



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

Distr.: General  
18 February 2026

Original: English

---

## Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination 116th session

### Summary record of the 3174th meeting

Held at the Palais Wilson, Geneva, on Friday, 21 November 2025, at 10 a.m.

*Chair:* Mr. Balcerzak

## Contents

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

*Combined twenty-fourth and twenty-fifth periodic reports of Sweden (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](mailto: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 twenty-fourth and twenty-fifth periodic reports of Sweden (continued)*  
([CERD/C/SWE/24-25](#); [CERD/C/SWE/Q/24-25](#))

1. *At the invitation of the Chair, the delegation of Sweden joined the meeting.*
2. **Ms. Esseneme** (Country Rapporteur) said that she would welcome clarification as to the distinction drawn by the State Party between ethnic groups and national minorities. She wondered what steps had been taken to address socioeconomic gaps between Swedish citizens, persons born in Sweden to foreign parents and persons of non-European origin. It would be useful to know what measures the State Party had taken since 2020 in response to the finding that people of African descent and Roma persons tended to live in the least favourable locations and what follow-up it had given to the proposals for reducing residential segregation submitted by the inquiry on socially sustainable housing in 2022. She wished to know what steps the State Party had taken to develop an equality-based social housing policy, particularly with a view to improving transparency and predictability in the allocation of housing, and whether any special measures were envisaged to ensure equal access to housing for young persons from disadvantaged minority groups.
3. She wondered what activities had been carried out under the action programmes against Afrophobia, Islamophobia, antisemitism, anti-Gypsyism and racism against Sami people and what their impact had been on racialized persons' perceptions of their acceptance in society. She wished to know what steps the State Party had taken to improve access to social services and public places for members of racialized groups, and to ensure that they had equal access to banking services. It would be helpful to hear about progress, for example, under the PROTECTOR project of the European Union, to prevent Islamophobic hate crimes, prosecute perpetrators and provide reparations for victims. She would be interested to know what special measures had been taken to protect Muslim women who wore the veil and how many complaints of Islamophobic hate crimes had been received by the competent bodies. She would appreciate details of the Equality Ombudsman's research findings regarding discrimination related to religion or other beliefs – especially discrimination against Jews and Muslims – and how it interacted with discrimination related to ethnicity. She would like to know why, in June 2023, the police had authorized the public burning of a copy of the Qur'an in front of a mosque in Stockholm, and whether any judicial or administrative action had been taken in response to the incident. She wished to know how the State Party addressed discrimination against Muslims in the housing market.
4. She wondered what progress had been achieved under the action programme to combat Afrophobia and what specific steps had been taken to curb xenophobia and hatred towards Africans. She wished to know how many complaints the Equality Ombudsman and the police had received about intersecting forms of discrimination involving xenophobia, racism, homophobia, transphobia, Islamophobia and Afrophobia. It would be helpful to know what follow-up the State Party had given to the recommendations contained in the report of the International Independent Expert Mechanism to Advance Racial Justice and Equality in Law Enforcement following its visit to Sweden in 2022. She wished to know what steps the State Party had taken to address the deep social divide that existed between wealthy and educated persons and those who lived in disadvantaged areas, most of whom were people of African descent. She would appreciate statistics on the educational performance of children living in disadvantaged areas following the measures taken by the State Party since 2018 to improve learning outcomes in schools. She wondered why coronavirus disease (COVID-19) vaccination coverage in 2022 had been low for people of African descent.
5. It would be helpful to hear what steps the State Party had taken to combat antisemitic prejudice, intolerance and hate crimes, including the spread of antisemitic ideas online, and to effectively follow up on reports of such crimes. She wished to know what steps the State Party had taken to ensure that anti-discrimination legislation was fully applied in schools with a view to preventing and punishing the expression of antisemitism and other forms of racial and intersectional discrimination.

6. In respect of the right to mother-tongue education, the Committee wished to know whether the State Party envisaged a comprehensive approach or coherent strategy to uphold the linguistic rights of members of the Jewish, Roma, Sami, Sweden Finn and Tornedalian minorities. It would welcome an explanation as to why only 651 of the 2,389 Roma schoolchildren who were entitled to receive teaching in the Romani language were doing so.

7. She would appreciate details of the results achieved under the Strategy for Roma Inclusion. In particular, she wished to know whether the State Party was taking any special measures to prevent and combat anti-Gypsyism and other forms of racism against Roma children at school and online. It would be useful to know to what extent the history of national minorities, particularly the Roma minority, was taught in schools and what steps the National Agency for Education had taken in that regard. She would appreciate information on the results of efforts made by the Public Employment Service between 2020 and 2023 to improve Roma persons' access to employment. Given reports that Roma persons' applications for housing had been rejected and that they had not been permitted to buy property because of their ethnicity, she wondered what steps had been taken to improve their housing situation. She wished to know what progress had been made, on the basis of data collected by the Public Health Agency between 2021 and 2024, in improving the health status of Roma persons. Since the Strategy for Roma Inclusion stressed the importance of education for improving the situation of Roma, she would appreciate information on the number of Roma university students and the courses that they were following.

8. It would be helpful to know what conclusions the Truth Commission for the Sami People had presented in its report on policies conducted with respect to the Sami people and their consequences. She wished to know why the three vacant posts on the Commission had not been filled. She would be interested to receive examples of the effective application of the Act on Consultation in Matters of Special Importance to the Sami People. She wondered why the Government had reportedly failed to consult Sami communities on the relocation of the town of Kiruna, and what steps had been taken to ensure that Sami representative organizations could participate genuinely in decisions likely to have a negative impact on their way of life. The delegation might comment on reports that, since the adoption of the Act on Consultation, the Government had decided not to allocate financial resources to organizations and communities of Sami reindeer herders, leaving many members of the Sami community unable to participate in consultations.

9. She wished to know what steps the State Party had taken to protect the environment, particularly in reindeer herding areas, from the effects of prospecting and mining operations, and how the State took account of the rights of Sami people when awarding permits for mining projects. It would be useful to know which matters were deemed to be of special importance to the Sami people and which were not. She would welcome information on the approach to green development taken by Sweden and its implications for the exercise of the collective rights of the Sami people on their ancestral lands. Given that hate crimes against Sami reindeer herders had reportedly increased since the ruling of the Supreme Court in the case of *Girjas Reindeer Herding Community v. Sweden*, granting the Sami village of Girjas sole management of fishing and small game hunting on its territory, she would appreciate information on the State Party's efforts to effectively implement the judgment and better protect Sami reindeer herders. She wondered why many Sami felt that they were not protected by the law, with the result that they rarely reported racist hate crimes against them, and what conclusions the Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention had reached in its in-depth study of hate crime targeting Sami. She would appreciate clarification as to why the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency had decided to rejuvenate the wolf population in Jämtland County – a measure that contradicted the predator policy of 2013 and would have a negative impact on Sami reindeer herding communities. She wondered what conclusions had been reached by the Committee on Reindeer Lands established in 2021.

10. **A representative of Sweden**, responding to questions posed during the previous meeting, said that, following the general election in 2022, four political parties that together held a parliamentary majority had signed the Tidö Agreement with a view to ensuring equality and high standards in education, improving healthcare for all, addressing issues in the areas of migration and integration and reducing criminality. There was no contradiction

between those measures and the country's international obligations, which the Government was committed to meeting.

11. The Government continued to implement the Strategy for Roma Inclusion, adopted in 2012, with the aim of ensuring, by 2032, that a Roma person aged 20 had the same life opportunities as a non-Roma person of the same age. The overall objective of the Government's policies with respect to the Sami people was to promote a thriving Sami culture based on ecologically sustainable reindeer husbandry and other economic activities. The Sami people formed an integral part of Swedish cultural heritage and identity, and their traditions, knowledge and contributions enriched Swedish society in many ways. Dialogue with the Sami Parliament and other Sami organizations was crucial to efforts to shape and strengthen Sami policies. The rights of the Sami people to the use of land for reindeer husbandry were based on long-standing tradition and protected by the Constitution and other laws. The Government was aware of the need to address significant challenges faced by the reindeer herding communities, which included land conflicts, climate change and coexistence with carnivorous animals.

12. **A representative of Sweden** said that, while the five national minorities of Sweden had been accorded special status under the Act on National Minorities and Minority Languages, there was no official definition of other ethnic groups in the country. The Government did not keep statistics on the ethnic origin of the population, including membership of the national minorities. The national minorities policy had the objectives of protecting national minorities, strengthening their opportunities to exert influence and supporting and preserving historical minority languages.

13. **A representative of Sweden** said that the Government had taken several measures to uphold the right of all persons to employment, including efforts to reduce the duration of unemployment. In 2022, under its policy to combat social exclusion, it had appointed a national coordinator who was tasked with mapping efforts to promote social inclusion at the municipal level and facilitating the work of municipalities with significant social exclusion issues. The national coordinator's May 2025 report contained several proposals, including in relation to schools and preschools, that were currently under consideration. The Action Plan to Combat Racism and Hate Crime included measures to combat discrimination in employment, including by assisting employers, elected representatives and other labour market actors in acquiring better knowledge and skills for combating racism and discrimination.

14. **A representative of Sweden** said that national housing policy did not include any special measures to provide subsidized housing to low-income households. There was a common rental market for all households, and the municipalities had primary responsibility for housing provision and land use. Legislation had been put in place to address housing-related discrimination and other significant challenges. Under the Social Services Act, the municipalities were responsible for ensuring that individuals received the support that they needed, while, under the Local Government Act, municipalities were required to treat their inhabitants equally, with exceptions permitted only for objective reasons or under special laws. Under the Act on Municipal Responsibility for Housing Provision, municipalities were required to plan housing provision with a view to creating the necessary conditions for all persons to have good housing. The Tenancy Act established strong protections for tenants, including the right to extend rental agreements in most cases. The national strategy to combat homelessness for the period 2022–2026 would be strengthened and extended until 2031.

15. **A representative of Sweden** said that the Discrimination Act prohibited discrimination based on ethnicity, which included national or ethnic origin, skin colour and membership of a national minority. With the adoption of the Act in 2009, seven pre-existing acts on discrimination had been merged into a single law and four pre-existing ombudsman roles into that of the Equality Ombudsman, allowing victims of all forms of discrimination, including intersectional and multiple discrimination, to seek assistance from a single authority. Of a total of 6,260 complaints of discrimination based on ethnicity made between 2020 and 2024, 59% involved discrimination based on ethnicity alone – in the remaining cases, there was an intersection with discrimination on the grounds of sex, religion or other beliefs, disability, age, sexual orientation or gender identity or expression.

16. **A representative of Sweden** said that the Constitution protected the rights to freedom of religion, freedom of assembly, freedom of demonstration and freedom of expression. Although freedom of expression did not extend to slander or acts involving threats or agitation against a national minority or ethnic group, religions were not protected against the expression of opinions that challenged religious messages and might be perceived as hurtful to believers. Nevertheless, there had been cases in which persons who had burned a copy of the Qur'an had been convicted of agitation against a population group.

17. **A representative of Sweden** said that, as a participant in the PROTECTOR project, the Swedish Police Authority had met with members of Christian, Muslim and Jewish congregations with a view to increasing the protection and resilience of religious groups. During the project, similar measures had been taken by the Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency in cooperation with the Swedish Police Authority and the Swedish Agency for Support to Faith Communities, which provided religious communities with grants for security-enhancing measures.

18. As the available statistics on hate crime did not reflect the extent of the hate faced by national minorities and other vulnerable communities, the Swedish Police Authority engaged in dialogue with all vulnerable groups to encourage the reporting of such crimes, provide crime prevention advice and collect information on the forms of hate experienced. Such work was ongoing, and the progress made might vary between regions. It was important for many actors apart from the police to play their part in such efforts.

19. **A representative of Sweden** said that the Equality Ombudsman's research had shown that discrimination based on religion or other beliefs occurred in all areas of society, affected persons with various religions and beliefs and took forms such as threats, physical attacks and difficulties in renting and insuring premises and opening bank accounts. It had also shown that discrimination against Muslims was extensive. The Swedish Agency for Support to Faith Communities had been tasked with taking steps to address those issues and would report on its progress in April 2027. A dialogue was currently taking place between faith communities and the insurance industry and was being closely monitored by the Government. Banks had a duty to provide access to bank accounts and were under an implicit obligation to explain any refusal to do so. Although Muslim faith communities had reported difficulties in gaining access to bank accounts, the Equality Ombudsman had received few complaints of ethnicity-based discrimination in access to banking services.

20. Under the specific action programme to combat anti-black racism, the Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention had produced a report on Afrophobic hate crime that had informed the preventive efforts of various actors. The National Board of Health and Welfare had gathered together studies on experiences of racism in healthcare systems conducted since 2021 in Sweden and other Nordic countries and had produced an educational resource on combating racism in healthcare that was currently being disseminated in various parts of the healthcare system.

21. **A representative of Sweden** said that pupils belonging to one of the national minorities could study the language of that minority at the beginners' level at primary and secondary school without needing to meet the conditions for access to mother-tongue tuition set forth in the Education Act. The Government was making significant investments in schools with a view to ensuring that all pupils received a high-quality education. State funding allocated through "knowledge grants" to strengthen school resources had risen from 1 billion kronor (SKr) in 2018 to almost SKr 7.5 billion in the 2025 budget. In 2024, the National Agency for Education had been tasked with implementing targeted initiatives to support and improve the performance of schools and preschools struggling with socioeconomic challenges and poor learning outcomes, in addition to improving adult education.

22. **Ms. Esseneme** said that she wished to know to what extent proposals presented by the Sami Parliament in its dialogue with the Government were taken into account in bills and public policies. Given that there was no official definition of the term "ethnic group", and no statistics on ethnic origin were collected, she would appreciate clarification as to which groups were affected by discrimination on the grounds of ethnicity. As responsibility for housing and basic social services was decentralized in the State Party, she wondered whether

a central mechanism was in place for monitoring the local implementation of relevant laws to ensure that certain persons and groups of persons were not left behind. Lastly, she wished to know whether the State Party would consider amending the Discrimination Act to include religion among the grounds for discrimination listed therein.

23. **Ms. Stavrinaki** said that, in the light of the Committee's recent decision on communication No. 54/2013 ([CERD/C/102/D/54/2013](#)), in which it found that the land and property rights of the Vapsten Sami reindeer herding community had been violated and that there had been no effective judicial remedy, she wished to know what measures the State Party intended to take to ensure that the free, prior and informed consent of Indigenous communities was secured and that courts could effectively review the compliance of mining-related decisions with international standards on Indigenous rights, including with regard to the adequacy and timeliness of environmental impact assessments and the need to prevent irreversible harm to Sami communities.

24. She would also be interested to know whether the Government intended to empower the county administrative boards and the Sami Parliament to coordinate and monitor efforts to combat and prevent violence against Sami women; to develop a national policy specifically addressing violence against Sami women and LGBTIQI+ young persons; to establish and strengthen support structures for Sami women and girls who were victims of violence; and to implement appropriate awareness-raising initiatives. She wondered whether the State Party had changed its position on special measures as a means of addressing the impact of structural discrimination.

25. **Ms. Shepherd** said that she was disappointed to note the apparent lack of progress with respect to the situation of people of African descent since the visit to Sweden conducted by the Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent in 2014. She wondered whether better use could be made of the education system to teach young people about the origins of and the harm caused by discrimination and anti-black racism. She would like to know whether the State Party could use the Committee's general recommendation No. 36 on preventing and combating racial profiling by law enforcement officials to effectively address racial profiling and anti-black racism. It would be interesting to hear about the extent of public awareness of the historical involvement of Sweden in the transatlantic trafficking of enslaved Africans and their treatment as chattel and to know whether the State Party intended to participate in the reparatory justice initiatives that had been launched in the Caribbean and elsewhere.

26. **Mr. Diaby**, noting that the Church of Sweden had recently apologized to the Sami people for its participation in and legitimization of their oppression, said he wished to know whether the Church had engaged in any efforts to provide the Sami with fair and adequate reparation, and whether the Government had been inspired to take similar steps. He wondered whether the State Party intended to apologize for its historical role in slavery, which had included specialization in the manufacture of chains, and whether that role was described in school textbooks.

27. **Mr. Yeung Sik Yuen** said that, during the current session, the Committee had met with young people from Sweden who had described their experiences of being shunned at school or avoided on public transport because of their skin colour or because they wore a veil. He urged the State Party to take measures to raise awareness of the harm caused by racial discrimination and to change social attitudes.

28. **Mr. Tlemçani** said that he wished to know how the State Party recognized and combated institutional Islamophobia as a form of discrimination, in line with its obligations under the Convention. In particular, he wondered what steps it had taken to ensure that its security and anti-extremism policies did not lead to systematic discrimination against Muslim communities. It would be helpful to know what safeguards the State Party was putting in place to end the disproportionate surveillance of Muslim organizations and ensure that all decisions made with respect to surveillance were based on objective and transparent evidence and subject to independent judicial oversight, with a view to protecting the rights to freedom of religion and freedom of association and the right to privacy.

29. **Mr. Rayess** said that he would like to hear more about how the State Party balanced the protection of freedoms, particularly freedom of the press, and the fulfilment of its

obligations under the Convention. He would appreciate information on the role of the courts in providing protection for members of ethnic and religious minorities in the event that they were targeted by the police.

30. **Mr. Guissé** said that he wished to know to what extent the current trend towards political polarization, involving xenophobic and nationalist political parties, was having an influence on social attitudes. He wondered what the causes of that trend might be and what strategies, if any, the Government had adopted to defend its democratic model.

31. **Ms. Chung** said that she would be grateful if the State Party could provide disaggregated statistics on persons adopted from other regions of the world, including data on their socioeconomic status, together with information on relevant legal and policy measures. She would be interested to hear about the extent of anti-Asian discrimination in the State Party.

32. **Ms. Tlakula** (Follow-up Rapporteur) said that, in 2019, Sweden had submitted information in follow-up to the concluding observations on the State Party's previous periodic report (CERD/C/SWE/CO/22-23/Add.1). Nevertheless, the Committee still had several questions regarding additional follow-up given to the paragraphs specified in the concluding observations. On paragraph 17 (d), regarding measures to compensate reindeer herders for damage caused by predators, the Committee welcomed the information provided in paragraph 170 of the report currently under review. It would appreciate an update on the work of the Committee on Reindeer Lands, including an indication of whether that body had already submitted its final report and, if so, whether the report had been discussed. With reference to paragraphs 171 to 173 of the report, the Committee would appreciate further details on the outcome of the evaluation of the management tool for ensuring sustainable reindeer husbandry while maintaining a favourable conservation status for large predators. Moreover, the Committee would welcome detailed information on the system of financial compensation for damage caused to reindeer herds by predators.

33. With regard to paragraph 19 (b) of the concluding observations, concerning anti-Muslim racism, the Committee noted the information provided in paragraph 100 of the report under review, indicating that the Swedish Police Authority had participated in the PROTECTOR project, aimed at strengthening security measures for religious communities and places of worship, from 2021 to 2023. It would welcome an update on the outcomes of that project and clarification as to whether the strategies developed had continued to be implemented since 2023. With reference to paragraph 101 of the report, the Committee would welcome clarification of whether the inquiry set up to map and describe the difficulties faced by faith communities in obtaining insurance against attacks on places of worship and assembly had submitted its final report and, if so, what proposals it contained.

34. **A representative of Sweden** said that the Government had heard the testimony of young people from ethnic minorities, which it took very seriously. As a result, it was more determined than ever to combat racism. The authorities considered a structured approach to be the most effective way forward, and schools and school staff had been identified as one of the priority areas of the Action Plan to Combat Racism and Hate Crime. She was not aware of concrete evidence suggesting that Sweden had become more politically polarized; however, the country was not immune to global trends of polarization or to attacks on liberal values. Efforts were under way to counter those trends, protect the rights of all groups in society, preserve social cohesion and defend gains in areas such as gender equality.

35. **A representative of Sweden** said that the Government was continuing its work under the Strategy for Roma Inclusion, with employment, education and gender equality identified as priority areas. Stockholm County Administrative Board had been tasked with coordinating, implementing and following up on measures within the framework of the strategy, including the allocation of government grants to municipalities to promote Roma inclusion. In addition, the Ministry of Culture had appointed a new Roma reference group for the period from June 2025 to June 2028, and the Government Offices continued to maintain close dialogue with that group regarding measures and priorities under the Strategy. The Public Employment Service continued to work on internal capacity-building, cooperation with municipalities and the development of new indicators for monitoring Roma inclusion.

36. In 2021, the Public Health Agency had been tasked with developing knowledge on the health situation of national minorities, including Roma, and proposing methods for long-term and systematic monitoring. In its final report, submitted in 2024, the Agency had presented proposals for long-term monitoring of health conditions among national minorities. The report had highlighted the absence of systematic data collection on the health situation of national minorities and identified significant knowledge gaps, particularly with regard to detailed and continuous health data. The Agency had also concluded that substantial methodological challenges remained, notably because the State did not maintain registers of ethnic affiliation.

37. The Sami Parliament played a central role in the realization of Sami self-determination and was the Government's primary consultation partner on Sami issues. Dialogue with the Sami Parliament and other Sami organizations constituted a cornerstone of efforts to shape and strengthen Sami policy. The Government remained committed to supporting and creating favourable conditions for the preservation and revitalization of Sami culture and language. Under the Act on Consultation in Matters of Special Importance to the Sami People, public authorities at all levels were obliged to consult the Sami Parliament and, in certain cases, reindeer herding communities or Sami organizations, when deciding on matters of particular relevance to the Sami people. The Act was an important step towards ensuring transparency and participation for the Sami people; consultations would lead to better consideration of Sami interests and rights. The Act was relatively recent, but knowledge of its application among relevant authorities was gradually increasing, and the number of consultation requests had risen from 110 in 2022 to 325 in 2024. There were plans to conduct an evaluation of the law in order to assess its application, effectiveness and social and economic consequences. The obligation to consult did not apply to courts, quasi-judicial boards or committees or bodies in government agencies with quasi-judicial remits; nor did it extend to matters relating to public order, security and defence or decisions concerning subsidies for civil society organizations. Even where the Act did not apply, however, consultations often took place under other legislative frameworks or at later stages of decision-making.

38. The Truth Commission for the Sami People operated independently and had its own annual budget, and the Government did not interfere in its internal work. Although initially expected to submit its final report by December 2025, the Commission had requested an extension, and the Government had decided to extend the mandate until October 2026. In 2024, the Sami Parliament had published a report indicating that Sami women were more exposed to domestic violence than women in Sweden generally. As knowledge about violence against Sami women remained limited, in 2025, the Sami Parliament had been given an expanded mandate to work on gender equality and violence against women.

39. **A representative of Sweden** said that, in August 2025, the State-owned mining company LKAB had announced that its mining operations had affected ground stability in Kiruna more than previously anticipated. As a result, the fracture zone would be expanded, requiring the relocation, within 10 years, of a further 2,700 homes and approximately 6,000 residents. In response to that announcement, in September 2025, the Government had asked Norrbotten County Administrative Board to report on its work to coordinate societal interests and the efforts of government agencies in connection with the required urban transformation. The Board had also been tasked with promoting collaboration among all relevant stakeholders in the county, including Sami and, in particular, reindeer herding communities. The final report was due to be submitted in July 2027. Any future decisions relating to the transformation of Kiruna that required consultations under the Act on Consultation would be preceded by consultations with the Sami representatives concerned. Sami representatives were already involved in infrastructure planning around the city, including in projects led by the Swedish Transport Administration, which aimed to develop long-term sustainable solutions that minimized environmental impact and ensured functional conditions for reindeer husbandry.

40. Sami rights, including the right to use land and water for traditional activities, were safeguarded both by the Constitution and by ordinary legislation. The Sami reindeer husbandry area covered approximately one third of the territory of Sweden, as the activity depended on extensive grazing areas to enable seasonal migration. Reindeer husbandry was

designated as a matter of national interest, and in the northern counties approximately 30% of land was classified as being of national interest and was therefore protected under the Environmental Code against measures that could significantly impede husbandry operations. Sami representatives also participated in land management in the northern counties through various bodies.

41. Participation and consultation, in accordance with the country's international obligations, had a long tradition and were fundamental elements of Swedish democracy. In addition to consultations conducted with the Sami Parliament and other relevant actors under the Act on Consultation, Swedish legislation provided multiple avenues for Sami representatives to participate in decision-making processes, including under the Environmental Code, the Minerals Act, the Forestry Act and the Planning and Building Act.

42. With regard to mining, the issues involved were particularly complex, but the legal framework struck an appropriate balance between competing interests, including reindeer husbandry and other land uses. The award of permits for all mining operations, from exploration to production, was subject to thorough assessment by independent authorities. Procedural safeguards ensured that all stakeholders, including reindeer herding communities, could submit observations and objections and request specific permit conditions to mitigate impacts on reindeer husbandry. Parties to the process also had the right to appeal decisions and to receive the results of environmental impact assessments. Since August 2014, plans of operation had to be made available in specific languages upon request by reindeer herding communities, and they were also required to be submitted to the Sami Parliament.

43. Following the Supreme Court judgment in the case of *Girjas Reindeer Herding Community v. Sweden*, the County Administrative Board had ceased the sale of hunting and fishing permits on State-owned land in the affected area. The Committee on Reindeer Lands, which had been set up in 2021 to propose new reindeer husbandry legislation, had presented an interim report in 2023; however, following substantial criticism, the Government had decided, after consulting Sami representatives, to dissolve it. Work on a new inquiry was ongoing within the Government Offices, and Sami representatives would be consulted prior to the appointment of a new committee. The Government aimed to adopt new terms of reference in the spring of 2026.

*The meeting was suspended from 12 noon to 12.10 p.m.*

44. **Mr. Guan** (Country Task Force) said that, while he welcomed the statistical information provided by the State Party in the report currently under review, he remained concerned about the continuing absence of disaggregated statistical data, in particular on socioeconomic indicators, which would allow the Committee to analyse the enjoyment of economic and social rights by members of different ethnic groups. The Committee noted the Government's caution when it came to collecting data related to ethnic minorities. However, it should be noted that wide-ranging statistical data, including data disaggregated by ethnic group, were already produced by Swedish institutions and civil society actors. Moreover, at a time of increasing immigration by persons of diverse ethnic backgrounds, statistical data provided an empirical basis for informed policymaking on integration. The Committee would be particularly interested to receive updated statistics on the demographic composition of the population, based on self-identification and disaggregated by ethnic origin, and data on economic and social indicators relating to the various population groups, disaggregated by national or ethnic origin, gender and age, with particular attention to Roma, Indigenous Peoples, persons of African or Asian descent and ethno-religious groups.

45. While he appreciated the efforts undertaken to promote human rights education, he was concerned about increased harassment and hate speech in schools and about discriminatory attitudes that were at times reflected in the conduct of officials. In that regard, he wondered how courses on combating discrimination, prejudice and intolerance were structured in the education sector. It would be useful to learn whether teachers were provided with specific teaching plans and training in delivering such courses and whether disciplinary measures were applied in cases where teachers made inappropriate remarks involving racial discrimination or prejudice in the classroom. In that context, he would welcome clarification of the mandate of the Schools Inspectorate, in particular with regard to monitoring and enforcement.

46. Furthermore, he wished to know whether public officials and members of the judiciary were required to undergo human rights training and, if so, with what frequency; whether participation was linked to recruitment or career progression; and which bodies were responsible for such training.

47. **A representative of Sweden** said that the issue of data collection, particularly in the context of efforts to combat racism, was complex and raised methodological questions relating to anonymity and the protection of privacy, as well as concerns among certain segments of the population. In Sweden, there were reasons to maintain a restrictive approach to statistics and data collection based on ethnicity. The question of how to obtain relevant information on living conditions linked to racism and discrimination in an appropriate manner therefore required further analysis. A number of studies had been conducted to improve understanding of the impact of racism and discrimination on the population. The annual reports of the Equality Ombudsman on the state of discrimination in Sweden were important for monitoring the forms and extent of discrimination experienced by individuals. In addition, measures had been taken to enhance knowledge of the living conditions of national minorities. Certain authorities had been tasked with compiling and presenting information on issues such as the health of minorities and participation in mother-tongue education.

48. **A representative of Sweden** said that reindeer herding communities received varying compensation for damage caused by predatory species. In the case of wolves, lynx and wolverines, compensation was based on documented presence of the species concerned, while for brown bears and golden eagles it was fixed and calculated on the basis of grazing land area. Subsidies were also available for preventive measures. The Sami Parliament was responsible for the distribution of both compensation and preventive subsidies to reindeer herding communities. In 2024, the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency had produced a guidance document on the presence of wolves in reindeer husbandry areas. That document, which had been developed with the involvement of the relevant county administrative boards, the Sami Parliament and the National Association of Swedish Sami, summarized all previously identified and tested preventive measures that could be applied in such situations.

49. **A representative of Sweden** said that all national minorities and immigrants were protected from discrimination on the ground of ethnicity. The Discrimination Act prohibited discrimination on the basis of religion or other beliefs. In that regard, “religion” referred to religious belief systems such as Hinduism, Judaism, Christianity or Islam, while “other beliefs” included convictions based on or linked to religious belief, such as atheism and agnosticism. Political convictions and ethical or philosophical values not related to religion were not covered by the Act. The concept of positive discrimination was not defined in Swedish legislation. However, in limited circumstances, special measures were permitted in relation to gender and ethnicity, to hasten progress towards equal rights and opportunities for all. The prohibition of discrimination in labour market policy activities and employment services did not preclude measures aimed at promoting equal rights and opportunities regardless of ethnicity. With respect to gender, employers and education providers could, under specific conditions, apply special measures in working life and education. Employers were required to take active measures to prevent discrimination on all grounds covered by the Discrimination Act.

50. **A representative of Sweden** said that the State was responsible for formulating overarching housing policy and for steering its implementation through legal and financial instruments. Municipalities bore responsibility at the local level for housing matters, including with regard to planning for land and water use. The principle of equal treatment applied within the social services sector. The Government had launched an initiative to support the National Board of Health and Welfare in raising awareness to combat racism in healthcare, dental care and social services.

51. Public grants to civil society organizations were a crucial element of policy, enabling civil society to fulfil its role in democracy and to make a difference in people’s lives. The Government would continue to ensure that such grants were awarded on the basis of consistent and fair conditions. A new condition for State support for civil society organizations, related to the promotion of democracy, had recently been introduced.

52. International adoptions to Sweden had started in the 1950s. According to a recent review by Statistics Sweden, as of December 2023, 58,560 persons born abroad had been adopted by Swedish families. The Family Law and Parental Support Authority had been mandated by the Government to provide support to internationally adopted persons, including psychological support and assistance in tracing biological origins.

53. **A representative of Sweden** said that the Action Plan to Combat Racism and Hate Crime focused on five specific forms of racism but was intended to address all forms, including racism affecting persons with an Asian background. Regarding anti-black racism, the Equality Ombudsman had been tasked with developing and disseminating knowledge on the exposure of Afro-Swedish pupils to racism and discrimination in schools. The knowledge generated would be shared with relevant rights holders and duty bearers, including school staff, and a report would be submitted in early 2026.

54. The Living History Forum had been tasked with raising awareness of the involvement of Sweden in the transatlantic slave trade and had developed relevant educational materials for students in compulsory and upper secondary education. Regarding reparatory justice, the Government took the view that, although past injustices could not be undone, there was a shared responsibility to address their negative legacies. It was essential that new frameworks and measures should be applied in ways that safeguarded and strengthened, and did not undermine, existing human rights norms.

55. **A representative of Sweden** said that the individual right to freedom of religion enjoyed strong constitutional protection. The cases involving Qur'an burnings had been treated under the offence of agitation against a population group, as they were deemed to involve hateful expression directed at Muslims, rather than at Islam. The Government's work to counter violent extremism and terrorism followed a comprehensive approach, by means compatible with the principles of a democratic society governed by the rule of law. Respect for fundamental rights and freedoms and for the rule of law constituted a core premise for all public action, with the ultimate objective of protecting democracy and a free and open society.

56. **A representative of Sweden** said that the Act on Consultation in Matters of Special Importance to the Sami People established a specific form of consultation based on the principle of free, prior and informed consent. In the Government's view, free, prior and informed consent did not entail a right of veto and did not constitute a stand-alone right under international law.

57. **Mr. Guan** said that he would welcome clarification of the manner in which Sweden conducted statistical work and the institutions responsible for the production and coordination of statistics. In particular, he wished to know whether all data used by the Government originated from official institutions or whether it also relied on non-official statistical sources.

58. **Ms. Esseneme** said it was her understanding that the State Party considered it unnecessary to prohibit racist organizations under criminal law because the offence of agitation against a population group was general in scope and could be applied to criminal acts committed by members of racist organizations. As a consequence, the Government allowed such organizations to form and operate freely in the State Party – an approach that was contrary to the letter and spirit of article 4 of the Convention and the Committee's general recommendation No. 7 relating to the implementation of that article. She therefore wished to know what follow-up had been given to the report of the all-party committee on the prohibition of racist organizations that had been established in 2021, including the proposals to introduce the offences of organized racism and support for organized racism.

59. **Mr. Kut** said that, despite sustained efforts, the situation in Sweden had not substantially improved over the years and had, in several respects, deteriorated. He wondered whether the State Party had developed a strategy, policy or set of instruments to carry out an inter-agency evaluation of its efforts, with a view to identifying those policies which had been effective and achieved their intended outcomes, and those which had not and therefore required revision or replacement.

60. **Ms. Shepherd** said that she welcomed the measures that had been put in place to raise awareness of the transatlantic trafficking in enslaved Africans, in particular through education and curriculum reforms. She hoped that the State Party would examine more closely the present-day legacies of past wrongs and would address the issue of reparations.

61. **Mr. Rayess** said that the State Party would do well to examine its criminal legislation on hate speech to ensure that the relevant offences were precisely defined. An approach that unduly favoured freedom of expression, such as when the State disengaged from oversight of the press, risked serious consequences for minority groups.

62. **A representative of Sweden** said that official statistics in Sweden were produced by Statistics Sweden, providing a facts-based foundation for decision-making, research and public debate. Statistics Sweden compiled, processed and published population statistics on a monthly basis. Those data covered, inter alia, sex, birth and death rates, citizenship and country of birth but did not include ethnicity. Statistics Sweden did not collect statistics on asylum-seekers but could draw on data from the Swedish Migration Agency for broader analytical purposes. Statistics Sweden had overall responsibility for statistical coordination. While it collected most data itself, it was also responsible for the quality assurance of statistics produced by other agencies with sector-specific expertise.

63. **A representative of Sweden** said that according to the Discrimination Act, discrimination was prohibited in schools and universities, and persons conducting educational activities might not discriminate against any child, pupil or student participating, or applying to participate, in such activities. Schools and universities therefore bore responsibility for ensuring that children, pupils and students were not subjected to discrimination, and protection against discrimination in educational settings extended to all prohibited grounds. The curriculum for compulsory education stipulated that education must promote the development and learning of all pupils, foster a lifelong desire to learn and convey and instil respect for human rights and the fundamental democratic values on which Swedish society was based.

64. **A representative of Sweden** said the proposals of the all-party committee on the prohibition of racist organizations had been widely criticized by public authorities, courts and civil society organizations, and the Government had decided not to proceed with them. The Government had since adopted a new approach. An inquiry had been mandated to examine and propose legislation aimed at criminalizing participation in a criminal organization, which could include racist organizations.

65. **A representative of Sweden** said that, in 2014, Uppsala University had been commissioned by the Government to develop and implement professional development initiatives on human rights for relevant staff at various levels within the State administration. In 2021, the mandate was expanded to include public employees at the municipal and regional levels. The objective was to ensure that public officials acquired a sufficient understanding of their roles in relation to human rights and gained knowledge of the content and practical implications of human rights standards. The Swedish Institute for Human Rights was tasked with promoting education, research, capacity-building, dissemination of information and awareness-raising in the field of human rights. According to the Institute's reporting for 2024, it had undertaken a wide range of initiatives aimed at increasing knowledge and awareness of human rights, such as the coordination of digital information meetings for a network of human rights specialists and for civil society and public sector actors. It had also worked to raise awareness of its own studies and reports and, in 2024, had submitted reports to United Nations treaty bodies.

66. **Ms. Esseneme** said it appeared that the State Party was aware of the rise of xenophobia and racism within its jurisdiction and had taken a number of measures in recent years to combat the resulting racial discrimination. However, the effectiveness of those measures did not seem to be perceptible to rights holders. She therefore encouraged the State Party to persevere in its efforts, with particular attention to addressing root causes through the identification of both endogenous and exogenous factors. She wished to emphasize the importance of inclusive preschool and school education as a means of instilling in young children respect for human dignity, equality, non-discrimination and, above all, fraternity.

67. **A representative of Sweden** said that she was sincerely grateful for the thoughtful questions and contributions addressed to her delegation during the dialogue. Sweden was a strong proponent of a global rules-based order centred on freedom, dignity and equal rights for every individual. For all victims of human rights violations, a strong United Nations system was essential. In that regard, her Government was deeply concerned about the ongoing liquidity crisis, which directly undermined the capacity of the Committee and other treaty bodies to fulfil their important mandates and weakened the international human rights protection system as a whole. The Government remained resolutely committed to eliminating racism, discrimination and hate crime. It would study the Committee's conclusions and recommendations carefully.

*The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.*