening

Programme had been extended to include screening for blood diseases predominantly affecting people of African descent.

28. The distribution of water was a public service. The Government had designed a strategy to address the current water crisis.

29. **A representative of Uruguay** said that, thanks to the incorporation of an ethno-racial variable into its data collection, the Ministry of Social Development was able to determine the proportion of persons of African descent who were beneficiaries of poverty reduction measures. According to those figures, persons of African descent made up 26 per cent of holders of the “Social Uruguay” card, through which cash transfers were provided to enable persons in vulnerable situations to purchase basic household goods; 8.5 per cent of recipients of family allowances for pregnant women, children and adolescents and persons with disabilities in poor households; 20 per cent of recipients of family allowances administered by the Social Security Bank; 22.8 per cent of beneficiaries of water subsidies; 23 per cent of beneficiaries of electricity subsidies; 23 per cent of beneficiaries of gas subsidies; and 20 per cent of beneficiaries of the Calle Programme, under which shelter and support were provided for adults in street situations. The Ministry of Social Development had implemented a number of special measures to address the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on the most vulnerable segments of society, including cash transfers and food assistance.

30. The National Plan for Racial Equity and People of African Descent (2019–2022) included measures that contributed to strengthening the participation and the inclusion of groups that had historically been disadvantaged in terms of the enjoyment of their economic, social, cultural, civil and political rights. One such measure was the inclusion of women of African descent and Indigenous women in efforts by the Ministry of Social Development to promote civic engagement. The Ministry had also held meetings with various departmental institutions on advancing departmental policies on people of African descent; it was working towards the fulfilment of employment quotas in departmental governments.

31. Regarding employment and education support for persons of African descent, the Government had recently launched a project financed by the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation that was focused on promoting the participation of persons of African descent in the formal job market. In addition, a selection process was under way to fill 125 places reserved for persons of African descent to train as nursing assistants and food service workers in nursing colleges in various departments.

32. The National Council for Ethnic and Racial Equity and People of African Descent, established in 2020, provided a space for coordinating public policy concerning ethnic and racial equality and developing joint actions to advance the rights of persons of African descent. The Council was presided over by the Ministry of Social Development and comprised representatives of other government agencies, civil society, academia and the National Human Rights Institution and Office of the Ombudsman. To date, it had held 22 sessions. A draft road map was currently being developed by a commission under the Council with a view to enabling both private and public entities to respond effectively to situations of racism and discrimination. In addition, the Council was working in collaboration with the National Institute for Youth to highlight situations of racial discrimination among young people as part of a national awareness-raising campaign on their mental health and psychosocial well-being. The Government had also launched a study which had yielded several recommendations for addressing on the impact of racial discrimination on the mental health of persons of African descent in Uruguay.

33. The Government had delivered training in human resources management to more than 4,000 persons in 50 public and private entities since 2020, in line with national and international standards, including the affirmative action measures and employment quotas provided for under Act No. 19122. Plans were in place to establish an observatory that would be responsible for monitoring the implementation of the employment quotas and other affirmative action measures for persons of African descent.

34. **A representative of Uruguay** said that, although persons entering the prison system were asked how they self-identified, those data had not been systematized. However, a census to be conducted in 2024 would yield information on the self-identification of persons deprived of their liberty. The Government worked with several non-governmental

organizations (NGOs) on initiatives to enable persons deprived of their liberty to work while in prison and to provide employment opportunities after their release. He wished to highlight, in particular, the valuable work of the NGO Mizangas, a collective of women of African descent working in support of women of African descent who were deprived of their liberty. A bill currently before the national parliament would provide significant funding to address the serious issues of mental health and addiction in prisons. The Government had taken steps to expand the country's prison capacity and was currently on track to eliminate prison overcrowding by early 2025.

35. **A representative of Uruguay** said that measures taken to prevent institutional and police violence against persons of African descent, Indigenous persons, migrants, asylum-seekers and refugees included the provision of comprehensive human rights training to law enforcement officers and officials in the Ministry of the Interior and the development of standards of conduct for the national police force, which emphasized that all persons, irrespective of age, gender, ethnicity, religion, economic or social status or any other trait, should be treated in a courteous and respectful manner – a principle enshrined in the Police Procedures Act and the National Code of Police Ethics.

36. Complaints regarding police conduct could be submitted to the Directorate of Internal Affairs of the Ministry of the Interior in person or by email. They could also be submitted anonymously via a hotline. The Ministry of the Interior had made efforts to widely publicize the means available to the public to report crimes, which included reporting in person at one of the Ministry's offices or online through its website or by calling 911, the national emergency line, or using the 911 app. In addition, a resource guide released by the National Directorate for Gender Policy in 2022 included a section on the various channels available to report instances of racism, discrimination or xenophobia. Those channels were also publicized through the distribution of leaflets during large-scale events and online through social media and the Ministry's website.

37. As to reported offences relating to religion, from 2018 to 2022 the Attorney General's Office had received reports of and substantiated eight offences under article 306 of the Criminal Code concerning acts committed against individuals in connection with their religious practices or beliefs or against places of worship or religious items.

38. Regarding measures taken to prevent and combat trafficking in persons, which disproportionately affected women of African descent, migrants, asylum-seekers, refugees and stateless persons, in 2022 the National Council to Prevent and Combat Trafficking in and the Exploitation of Persons, established under Act No. 19643 of 20 July 2018, had approved a guide for interinstitutional action on preventing trafficking in and exploitation of persons; in July 2023 it had approved a second national plan to combat trafficking in and exploitation of persons for 2022 to 2024, which included gender, sexuality, intersectionality, migrant, race and disability perspectives. Suspected cases of trafficking in or exploitation of persons could be reported calling a dedicated phoneline. The Ministry of the Interior had taken steps to strengthen the mechanisms for the investigation of cases by providing specialized training to its staff. As part of the World Day against Trafficking in Persons 2023, staff had been invited to participate in a workshop held by the National Directorate for Gender Policy on the ethnic and racial dimension of the crime of trafficking in and exploitation of persons.

39. **A representative of Uruguay** said that the Uruguayan Institute for Children and Adolescents had launched a social media campaign in 2021 with a view to supporting the integration of migrant children and the full enjoyment of their rights. Children with migrant status were prioritized in the support services provided by the Institute. At present, 872 migrant children were receiving such services, 771 of which were migrants from other Latin American countries, primarily from Brazil, Argentina, Venezuela and Cuba. In December 2022, the Government had signed a protocol for assisting undocumented child migrants, including unaccompanied children, at borders. Training for persons working in the area of migration, including judicial officials, staff in the Ministry of the Interior and members of civil society, would commence in September 2023.

40. The National Committee for the Elimination of Commercial and Non-Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children and Adolescents had been established in 2004. As a result of efforts to strengthen the Committee and increase general awareness about the issue,

reporting of possible instances of sexual exploitation of children and adolescents had increased, with the number of reports received by the Committee rising from 232 in 2015 to 529 in 2022. A 24-hour centre offering support for child and adolescent victims was scheduled to open its doors by the end of 2023.

41. The Government was taking steps to improve home ownership among Indigenous persons in Uruguay, including an initiative to construct homes made of wood, which was an environmentally friendly material.

42. **A representative of Uruguay** said that, in the wake of the controversy sparked by the use of the expression “*gracias, negrito*” on social media by Uruguayan footballer Edinson Cavani, the Honorary Commission against Racism, Xenophobia, and All Other Forms of Discrimination had held a special session to discuss the matter but had failed to come to an agreement. It was important to understand that, for many people in Uruguay, and indeed for some members of the delegation, “*negrito*” was a term of endearment that had nothing to do with skin colour; the National Academy of Letters had confirmed that the word had that connotation in Uruguayan Spanish. The National Secretariat for Sport had criticized the penalties imposed on Cavani as unfair and disproportionate and offered the footballer its full support. Cavani had responded by apologizing and taking down the post. As the term was not classified as offensive from a legal standpoint, there was no legal recourse to be taken against Cavani. The incident had, however, helped to cast light on subtle forms of discrimination in Uruguayan society.

43. Special efforts were made in Uruguay to ensure that education was accessible to all children. For instance, a school in a particularly remote rural area was attended by just three pupils, who were taught by a teacher who lived in a nearby city but was transported in an Air Force plane once a fortnight to the location of the remote school. School completion rates at the primary level were 95 per cent among children who were not of African descent and 90 per cent among those who were. Completion rates at the secondary and tertiary levels were lower. The Government had made available over 10,000 educational grants, a certain percentage of which were reserved for persons of African descent: 20 per cent for secondary studies and 17 per cent for vocational training in 2017, and 21 per cent and 18 per cent, respectively, in 2018. Currently, 24 per cent of grants for secondary studies were reserved for children of African descent. At the university level, 10 per cent of grant applications were approved, 8 per cent of which were reserved for students of African descent.

44. The Government would continue to examine the applicability of the ILO Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention, 1989 (No. 169), in Uruguay. The reality in Uruguay was, however, that the Indigenous population was difficult to identify owing to the blending of different population groups during the country’s colonial period. Consequently, many citizens had a mix of African, European and Indigenous ancestry. Nevertheless, the Government respected the provisions of the relevant conventions and respected the rights of those persons who self-identified as descendants of Indigenous Peoples. It was also aware that such people experienced racial discrimination.

45. Academic research on Indigenous history and culture had been under way for many years and was slowly being incorporated into the educational content taught in the country’s schools. A research centre on Indigenous issues had recently been established in Paysandú. The location of the Salsipuedes massacre had been recognized as a site of remembrance, and access to the site had been improved to allow ceremonies and other activities to be held there.

46. **A representative of Uruguay** said that 12 per cent of the training courses offered by the National Institute of Employment and Vocational Training from 2020 to 2022 had been provided to people of African descent. Additional data on training would be submitted in writing.

47. All workers were subject to and protected under national labour regulations, regardless of whether they were migrants or Uruguayan nationals. The Labour Inspectorate acted immediately on all complaints of labour rights violations, which could be filed anonymously by the individuals affected or by third parties. An initiative aimed at monitoring and promoting the integration of migrant workers into the formal labour market was planned for the period 2024 to 2025.

48. Economic activity and employment rates among migrants had increased in the previous 10 years. The unemployment rate among migrants had stood at 9.1 per cent in 2022, which was higher than the national average of 7.9 per cent but was the lowest rate recorded since 2012 and was significantly lower than the figure of 16.8 per cent recorded in 2019. The employment rate among people of African descent had risen over the period 2019 to 2022. Although the unemployment rate among that group had increased from 3.7 per cent to 5.1 per cent between 2019 and 2022, it had fallen to 4.1 per cent in 2022, and underemployment and informal-sector employment had also decreased. The Government would continue working to combat discrimination in the labour market with a view to reducing the gap in employment rates between persons of African descent and the general population.

49. **Mr. Vega Luna**, underlining the importance of disaggregated data for assessing the enjoyment of human rights among different population groups, said that he would be interested in receiving further information on how the State party sought to prevent racial profiling in police operations, especially since it was likely that the high proportion of people of African descent in the prison population was connected to such profiling. He would also like clarification as to whether the State party intended to ratify the ILO Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention.

50. **Mr. Diaby** said that he wished to know how the State party planned to address the overrepresentation of people of African descent and Indigenous persons in the prison population. Regarding the water crisis, the Committee had received reports that seawater was being desalinated to supply Indigenous communities and people of African descent, yet large plantations were being irrigated with potable water. It seemed to him that the situation should be reversed with a view to preventing the spread of waterborne diseases.

51. **Ms. McDougall** said that it was concerning to hear that the delegation was not united on the matter of the term “*negrito*”. There were certain terms that were inherently offensive because of their historical link to the period of slavery. The Government should make it clear that such terms should never be used, including by ensuring that that message was disseminated in schools.

52. **A representative of Uruguay** said that although individuals entering prison completed a questionnaire containing questions on self-identification, there were no official statistics on the percentage of persons of African descent and Indigenous persons in the prison population. Relevant data would be collected through the survey mentioned earlier.

53. **A representative of Uruguay** said that, to prevent racial profiling and police violence, the Ministry of the Interior was making great efforts to train police officers on matters such as human rights, gender, diversity and race and ethnicity. Mechanisms were in place to enable individuals to file complaints of police misconduct. If it was determined that a crime had been committed in any such case, the perpetrator would be prosecuted.

54. **A representative of Uruguay** said that she wished to clarify that the delegation was united in its commitment to combat racism and racial discrimination. However, the use of language was a delicate topic, and it was difficult for many people in Uruguay to comprehend that some terms that were commonly used to express with affection could in fact be discriminatory and offensive. The use of discriminatory language remained a challenge that the Government was seeking to overcome through awareness-raising and education.

55. The Government was continuing to examine the implications of ratifying the ILO Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention. As part of that process, it was making sustained efforts to improve understanding of, and reckon with, the country’s history in relation to Indigenous Peoples.

56. **Mr. Moerzinger** (Uruguay) said that the water crisis was affecting two departments, Montevideo and Canelones, which were home to around half of the population and relied on a single source of freshwater, which had been depleted as a consequence of lack of rainfall. The use of water by industry was therefore not the cause of the water crisis. The Government had taken several measures to mitigate the situation, especially for the most vulnerable populations.

57. **Mr. Vega Luna** said that he wished to thank the delegation for its willingness to engage openly in dialogue on sensitive issues, especially those concerning people of African

descent and persons who identified as members of Indigenous Peoples. The information provided would allow the Committee to gauge the progress made and the challenges persisting in the implementation of relevant programmes and policies in the State party. The Committee would look forward to receiving additional information on questions that had not yet been answered.

58. **Mr. Albertoni** (Uruguay), expressing thanks to the Committee, said that his delegation had wished to demonstrate during the dialogue that the Government was firmly committed to the elimination of racial discrimination and was tirelessly working towards that goal. The Committee's comments and questions would be taken into account in that work, including in the development of a new national plan on human rights in the coming year, and no effort would be spared in implementing its recommendations. The delegation would submit further information in response to questions that it had been unable to answer in the time available.

59. **The Chair** said that she would like to draw the delegation's attention to the sentiments expressed by Mr. Amir earlier in the meeting, as well as the point raised by Ms. McDougall on the potential harm that certain words could cause. She encouraged the State party to be mindful of the Committee's general recommendation No. 36, on racial profiling.

The meeting rose at 12.55 p.m.