



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

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

### Summary record of the 3178th meeting

Held at the Palais Wilson, Geneva, on Tuesday, 25 November 2025, at 10 a.m.

*Chair:* Mr. Balcerzak

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article 9 of the Convention (*continued*)

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*The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.*

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

*Combined eleventh to nineteenth periodic reports of Burundi (continued)*  
([CERD/C/BDI/11-19](#); [CERD/C/BDI/Q/11-19](#))

1. *At the invitation of the Chair, the delegation of Burundi joined the meeting.*
2. **A representative of Burundi**, responding to questions raised by Committee members at the previous meeting, said that no complaints of racial discrimination had been submitted either to the Independent National Human Rights Commission or to the Office of the Ombudsman since 1998. Some 30 such complaints, however, had been submitted to the Public Prosecutor's Office. Most had led to convictions, and in some cases the perpetrators had been given life sentences and the victims had been awarded compensation. Although the Public Prosecutor's Office could initiate investigations on its own initiative, it was highly unlikely that victims of racial discrimination would fail to submit complaints. Under Act No. 1/04 27 July 2016, victims who were at risk could make their statements behind closed doors.
3. The members of the Independent National Human Rights Commission had split into two dysfunctional and antagonistic groups, and as a result the National Assembly had taken matters into its own hands. What was more, under the law pursuant to which the Commission had been created, members of the Commission, including the President, could in some circumstances be removed. The former President, who had never been subjected to intimidation, had gone into exile in Europe for reasons of his own. No criminal proceedings had ever been instituted against him for any opinions he had expressed or for anything he had done in his capacity as President of the Commission. The limited immunity he had enjoyed had not extended to the members of his family, and while his place of residence had in fact been searched, it had not been searched without a warrant.
4. The investigation into the August 2004 killings that had taken place at a camp in Gatumba at which Banyamulenge refugees from the Democratic Republic of the Congo had sought refuge was ongoing. Once the perpetrators were found guilty, the surviving victims would be able to seek compensation.
5. **A representative of Burundi** said that the Government was continuing to consider the advisability of ratifying the Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons and the Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness. Even though the statelessness conventions had not yet been ratified, a number of the causes of statelessness had been eliminated. When a child in Burundi was abandoned at birth, for example, he or she automatically acquired citizenship of Burundi.
6. **A representative of Burundi** said that the budget of the Independent National Human Rights Commission, whose activities were supported by partner organizations, had increased steadily since 2020/21, with the exception of its 2024/25 budget of 1,889,759,665 Burundi francs, which had been revised downward.
7. **A representative of Burundi** added that the budget cuts of the preceding year had affected all public institutions, not only the Commission.
8. **Ms. Tebie** (Country Task Force) said that she wondered what the State Party did to ensure that the Twa community, including Twa women, was well represented at all levels of government, on the Independent National Human Rights Commission and in the private sector. She wondered, too, what was being done, in addition to co-opting members of the Twa community into decision-making positions, to enhance their participation in political and public life.
9. She would welcome up-to-date statistics on the representation of the State Party's ethnic groups, including the Twa, in all three branches of government, in the defence and security forces and in other institutions. She would also welcome information on the ethnic composition of the Senate in the wake of the July 2025 elections and on women's representation in national and local governing institutions.

10. Since, according to the Arusha Peace and Reconciliation Agreement for Burundi, one of the causes of the State Party's instability was rejection of the diversity that was essential to national unity, she wondered what measures had been taken to promote tolerance of ethnic diversity in political life. She wondered, too, what had been done to prevent the violence and intimidation to which members of political parties and candidates for public office were subjected for their political views or ethnicity. It would be helpful to know, in that connection, how many investigations into such conduct there had been, how many alleged perpetrators had been sentenced and what compensation the victims had been awarded.

11. In view of a number of troubling reports, she wished to know how the State Party intended to ensure that Act No. 1/21 of 12 July 2014 amending Act No. 1/15 of 9 May 2015 regulating the press in Burundi, as well as the accreditation procedures it provided for, was not used to unduly limit freedom of expression, in particular in election season. She wished to know, too, what would be done to ensure that the enforcement of the Act contributed to greater protection of the right to that fundamental freedom and the expansion of access to information, to protect journalists and human rights defenders from intimidation and undue prosecution and to promote the development of a more diverse media landscape. In addition, she wondered what had happened to Aline Sandra Muhoza, one of a number of detained journalists, and what had been done to investigate the disappearance of Jean Bigirimana, Marie-Claudette Kwizera and other journalists or human rights defenders, as well as the threats and acts of intimidation such persons often faced.

12. It would be helpful to learn what measures had been taken to ensure that journalists, human rights defenders and civil society organizations enjoyed the protection they needed to work safely and without interference. It would also be helpful to learn when the State Party intended to adopt a law on the protection of human rights defenders.

13. She wondered why foreign and domestic non-governmental organizations (NGOs) were so strictly regulated, including in respect of the ethnic composition of their membership, and what safeguards were in place to ensure that such regulation did not interfere with the freedom of association. She also wondered what was being done to ensure that members of opposition parties and minority ethnic communities could exercise their right to freedom of assembly. In addition, it would be helpful to learn how the authorities had responded to reports that the family members of victims of massacres had been detained when, for example, they had tried to lay flowers on their relatives' graves.

14. As women from marginalized groups often faced intersecting forms of discrimination, she would welcome information about the efforts that were being made to improve such women's access to essential services and enhance their participation in public life. A brief description of the measures being taken to prevent children with albinism from being abandoned by their fathers and to support the families of such children would also be welcome. In addition, it would be useful to know what measures were being taken to protect women and girls from gender-based violence and intersecting forms of discrimination. Information on relevant investigations, prosecutions and punishment, as well as on the steps taken to protect victims, the availability of shelters, the provision of support services and any plans to amend article 590 of the Criminal Code, under which same-sex sexual relations were made punishable by law, would likewise be useful.

15. She wished to know what efforts were being made to guarantee equitable access to justice, expand the availability of free or low-cost legal representation and ensure that the obstacles – fear of reprisals, for instance – to the pursuit of justice were overcome. She wished to know, too, what specific measures had been taken to explain the legal remedies available to members of the State Party's ethnic communities and persons with albinism who were victims of racial discrimination. She would welcome information on the complaints of racial discrimination lodged with the State Party's courts or other relevant institutions and on the outcome of those complaints, including any reparations awarded to the victims.

16. The State Party had made efforts to manage migration flows and encourage the return of refugees since the signature of the Arusha Agreement. She nonetheless wondered what measures had been taken to guarantee the safety and reintegration of the people who returned to their local communities after what had often been years of internal displacement or exile abroad. In that connection, it would be interesting to know what was being done to help

ensure that the land they had been forced to abandon was returned to them. She would welcome an indication of the number of internally displaced persons and repatriated refugees, broken down by ethnicity, sex and age range, who were currently still living in the State Party's temporary reception sites. She likewise wished to know how many asylum-seekers or other persons in need of international protection were currently living in Burundi and what measures had been or were being taken to encourage them to return voluntarily to their communities of origin.

17. **A representative of Burundi** said that efforts were being made to right the wrongs that had historically been done to the Twa people. He did not have the exact figures, but all his country's ethnic groups were represented in governing institutions, the armed forces and the police. Members of the Twa community were not, of course, as well represented as their Hutu or Tutsi counterparts, but they were increasingly involved in his country's public and political life. There were five Hutu senators, five Tutsi senators and three Twa senators. One of the three Twa senators was a woman.

18. He wondered how it could be that NGOs, foreign NGOs in particular, could object to the rules requiring that the membership of NGOs should be ethnically balanced. The suggestion that Twa women and persons with albinism had limited access to public services was also puzzling.

19. Efforts were being made, including by the National Commission on Land and Other Property, to return land to former refugees or internally displaced persons who returned to their home communities. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission, too, was hard at work. Its final report had not yet been released.

20. **A representative of Burundi** said that the Twa community, of which he was a member, accounted for around 1 per cent of his country's population. The Twa people were considered Indigenous because of their way of life. They made pots, fished and hunted. They were blacksmiths and weavers of baskets. In the past, the Twa of Burundi had been excluded from the social, political and economic life of the country. It had even been prohibited for them to eat or drink with members of other ethnic groups. Not until the ratification of the Constitution of 2005 had the Twa been represented in Parliament. There had been a Twa minister in the Government since 2020, and one of the members of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission was Twa. Other members of the Twa community held positions in the Administration and served, including as officers, in the National Defence Forces. Still others were teachers. The community also benefited from positive discrimination.

21. In addition to the giant step the Government had taken when it had acknowledged the injustice and discrimination his people had faced, its highest representatives, including the President, had always taken part in the activities organized to commemorate the International Day of Indigenous Peoples. Public lands were being surveyed with a view to facilitating the distribution of land to landless members of the community.

22. The members of the Twa community participated in and were the beneficiaries of a wide range of social programmes. There were no quotas for his community's participation in the public life of the country, but its situation was clearly improving, and in the future the Twa community would be as fully integrated as the Hutus and the Tutsis.

23. The decision to make healthcare for children under 5 and nursing mothers free of charge had somewhat bettered the lives of the Twa people. In addition to covering boarding school tuition and fees for post-primary Twa students, the Government had exempted members of the community from paying university tuition and fees. There were around 100 Twa students in higher education in Burundi.

24. Decent housing had been built for the Twa and other groups of vulnerable people, and training in agricultural production techniques, including modern animal husbandry, had been offered with a view to promoting dietary diversification and participation in the market economy. The Government had reached out to Twa households to help familiarize them with its child protection efforts, in particular for girls. It also facilitated the participation of community representatives in relevant international forums, forums on Indigenous affairs in particular.

25. Persons with albinism, whose representative organizations had been accredited by the Government, were also entitled to special benefits, including free healthcare. Campaigns to help change the public perception of such persons were organized on an ongoing basis.

26. **A representative of Burundi** said that every country had its culture and that in his country's culture homosexuality was not widely accepted. Enshrining the rights of gay people in the Constitution, as had been demanded some ten years previously, could lead to the erosion of his country's traditions. In any event, gay people in Burundi were not, despite the existence of article 590 of the Criminal Code, subjected to undue persecution. No one in Burundi was stoned on account of his or her sexual orientation,

27. Efforts had been made, including by the Ministry of Justice, to promote access to justice. Mobile legal teams, for instance, travelled the country, and public defenders were appointed for defendants who did not have lawyers of their own.

28. If ever there were a country where freedom of expression was truly guaranteed, it was Burundi. There were numerous media outlets, and anyone could say practically anything he or she wanted to without being investigated. It was possible even to insult the President.

29. **A representative of Burundi** said that there was a solid legal framework, built around the Constitution and legislation on political parties and other organizations, for the protection of the rights to freedom of expression, opinion, association and assembly. The country currently had 37 political parties, 7,765 NGOs and at least 239 media outlets, ranging from community radio stations to newspapers and online news sites. Diversity of opinion and citizen participation in the life of the country were a reality.

30. **A representative of Burundi** said that no one was investigated simply because he or she was a journalist. Like anyone else, however, journalists could break the law, and if they did so they were held to account.

31. **A representative of Burundi** said that the increasingly dynamic expression of his country's civic spirit was facilitated by a range of stakeholders, including the Government, public institutions and the civil society organizations with which those institutions cooperated. In law and in practice, human rights defenders were afforded the protection, including from arbitrary detention, that they needed to do their work. For the rest, Burundi was the only country in the world whose Head of State regularly invited civil society actors to share with him and the Government their ideas on how to end poverty, strengthen the protection of fundamental rights, promote good governance and development and combat corruption and marginalization. His country's civil society organizations also contributed to its effective cooperation with regional and international human rights mechanisms. There were, furthermore, 36 trade unions in Burundi and, as had been noted, numerous media outlets, including online news sites, on which human rights defenders were heavily reliant.

32. NGOs were not so strictly regulated as had been suggested. In fact, the adoption of Act No. 1/02 of 27 January 2017 had been preceded by consultations with civil society. A number of NGOs had been dissolved in the wake of a failed coup in 2015, because they had called on his country's young people to join the coup plotters, and some of them had responded by participating in violent disturbances. The Government had had no choice but to take action against those organizations.

33. **A representative of Burundi** said that the Imbonerakure was simply the name of the youth wing of the governing party. The misdeeds of some of its members should not be used to demonize the organization as a whole.

34. **Mr. Diaby** (Country Task Force) said that, as there was apparently no judicial training academy in the State Party, it would be interesting to know how judges and prosecutors were chosen. Were they simply selected from among the graduating classes of the State Party's universities?

35. **Ms. Tlakula** said that she wished to know whether the State Party had ratified the African Union Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa. She wondered, too, whether the State Party had, as recommended by the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights, adopted legislative measures to consolidate the rights of the three Peoples recognized as indigenous to its territory.

36. **Mr. Sibande** said that, in the light of reports that the National Communication Council had banned the Bonesha radio station from broadcasting, that, in May 2024, a senior police officer had assaulted Jean-Noël Manirakiza, a news reporter, and that, in June 2024, two police officers had attempted to detain Pascal Ntakirutimana, a journalist, he wished to know what steps were being taken to ensure that journalists could operate freely, without risk of being subjected to investigation or arbitrary arrest. The delegation might explain how the authorities planned to ensure that, in the lead-up to the elections due to be held in 2027, the Imbonerakure – the youth wing of the ruling party – did not engage in intimidation or violence towards political figures, journalists or human rights defenders.

37. **Ms. Esseneme** said that she would like to know what legal status was accorded to Councils of Colline Dignitaries, whether the Councils constituted a form of traditional justice and what relationship they had with the ordinary courts. She wondered what steps the authorities planned to take to ensure that sufficient numbers of Tutsis were able to pass the relevant tests to meet the applicable quota for technical posts.

38. **Mr. Guissé** asked which languages had official status in the State Party.

39. **Mr. Rayess** asked whether the State Party's authorities believed that democracy was sustainable in a country where government positions were allocated on the basis of tribal identity.

40. **A representative of Burundi** said that, with regard to the questions raised about the activities of the Imbonerakure, he wished to draw the Committee's attention to the shadow report drafted by a number of civil society organizations and coordinated by the Burundi branch of Action by Christians for the Abolition of Torture.

41. The Government worked with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the International Organization for Migration to facilitate voluntary returns of refugees to Burundi. Upon their arrival in the country, such persons were provided with assistance.

42. Many judges in Burundi had studied in other countries, including Cameroon. While there was currently no national training college for judges, the Government would consider the possibility of establishing one.

43. The official languages of Burundi were Kirundi and French. Efforts were under way to accord Kiswahili the same status and to ensure that English was more widely spoken.

44. Any reflections on the relative merits and drawbacks of the quota system should be undertaken with due regard to the specificities of the country's history. Progress was being made towards achieving conditions in which the quota system would no longer be required.

45. **A representative of Burundi** said that the Councils of Colline Dignitaries, which were regulated in the Code of Civil Procedure, as supplemented by Act No. 1/03 of 23 January 2021, were competent to deal with reconciliation processes. The Code of Judicial Organization and Competence had been amended in 2023 to accord plaintiffs in civil matters the right to request that the case be brought before the relevant Council of Colline Dignitaries. Decisions issued by a Council could be reviewed by the appropriate *tribunal de résidence* (local court) if, within 15 days of issuance, either of the parties submitted a request to that effect. If no such request was made, the Council's decision was automatically approved by the *tribunal de résidence* and became enforceable. The Councils had no jurisdiction over criminal matters, which were handled by a *tribunal de résidence* when they concerned an offence that carried a prison sentence of less than 2 years and by the Public Prosecutor's Office when they concerned offences carrying a longer sentence.

46. **A representative of Burundi** said that 110,057 refugees currently resided in camps. Others lived in urban areas. Between 2017 and November 2025, 266,673 Burundian refugees had been repatriated from 30 countries, including 19,831 in 2024 and 27,940 between January and November 2025.

*The meeting was suspended at noon and resumed at 12.10 p.m.*

47. **Mr. Diaby** said that he would welcome an update on the status and impact of any measures, including special measures or affirmative action, to combat inequality and multiple

and intersecting forms of discrimination, in particular those based on race, colour, descent or national or ethnic origin, political or other opinion, sex or gender identity, affecting people belonging to ethnic communities, including the Twa, as well as measures designed to ensure that persons with albinism, migrants, refugees, asylum-seekers, stateless persons and displaced persons could exercise their human rights without any discrimination. The delegation might provide details of measures taken to reduce poverty levels among people belonging to those groups and to guarantee them effective access to education, healthcare, employment and basic services, as well as information on the impact of those measures and relevant statistical data, and of measures adopted to promote equal opportunities and guarantee effective access to land and to health, education and justice services for persons belonging to the Twa Indigenous People. It might also comment on the status of the national strategy for the integration and socioeconomic inclusion of the Twa for sustainable development 2022–2027 and any plans to adopt a second iteration of the strategy beyond 2027, explain the extent to which the cultural and historical specificities of the Twa were taken into account in the strategy's design, including with respect to the criteria for access to land, and describe the indicators that had been established to measure the strategy's impact on access to land for the Twa.

48. He wished to know whether the authorities had given effect to the President's commitment, undertaken in 2024 to mark the International Day of Indigenous Peoples, to provide a hectare of agricultural land to every Twa household and, if so, how they had ensured equity, transparency and sustainability in the process. He wondered how measures designed to uphold the social and economic rights of vulnerable groups were evaluated and improved, to what extent persons belonging to those groups participated in the design, implementation and monitoring of special measures intended to reduce multiple forms of discrimination and what mechanisms were in place to guarantee that any measures taken reflected a concerted and inclusive approach to racial discrimination. The delegation might specify whether there were plans to draft legislation recognizing and protecting the land and customary rights of the Twa people or to take steps to facilitate land registration, simplify the related administrative procedures and remove fees.

49. He would like to know about any special measures aimed at improving access to education for Twa children living in isolated areas, with a particular focus on girls, and ensuring that programmes were designed in line with culturally relevant teaching and learning methods.

50. The delegation might provide additional information on any measures that had been or would be taken to protect persons with albinism from violence, including ritual violence, abductions, discrimination and stigmatization and on any related investigations conducted, prosecutions brought and reparations granted. He wondered what institutional and social arrangements had been put in place to guarantee, for persons with albinism, equitable access to specialized healthcare and justice, reparations and lasting protection against all forms of discrimination, and how the authorities used International Albinism Awareness Day to strengthen prevention, promotion and inclusion.

51. He would appreciate up-to-date information on measures taken to prevent and combat trafficking in persons, particularly members of the Twa community and foreign nationals, including for purposes of labour exploitation, domestic servitude and sexual exploitation, with a particular focus on the implementation of Act No. 1/28 of 29 October 2014 on the prevention and suppression of trafficking in persons and the protection of victims of trafficking.

52. The delegation might furnish additional information on the measures taken to give effect to the provisions of the Arusha Agreement, particularly those relating to transitional justice and efforts to combat impunity, and to ensure the effective participation of members of all ethnic groups and civil society organizations in the transitional justice process. He wondered what measures had been taken to strengthen the mandate and guarantee the independence and impartiality of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and to advance all aspects of transitional justice, in particular accountability, reparations, restitution, and reforms in the security and justice sectors.

53. He would like to know what concrete measures the Government planned to take to ensure impartial and thorough investigations into all serious violations of human rights and international humanitarian law that had occurred during the ethnic conflict and to prosecute all perpetrators and provide reparations to victims, without discrimination based on race, colour, descent or national or ethnic origin. The delegation might provide additional information on the mandate, activities and action plan of the National Observatory for the Prevention and Eradication of Genocide, War Crimes and Other Crimes against Humanity, as well as on the human, technical and financial resources allocated to it to ensure that it was able to discharge its mandate effectively and in an independent manner.

54. The focus of the transitional justice process, which had been instituted pursuant to the Arusha Agreement with the aim of examining structural, political and ethnic violence through a comprehensive and inclusive lens, appeared to have been narrowed to the 1972 crises, with no attention given to the political repression that had taken place in 2015. In addition, the ethnic and political composition of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission reportedly no longer reflected the balanced representation, namely 60 per cent Hutus and 40 per cent Tutsis, set out in the Agreement. The delegation might comment on what had been done to address those shortcomings and to end the perceived politicization of the transitional justice process by adopting a national framework for memory and reparation that was inclusive and recognized all victims of past violence equitably. He would like to know what measures were being taken to strengthen the independence of the judiciary by protecting judges from political pressure and establishing transparent disciplinary mechanisms to punish the issuance of arbitrary decisions, as well as to ensure the prosecution of the perpetrators of violence and serious human rights violations, including massacres, enforced disappearances and crimes against humanity committed between 1965 and 2020 and targeting, *inter alia*, ethnic groups and political opponents. He wondered what safeguards were in place to guarantee the independence of the judiciary and its capacity to undertake prosecutions, including of political and military leaders, and what was being done to ensure that the Observatory and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission could provide victims with official recognition, truth and access to justice.

55. He wished to know what steps had been taken to immediately suspend all expropriation and land reallocation operations in Rohero, Buyenzi and other locations until an independent assessment of their degree of conformity with legal and social regulations had been completed and how the authorities planned to ensure full respect of legal remedies in all future operations and effective participation in urban management decisions for affected households. The delegation might provide details of the national compensation and restitution mechanisms in place for victims of arbitrary expropriation, including whether the associated legal proceedings had suspensive effect.

56. He wondered how the authorities guaranteed the safety and right of return of Burundian refugees, in particular those seeking to reclaim property, and ensured that they did not experience retaliation. The delegation might describe any plans to reinstitute official and structured dialogue with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, with a view to reopening its office in the State Party and ensuring technical cooperation rooted in the rule of law.

57. **Ms. Tebie** said that, against the backdrop of the Committee's preparation of a draft general recommendation on reparations for the historical injustices caused by the chattel enslavement of Africans and the subsequent harms inflicted upon people of African descent, and in the light of the publication by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, in 2022, of a report in which certain colonial acts had been qualified as crimes against humanity, she wondered what commitments had been made by Germany and Belgium, as the former colonial powers, in response to the Government's efforts to obtain historical justice and reparations, what concrete action the authorities planned to take to raise public awareness and preserve historical memory and whether the history of colonization and the requests for reparations were included in school curricula.

58. **A representative of Burundi** said that, in Burundi, family-owned land was sacred and could not be sold. However, there had been cases of parcels of land in urban areas being used without permission by persons other than their owners. Land management was well



regulated by law, which provided for the State to reacquire land that had not been used within a specified time frame. Expropriations did not occur.

59. With regard to inheritance rights, when a woman married, she became part of her spouse's family. If she returned to her family of origin following divorce or for other reasons, she reacquired her right to inherit.

60. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission was composed of seven Hutu members, five Tutsi members and one Twa member, in line with the provisions of the Arusha Agreement. The Commission, which had a mandate covering all periods that had been affected by violence, was currently examining events that had occurred in 1972 and would later proceed to an examination of other time periods.

61. A commission had been set up to establish guidelines in the area of historical reparations. Both Belgium and Germany had shown themselves to be open to dialogue; the latter had committed to returning property stolen during the colonial period and had identified premises in Gitega to be used for the management of that process.

62. **A representative of Burundi** said that Burundi was viewed as a regional role model in terms of the participation of Indigenous Peoples in decision-making processes and the implementation of measures aimed at their social and economic inclusion. The Government was currently implementing the Merankabandi social support programme and developing income-generating activities such as farming and agriculture, since the traditional occupations of the Twa were no longer profitable. Progress was being made towards ending discrimination; for example, inter-ethnic marriages were becoming more common. A commission had been set up to give effect to the President's commitment to providing land to Twa households and was compiling an inventory of suitable land.

63. **A representative of Burundi** said that there was a primary school with a canteen in every administrative subdivision known as a "*colline*", ensuring that all population groups, including the Twa, had access to education.

64. **A representative of Burundi** said that, in March 2018, an ad hoc committee had been created to combat trafficking in persons, and, in 2021, focal points had been established in all courts, public prosecutor's offices and police forces in the country to share information related to trafficking. Training and awareness-raising activities had been organized for judges and diplomats as part of a comprehensive action plan implemented between 2019 and 2022. A new national action plan had been adopted for the period 2023–2027. In January 2022, pursuant to Act No. 1/28 of 29 October 2014, which had been drafted in French and translated into Kirundi, a commission had been set up to advise on and monitor measures to prevent trafficking. A guide and standard operating procedures had been produced on combating trafficking and, in June 2023, 130 community leaders in eight provinces had been selected to participate in a pilot project to deliver training on trafficking in persons.

65. Temporary shelters for victims of trafficking were required to meet beneficiaries' needs. Five such centres in the Provinces of Rumonge, Cibitoke, Makamba, Gitega and Muyinga had been evaluated to assess needs. Efforts had been made to raise awareness of trafficking among vulnerable populations, particularly in transit and destination countries. A data collection system had been established for use by focal points, judges, police officers and members of the advisory commission.

66. **A representative of Burundi** said that, pursuant to the Arusha Agreement, political power was shared among the ethnic communities to avoid a concentration of power within one community, namely Hutus. The Parliament and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission had determined that the crimes against humanity that had been committed against the Hutu community in 1972 met the threshold for genocide. While the resources allocated to the National Observatory for the Prevention and Eradication of Genocide, War Crimes and Other Crimes against Humanity were insufficient, its joint programme with the United Nations Development Programme allowed for a minimum level of operations. Greater cooperation between Burundi and the United Nations system was needed.

67. **Ms. Tebie** said that she wished to thank the delegation for its active participation in the dialogue, which had shed light on the legal and institutional progress that had been made and on areas of particular concern, including the protection of minorities, the collection of

disaggregated data and the dismantling of structural discrimination. She hoped that the dialogue would mark the beginning of renewed cooperation between the State Party and the United Nations and would pave the way for the reopening of a branch of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights in Burundi.

*The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.*