



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

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## Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination 117th session

### Summary record of the 3210th meeting

Held at the Palais Wilson, Geneva, on Wednesday, 22 April 2026, at 10 a.m.

*Chair:* Mr. Kut

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

*Combined thirteenth and fourteenth periodic reports of Uzbekistan (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 thirteenth and fourteenth periodic reports of Uzbekistan (continued)*  
([CERD/C/UZB/13-14](#); [CERD/C/UZB/Q/13-14](#))

1. *At the invitation of the Chair, the delegation of Uzbekistan joined the meeting.*
2. **Ms. Stavrinaki** (Country Rapporteur) said that, given the absence of dedicated legislation on ethnic minority rights, she wished to know how the State Party ensured that its existing anti-discrimination framework addressed the structural challenges faced by ethnic minority groups and what steps were being taken to develop measurable benchmarks and a more tailored standards framework to meet the needs of such groups, in line with articles 2 and 5 of the Convention. She also wished to know what targeted policies were in place to address the disparity in per capita income between the Republic of Karakalpakstan and other areas of the State Party and how the delegation responded to reports of wage disparities between Karakalpaks and ethnic Uzbeks performing similar work. She wondered how the State Party ensured that the self-governing status of the Republic of Karakalpakstan translated, in practice, into effective decision-making power for Karakalpak institutions and, given that Karakalpak representation in the local councils of the Republic reached rates as low as 4.1%, what mechanisms were in place to ensure that governance structures were representative of the local Karakalpak population. She would welcome examples of cases where the authorities of the Republic had exercised autonomous policymaking powers without central interference. It would be useful to know what concrete steps were being taken to address the underrepresentation of Karakalpaks in the national parliament and the judiciary and how the State Party ensured the meaningful participation of Karakalpaks in decision-making bodies. She wondered why there were no registered political parties representing Karakalpak interests and what legal or administrative barriers were preventing them from being formed.
3. Given the concerns that the State Party's "extremism" framework was overly broad and enabled the criminalization of non-violent expression, she wished to know on what grounds the Alga Karakalpakstan movement had been designated extremist and how the State Party ensured that anti-extremism measures did not unduly restrict political pluralism and minority participation. She would welcome clarification of the criteria and processes that had guided decisions to rename streets and public spaces that formed part of Karakalpak cultural heritage and how the State ensured that such decisions did not result in the marginalization of minority identities. She would appreciate information on how the State Party reconciled its cultural preservation policies with reported cases of elements of Karakalpak culture, including cultural sites and symbols, being presented under Uzbek names. It would be useful to hear more about the concrete measures being taken to revitalize and promote the Karakalpak language, particularly in the light of concerns about its decline. She wondered why, despite the formal recognition of the Karakalpak language, official documents and administrative procedures appeared to be conducted predominantly in Uzbek, and what measures were in place to ensure the effective use of Karakalpak in public administration. She wished to hear more about the steps being taken to ensure that Karakalpak speakers had equal access to public services, employment and the justice system in their own language.
4. In the light of the severe and disproportionate impact of the Aral Sea environmental crisis on the Republic of Karakalpakstan, she wished to know what targeted measures were in place to ensure equal access to healthcare and effective environmental protection for Karakalpak communities and how the State Party ensured that the communities were meaningfully consulted and able to participate in decision-making processes related to environmental restoration and development initiatives in the Aral Sea region. She wondered what targeted measures were in place to ensure equal access to the right to a healthy environment for Karakalpaks. Given that some minority-language schools had reportedly been closed or faced challenges operating in practice, she wondered what measures were in place to ensure the equality of education quality across all languages of instruction. She

would appreciate updated data on schools and preschools offering education in minority languages, disaggregated by language and region, including recent openings, closures and the reasons for any closures.

5. She wished to receive clarification regarding reports that women from ethnic minorities, in particular Karakalpaks, had been subjected to coercive practices, including household visits carried out by nurses to enforce an unwritten two-child policy. In particular, she wished to know what safeguards were in place to ensure that no woman was subjected to non-consensual medical procedures and how the State Party ensured that all reproductive health policies fully respected women's fundamental human rights.

6. In the light of deeply concerning information received by the Committee regarding the handling and return of the bodies of deceased protesters following the events of July 2022 in the Republic of Karakalpakstan, she would appreciate information on the procedures governing such cases and the measures taken to ensure that they were conducted with dignity and transparency and in accordance with applicable human rights standards. She would appreciate an update on the situation of Dauletmurat Tazhimuratov, a human rights defender, who reportedly faced being transferred to a stricter prison regime, raising fears of an increased risk of abuse. She wished to know what progress the State Party had made with respect to conducting an independent, impartial investigation into the July 2022 events, how many individuals remained in detention or prison in connection with those events, what safeguards were in place to ensure fair trial rights and whether the State Party planned to make relevant investigative findings public and ensure transparency and reparations for victims. She wondered why the parliamentary commission report on the events had not been made public and whether there were plans to implement recommendations on transparency and accountability.

7. **A representative of Uzbekistan** said that Uzbek public policy was founded on the principles of equality, non-discrimination, the preservation of cultural and linguistic identity and a commitment to ensuring the full participation of all ethnic groups in public life. The Government had devoted special attention to the development of the Republic of Karakalpakstan, including by implementing large-scale programmes to improve living conditions for the population and mitigate the environmental situation in the Aral Sea region. The events of July 2022 had been subject to legal assessment in accordance with national law.

8. **A representative of Uzbekistan** said that the sovereign Republic of Karakalpakstan was historically home to Uzbeks, Karakalpaks and other ethnic groups. Given that both Karakalpak and Uzbek had the legal status of official languages of the Republic of Karakalpakstan, it was entirely natural for geographical features to be named in Uzbek as well as Karakalpak; there were also geographical features that bore names in other languages. The naming or renaming of districts, towns and other entities was a process carried out by the parliament of the Republic.

9. **A representative of Uzbekistan** said that the Constitution and other laws of Uzbekistan established that all citizens were equal, irrespective of ethnicity, language and origin, and had equal access to public service on the basis of merit. Discrimination in the workplace, including with respect to recruitment and promotion, was prohibited. Those principles applied in all State institutions, including the judicial system. Although Karakalpaks represented a little over 2% of the population, they made up approximately 4.5% of judges and approximately 4.7% of court staff.

10. **A representative of Uzbekistan** said that, pursuant to a decision adopted on 15 July 2022, a parliamentary commission comprising members of both chambers of the parliament, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and the public had been set up to examine the events of July 2022. The commission had worked together with international organizations, including the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, and had communicated with international NGOs and the media. In December 2024, the commission had presented a report to the parliament, on the basis of which a resolution had been adopted by the councils of both chambers. At an online meeting held on 20 February 2026, the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders

had welcomed the statement made by Azam Farmonov, leader of the Khukukii Tayanch human rights organization and a member of the committee, who had himself spent time in prison serving a sentence of 11 years. As a member of the commission, he had spoken with all participants in the events. It had been found that the rights and legitimate interests of suspects, accused persons and defendants, including the right to have access to a lawyer, medical assistance and telephone calls, had been fully safeguarded. Members of the independent commission had expressed their opinions on the events in interviews with Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, *The Economist* and Voice of America. The commission had carried out its work openly and transparently. A call centre with a short number had been launched in Nukus, Republic of Karakalpakstan, and had received more than 600 calls. At the request of the commission, 30 defendants had been released from custody in the courtroom. The commission's report had been published on the website of the lower house of the parliament on 26 December 2024.

11. **A representative of Uzbekistan** said that, in line with the new Constitution, which referred to the population of Uzbekistan as a single people, the Government avoided use of the term "ethnic minority" in legislation. Groups in need of additional support were identified using socioeconomic and geographical criteria, including poverty and employment rates and level of access to services in densely populated areas. That approach made it possible to distribute resources in a targeted manner, but not to compile a formal register of minorities.

12. In recent years, as a result of the country's comprehensive public policy, the Republic of Karakalpakstan had seen a sustained positive trend in socioeconomic development, strengthened rights for ethnic groups and improved living standards for all persons, including Karakalpaks. The poverty rate in the Republic had fallen from 10.8% in 2024 to 6.6% in 2025, and real incomes had risen by more than 5%. Despite the area's difficult environmental situation, the poverty rate in the Republic was falling faster than it was in Uzbekistan as a whole, due to rising employment, the expansion of entrepreneurship and self-employment and the implementation of targeted social programmes and support for vulnerable families. Large-scale economic stimulus measures had been implemented, the average tax burden had been halved and more than 17,000 entrepreneurs had benefited from significant financial exemptions. More than 1 trillion sum in preferential loans and \$100 million in foreign investment had been secured, 144 new companies had been established and exports had risen by 32.7%. More than 17,000 residential buildings had been renovated, 300 such buildings had been built and around 27,000 dwellings had been legalized, providing their inhabitants with full ownership rights and access to loans.

13. Karakalpak was actively used in official procedures, business, State services, education and the media, including television and radio programmes and print and online publications. The cultural identity of ethnic minorities was supported in line with international standards through regular cultural events, theatrical productions, museum exhibitions and traditional crafts. Efforts to counteract the impact of the Aral Sea environmental crisis included the creation of a large-scale afforestation belt ("green shield"), covering more than 1.8 million ha. Dust storms in that area had fallen by between 15% and 20%. Access to clean water had doubled and alternative sources of employment were being developed.

14. **A representative of Uzbekistan** said that, on 22 February 2024, the Supreme Court had ruled that Alga Karakalpakstan was an extremist organization and had prohibited it from operating in the country after members of the organization had posted extremist and separatist material on social networks that was aimed at undermining the constitutional order and territorial integrity of Uzbekistan and had orchestrated and participated in unrest in Nukus in July 2022. The ruling of the Supreme Court had entered into force without appeal.

15. **A representative of Uzbekistan** said that the protests organized on 1 July 2022 had not been peaceful, but illegal. A total of 270 government employees had sustained injuries of varying severity. The violence displayed and provocative actions of those involved in the unrest could not be classified as a peaceful demonstration. Law enforcement bodies had responded rapidly to put a stop to the illegal acts. Those charged as a result of the investigations that had followed had included three law enforcement officers. Dauletmurat Tazhimuratov was currently serving a sentence at penal colony No.11 in Navoi Oblast. Prisoners' rights were established in penalties enforcement legislation and ensured in practice

by prison administrations. The procuratorial authorities conducted rigorous monitoring to ensure respect for prisoners' rights, freedoms and legitimate interests. Dauletmurat Tazhimuratov's rights as a prisoner had been respected fully and in a timely manner, and he had enjoyed all of the conditions of the detention set out in the regulations. Since his arrival, he had been involved in socially useful work at the prison's production facility. There was no record that he had submitted any complaints, petitions or requests to the prison authorities or other law enforcement bodies in 2025 or thus far in 2026. Moreover, he and his family members had exchanged 7 letters in 2024 and 15 in 2025.

16. **A representative of Uzbekistan** said that, when Dauletmurat Tazhimuratov's case had been before the appellate court, he and his lawyer had petitioned the court to investigate the actions of law enforcement personnel who they claimed had subjected him to torture and caused him bodily harm. After the court had accepted their petition on 15 May 2023, the Ministry of Internal Affairs had conducted an investigation and concluded that there had been no violations of the law during his arrest and detention. It had determined that, during the time that he had spent in police custody, from 5 July 2022 to 19 November 2022, no signs of torture, violence or bodily harm had been identified. Detention facilities had received no health-related complaints. Dauletmurat Tazhimuratov had not been subjected to physical or psychological coercion by law enforcement personnel.

17. **A representative of Uzbekistan** said that the Government had been working together constructively with the special procedures of the Human Rights Council in relation to Dauletmurat Tazhimuratov's case. Between 2023 and 2025, the Government had on several occasions provided information in response to joint communications by the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention, the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders and the Special Rapporteur on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association. Uzbekistan had taken note of the opinion adopted by the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention in respect of Dauletmurat Tazhimuratov in November 2024 and was providing the Working Group with information on the actions taken in response, including efforts to uphold his rights.

18. **A representative of Uzbekistan** said that there was no practice of nurses visiting women to prevent pregnancies and that the Ministry of Health had issued no instructions of that nature. The Government was committed to promoting women's reproductive health, including through the Reproductive Health Act.

19. **Ms. Stavrinaki** said that she wished to receive more specific data on how projects undertaken by the State Party had benefited particular ethnic groups. She would welcome more information on the findings of the parliamentary commission on the events of July 2022 with respect to accountability, especially in the light of reports regarding the excessive use of force by law enforcement personnel. It would be useful to receive information on training provided to healthcare workers aimed at ensuring non-discrimination and the right to health, particularly in accordance with the Committee's general recommendation No. 37 (2024).

20. **Ms. Tebie** (Country Task Force) said that, given that investigations into the events of July 2022 had been initiated almost four years previously, she wished to know whether any of the investigations were still in progress, who had been found responsible for the crimes committed, what penalties they had faced and what other measures had been taken in response to the investigations' findings.

21. **Mr. Vicente Vázquez** said that he wished to know whether the State Party had conducted any investigations into the forced sterilization of Roma women in follow-up to the concerns raised by the Committee in its previous concluding observations (CERD/C/UZB/CO/10-12) and, if so, what the conclusions of those investigations had been and what remedies had been provided to the affected women and members of their families. In the light of reports that, as a result of the Aral Sea environmental crisis, infant and maternal mortality rates in the Republic of Karakalpakstan were above the national average, he wished to know what measures the State Party had taken to address the disproportionate impact of the crisis on people in the Republic, including by ensuring full compliance with the Convention. Given that the Constitution of Uzbekistan and that of the Republic of Karakalpakstan established the Republic's sovereign status, he wondered what consultations had been conducted with the people of the Republic prior to the constitutional amendment

process that had been aimed at reducing its autonomy and had led to the July 2022 protests, whether the State Party had obtained the free, prior and informed consent of the Karakalpak people in relation to the Aral Sea project and what forms of reparation had been envisaged for those affected by the project. He also wondered what formal mechanisms were in place to ensure prior and effective consultation with the Karakalpak people regarding any future legislative amendments that could affect their autonomy.

22. **Ms. Ali Al-Misnad** said that she would appreciate an explanation of the reasons for the constitutional amendments that had been aimed at reducing the level of autonomy enjoyed by the Republic of Karakalpakstan.

23. **Ms. Pousa Caride** said that she wished to know whether reported arbitrary changes to surnames and traditional first names of the Karakalpak people were part of efforts to integrate them into a single Uzbek nation. She would appreciate more information on the decree establishing a special mining district in the Republic of Karakalpakstan, including the potential environmental damage and the percentage of the profits that would directly benefit local people. She would welcome more information on the ongoing problems that mandatory production quotas for wheat and cotton posed for the population.

24. **Mr. Sibande** said that, in the light of reports that the Karakalpak people lacked representation in the parliament of the Republic of Karakalpakstan and that efforts to establish political parties representing them had resulted in persecution, including the reported flight abroad of a party leader, he wondered what measures the Government was taking to ensure freedom of expression and association in the Republic, including the right to advocate for political parties and discuss issues affecting the Karakalpak people.

25. **Mr. Diaby** said that he wished to know whether the State Party had taken steps to train healthcare personnel to provide consultations to members of ethnic minorities in their own languages and to provide interpretation services in the justice system to ensure access to justice. He would appreciate more information on the wheat and cotton production quotas imposed on Karakalpak and other farmers and the penalties that they faced if they failed to meet them.

26. **A representative of Uzbekistan** said that Uzbek law prohibited wage discrimination on grounds of race, ethnicity or religious belief, without any exceptions. There were no restrictions limiting access to justice for members of ethnic minorities, all of whom were fully entitled to receive legal documents and responses to their questions in their own language and to free interpretation services in judicial proceedings. On 13 January 2023, 22 individuals had been convicted in connection with the events of July 2022, 17 of whom had been sentenced to terms of imprisonment, all of whom had exercised their right of appeal. On 5 June 2023, the appellate court had revised the sentences of 15 of those individuals, 7 of whom had had their sentences reduced to below the lower limit established in article 57 of the Criminal Code and 8 of whom had had their sentences commuted to semi-custodial penalties and had been released from custody in the courtroom. On 17 March 2023, 39 individuals had been convicted, 30 of whom had been sentenced to terms of imprisonment; 38 had exercised their right to appeal. On 12 June 2023, the appellate court had reduced the sentences of 16 individuals to below the lower limit prescribed and commuted the sentences of 5 individuals to semi-custodial penalties, whereupon they had been released from custody in the courtroom. A total of 13 persons had exercised their right of cassation appeal, all of whom had had their sentences upheld on 1 November 2023. Both initial judgements had been assessed by higher instances and had since entered into force. Extrajudicial interference aimed at altering them was prohibited by law. The judicial proceedings in question had received wide coverage in local and foreign media and on the Internet.

27. **A representative of Uzbekistan** said that all investigations initiated in connection with the events of July 2022 had been concluded and all criminal cases brought against persons who had organized and participated in the unrest and law enforcement officers had ended in judgments that had entered into force. The three law enforcement officers who had faced charges had been found guilty.

28. **A representative of Uzbekistan** said that the concept of a single people was not intended to be a means of levelling or ignoring ethnic diversity, but to provide a civic identity

that united all citizens of Uzbekistan on the basis of equal rights, mutual respect and common constitutional values. The Government acknowledged the existence of and respected ethnic minorities and their cultural, linguistic and religious identity and pursued a policy aimed at their preservation and development. Uzbekistan consistently pursued a policy aimed at protecting mothers, children and reproductive health and had achieved significant, internationally recognized successes in those areas. Its policy was based on the transition from abortion as a traditional but dangerous method of birth control to timely and informed family planning. Over the previous decades, the country had seen a drastic reduction in the number of abortions owing to the implementation of national programmes to strengthen reproductive health that had ensured wide access to modern contraceptives and raised public awareness in that area. Uzbekistan strongly rejected speculative claims that there was a practice of sterilization. Medical personnel were legally responsible for following protocols that prohibited the performance of surgical interventions without individual, prior and informed consent. The delegation called on the Committee to rely on official data and verified information.

29. Between 2017 and 2024, 76 family health units, a number of family polyclinics and 90 district medical units had been established in the Republic of Karakalpakstan. More than 150 new technologies had been integrated into the care provided at regional branches of specialist centres and 4,500 patients per year had received cutting-edge assistance without needing to visit Tashkent or travel abroad. As part of a programme for the construction of new social and production infrastructure in the Republic, the Government would soon begin building a specialist centre for oncology and radiology with 175 beds. Courses on human rights, including modules on women's and children's rights and non-discrimination, had been introduced at 120 higher education institutions and 330 vocational education establishments. At 11 medical academies, a special 60-hour modular course on human rights and non-discrimination had been introduced.

30. The Government firmly rejected baseless accusations of discrimination on ethnic, linguistic or political grounds related to the autonomy of the Republic of Karakalpakstan and the Karakalpak people. The sovereign status of the Republic was enshrined in article 85 of the revised Constitution and was safeguarded by the Government. Article 89 of the Constitution, which established the right to hold referendums in relation to changes in status, reflected the Government's commitment to upholding the right of peoples to self-determination in line with international human rights treaties.

31. **A representative of Uzbekistan** said that the joint official status of Karakalpak and Uzbek in the Republic of Karakalpakstan was established in article 1 of the Republic's law on language. The government of the Republic included a department responsible for official language development, and official language consultants worked in all government bodies and regional administrations (*hokimats*) to protect the Karakalpak language.

32. **A representative of Uzbekistan** said that the Jokargy Kenes (parliament) of the Republic of Karakalpakstan was formed taking into account the multi-ethnic composition of the population with a view to ensuring that the interests of all ethnic groups were taken into consideration in decision-making, including with respect to the budget and strategic development. The parliament's 65 seats were currently occupied by 45.4% Karakalpaks, 43% Uzbeks and 10.8% members of other ethnic groups, including Kazakh, Turkmen, Russian and Korean deputies. That structure reflected the balanced and proportional participation of the main ethnic groups in the Republic's government. Public participation in decision-making was also ensured through a developed system of democratic mechanisms. At the district and city levels, an extensive network of representative bodies that operated in accordance with the bottom-up principle also had a multi-ethnic composition, including 48.4% Karakalpaks, 39.2% Uzbeks, 8.5% Kazakhs, 3.3% Turkmen, in addition to members of other ethnic groups. That system ensured extensive public involvement in the planning and execution of government programmes, including social, economic and environmental projects.

33. **A representative of Uzbekistan** said that the Government demonstrated a commitment to ensuring that nobody was left behind. Under the revised Constitution and other laws, efforts were being made to ensure that ethnicity was not a barrier to the enjoyment of human rights. There were currently 5,598,950 young people being taught in Uzbek,

695,824 in Russian, 121,754 in Karakalpak, 64, 857 in Tajik, 46,030 in Kazakh, 11,107 in Turkmen and 7,290 in Kyrgyz. Textbooks in each language continued to be published. A total of 129,377 students in 384 schools were learning Karakalpak with the help of 148, 851 sets of textbooks. The Republic of Karakalpakstan had a total of 735 schools – compared with 705 in 2017 – with 360,707 students. There were currently 1775 preschool establishments in the Republic – compared with 318 in 2017 – with an enrolment rate of 84%.

34. **A representative of Uzbekistan** said that, in accordance with article 4 of the Constitution, the Government ensured respect for the languages, customs and traditions of all ethnic groups in the country and created conditions conducive to their development.

35. **A representative of Uzbekistan** said that the Government viewed the environmental situation in the Republic of Karakalpakstan as an indivisible part of the human rights situation of the Karakalpak people. In 2025, an additional 80,000 ha of trees had been planted on the dried bed of the Aral Sea as part of the “Green Aral Sea” programme, which had significantly reduced the frequency of salt and dust storms that seriously threatened the health and well-being of the local Karakalpak population in particular. The level of access to drinking water was now nearly 98% in a number of districts around the Aral Sea, and was above 70% in the Republic of Karakalpakstan on average. Such improvements were being made under programmes for the improvement of local communities that were also aimed at improving roads and housing and reducing multidimensional poverty. As a result of such efforts, the Republic had been transformed from an environmental disaster zone into an area with growing industrial and export potential which, in 2026, had shifted its focus to advanced technologies and the advanced processing of raw materials.

36. **A representative of Uzbekistan** said that, under healthcare programmes carried out with the support of the Ishonch Fund, 1.8 million women, teenagers and newborns had received comprehensive perinatal care, and awareness of rights related to maternal and reproductive health had been raised among 10 million people. More than 5,800 people had received legal aid, and round-the-clock legal support had been made available through a digital platform, which had reduced financial and geographical barriers to access to such support. More than 450 judges, prosecutors and lawyers had improved their knowledge of standards concerning freedom of speech and the documentation of torture and ill-treatment. The circulation of Braille materials on rights and freedoms had reached 40,000 people, some of whom had received such information for the first time. In 2025, a programme run jointly with the United Nations and support from the Ishonch Fund had resulted in systematic improvements aimed at reducing preventable maternal and neonatal deaths. A total of 230 perinatal care facilities throughout the country had received equipment for neonatal resuscitation and the provision of urgent obstetric care. A total of 99,508 medical personnel, including 62,041 specialists, had undergone training to upgrade their clinical skills, and 34,000 medical personnel had received assistance improving their interpersonal skills. A total of 14 new national standards had been developed and implemented to improve the quality of medical care, and cases of perinatal death were now subject to review at all 230 maternity centres. A national baseline assessment on the fight against corruption had been carried out and the country’s first manual on ensuring the quality of laboratory tests had been approved, which had helped to set national standards for the quality of diagnosis.

37. **Mr. Sibande** said that he wished to hear the delegation’s comments on reports that the leader of an opposition political party had been forced into hiding outside the country and to know what steps were being taken to ensure that political parties could freely undergo registration and take part in efforts to support the Karakalpak people.

38. **Ms. Pousa Caride** said that she wished to know what percentage of the revenues from mining operations in the Republic of Karakalpakstan reached the local population and to hear the delegation’s response to reports of problems faced by local farmers in connection with wheat and cotton quotas.

*The meeting was suspended at 11.25 a.m. and resumed at 11.40 a.m.*

39. **Ms. Tebie** said that the State Party had undertaken several reforms and established mechanisms to promote consultation and dialogue with ethnic minorities. However, a number of land-related decisions in rural areas, whether concerning agricultural, infrastructure or tourism-development projects, had reportedly been implemented without genuine



consultation of the minorities concerned, notably the Karakalpaks, rural Tajiks and Kazakhs of the north-west. At the same time, the participation of their representatives in cultural bodies remained largely symbolic.

40. She asked how local and national authorities justified such unilateral land decisions and reconciled development projects with minority rights; what role the Committee on Inter-Ethnic Relations and Compatriots Abroad and the national cultural centres genuinely played in decisions affecting the minorities they represented; what their composition, appointment, mandate and resources were; and what measures were in place to ensure their independence and transparency.

41. Recent governance reforms, notably the Civil Service Act and the creation of the Presidential Agency for the Development of the Civil Service, had not yet ensured equitable representation of national minorities, with Tajiks, Karakalpaks, Russians and Koreans remaining poorly represented in the parliament, the local councils of people's deputies (*kengash*), the Government and the judiciary, and women from minorities almost entirely absent from public life. She asked what concrete measures were in place to increase the representation of national minorities, including women, in elected bodies, senior civil service posts, the judiciary and the local councils of people's deputies.

42. The State Party's report (paras. 74–93.) referred to several sociological surveys conducted in 2021 to assess the Lyuli/Roma/Mugat community's access to housing, among other socioeconomic rights, whose findings had revealed a number of major concerns. With 42.9 per cent of respondents dissatisfied with their housing conditions and 94.6 per cent wishing to improve them but only 12.5 per cent able to do so, housing quality was a central concern for most households. Many Luli/Roma and Mugat were reportedly exposed to forced evictions and the demolition of their homes, sometimes at their own expense, in the context of urban redevelopment projects. In May 2025, over 1,200 members of the Multoni Roma community had reportedly been forced from their Samarkand neighbourhood without genuine consultation, adequate compensation or effective judicial remedy, drawing condemnation from United Nations special procedure mandate holders. She asked what structural measures the State was taking to improve housing conditions durably; to what extent redevelopment projects took into account the rights and needs of these communities; what alternatives to forced evictions could ensure that the families affected could be rehoused in a dignified and stable manner; and whether existing compensation mechanisms genuinely offset the losses suffered.

43. More than 6 in 10 members of the community had reported having insufficient money for food, clothing or healthcare; while most received State financial assistance, that dependence highlighted their precariousness. She wished to know what policies could reduce the community's reliance on social assistance and strengthen economic autonomy; whether the assistance provided formed part of a long-term national strategy or remained confined to ad hoc interventions; and how the State assessed the actual impact of the relevant road map for the period 2020–2021.

44. More than half of the community (58.9 per cent) had never attended school and 10,856 children remained outside the education system. Although the State did not formally restrict access to education, low school attendance and disparities between girls and boys revealed the population's vulnerability; field observations indicated that in some Mugat villages fewer than 20 per cent of school-age children attended school. She asked how effective and non-discriminatory access to quality education was ensured; what measures prevented the reported practices of segregation; how the authorities were addressing barriers to attendance, the high non-enrolment rate and gender disparities; and how access to higher education and vocational training could be broadened. She also asked what practical measures ensured Luli/Roma children's equitable access to documentation and essential services.

45. Infant mortality in those communities was almost twice the national average, access to care remained difficult for families without identity documents and child vaccination coverage remained below 80 per cent. Roma women faced particular obstacles in reproductive health, including regularly reported cases of forced sterilization and discriminatory practices in health establishments. She asked what measures were in place to

guarantee access to health services for Roma, in particular those without identity documents or in situations of social exclusion; what action was being taken to reduce infant mortality and improve Roma women's reproductive health; what investigations had been conducted into cases of forced sterilization of Roma women and what legal, financial and medical reparation measures had been adopted; and whether prevention campaigns adapted to the needs of Roma communities (vaccination, sexual and reproductive health, nutrition) existed, along with initiatives to combat discrimination in health establishments.

46. **A representative of Uzbekistan** said that the Committee on Inter-Ethnic Relations and Compatriots Abroad played an important role in coordinating State policy in ensuring systematic dialogue with national cultural centres and civil society organizations. Advisory and expert councils comprising representatives of various ethnic groups operated under the Committee and other State bodies, and a mechanism of regular round tables, forums and conferences had been established at which issues relating to the rights and interests of national minorities were discussed and practical recommendations drawn up. Public councils operating under the Committee and at the regional level facilitated direct dialogue with representatives of various ethnic groups at the local level, enabling emerging issues to be addressed, while mechanisms for public oversight and feedback, including public reception centres, hotlines and online complaint platforms, promoted more open and inclusive engagement.

47. A multi-tiered system of consultation and dialogue with ethnic minorities had thus been established, ensuring their participation in public life and the consideration of their interests in decision-making. The Committee on Inter-Ethnic Relations and Compatriots Abroad and the national cultural centres served as important instruments for collecting and conveying the proposals and appeals of ethnic communities to the relevant authorities, while consultative councils, public councils and expert groups that included minority representatives ensured that their views were taken into account during the drafting and discussion of legislation. Such views were also gathered through local meetings, round tables and forums and through the online submission system and were systematically examined and reflected in public policy and decision-making.

48. **A representative of Uzbekistan** said that, in 2025, the Samarkand Civil Court completed 24 civil cases concerning disputes over damage caused to Roma citizens as a result of expropriations for public use. Of those, 17 claims had been upheld and compensation amounting to some \$1.5 million had been awarded; one claim had been dismissed without consideration; and proceedings in six cases had been discontinued following settlement agreements between the parties. With regard to gender equality in the judiciary, while 16% of judges were women, under the New Uzbekistan Development Strategy, that percentage was set to reach 30% by 2030.

49. **A representative of Uzbekistan** said that, in July 2025, the President had approved a new decree reforming the civil service system, with key provisions to ensure equal access for all citizens, regardless of ethnicity. A central feature of that approach was that the State neither set specific quotas nor established separate mechanisms for ethnic groups within State bodies. All citizens had equal rights of access to the civil service, regardless of ethnicity; the legislation contained no provisions restricting access for any ethnic group; and recruitment was based on professional qualities, qualifications and assessment results. Uzbekistan ensured the representation of all citizens, regardless of ethnicity, in State, law enforcement and judicial bodies through universal constitutional guarantees and standardized competitive recruitment procedures, and created equal opportunities for all to apply for civil service posts.

50. With regard to demolitions, approximately 1,300 citizens had been living in the demolition zone, a significant proportion of them members of the Multoni/Lyuli ethnic group. There were currently over 18,000 Multoni in the Samarkand Oblast, settled in mahallas alongside Uzbeks and other ethnic groups; while traditionally nomadic, their nomadic way of life had now virtually disappeared. A survey conducted in May 2021 had covered over 50,000 members of the Multoni community nationwide, of whom 38,000 held Uzbek passports and 14,000 held birth certificates; today, virtually all members of the community were Uzbek citizens. Ethnicity was indicated in documents solely at the individual's own discretion.

51. **A representative of Uzbekistan** said that the State ensured free general secondary education. The education system was structured so that all children in the country had access to schools, regardless of their social status or background. A law had recently been adopted to protect children from all forms of violence, strengthening safeguards and promoting inclusion; it ensured that every child, including Lyuli children, was protected by the State and that any barriers preventing them from attending school must be removed immediately.

52. Systematic efforts were being made to realize the Lyuli people's right to education and ensure their regular participation in schooling. School-age children from the Lyuli community were admitted to the first year of primary school; at the start of each academic year they received a gift from the President comprising 12 items of school supplies and were provided free of charge with textbooks in the relevant languages of instruction. To date, 16,317 Lyuli pupils were enrolled in the compulsory education system.

53. To improve attendance among all schoolchildren, the Ministry of Preschool and School Education, together with the Ministry of the Internal Affairs, had issued a joint order and approved road maps to ensure proper recording of attendance and strengthen monitoring of children who systematically missed classes, defining the respective responsibilities of head teachers, class teachers, inspectors and psychologists.

54. **A representative of Uzbekistan** said that there were currently over two hundred female managers serving within the internal affairs system. The Government was actively working to encourage women to join the internal affairs agencies. There were specific quotas for women applying to the Academy of the Ministry of Internal Affairs. While in 2017 women accounted for 5% of all staff, today that figure stood at 9%. Members of the Karakalpak, Kazakh, Tajik, Russian, Kyrgyz and other ethnic groups made up more than 10% of the internal affairs agencies' workforce.

55. Between 2023 and 2026, no applications for Uzbek citizenship had been submitted by the Lyuli Roma or other ethnic groups living in Uzbekistan, and no presidential decrees concerning the granting of Uzbek citizenship to the Lyuli Roma had been issued during that period. The number of Lyuli Roma registered in Uzbekistan and who had obtained the relevant documents stood at over 30,000.

56. The majority of the Lyuli Roma lived in Kashkadarya Oblast (over 11,000 people), Samarkand Oblast (over 5,000 people), Bukhara Oblast (over 4,000 people). They were present in other regions. For example, in Surkhandarya Oblast, there were more than 3,000 and in Namangan Oblast, more than 2,000.

57. **A representative of Uzbekistan** said that Lyuli/Roma, as citizens of Uzbekistan, enjoyed all guaranteed rights on an equal footing with other citizens. They lived alongside other sections of the population in mahallas, took part in community life, and inter-ethnic marriages had increased. The population was now fully covered by free secondary education, with schooling provided alongside pupils from other ethnic groups, and enjoyed full access to State-funded free healthcare.

58. The Multoni/Lyuli had their own culture, language, customs, traditions and values. To preserve that heritage in rural areas, the Multoni/Lyuli National Cultural Centre had been established in Surkhandarya Oblast in 2023. Strengthening the social integration of the Lyuli people was a key factor in combating stereotypes and systemic discrimination against the group.

59. **A representative of Uzbekistan** said that, with regard to the protection of the Lyuli families' rights in connection with the Samarkand project, approximately 1,300 citizens had been living in the houses due for demolition, and all eviction and demolition procedures had been carried out strictly in accordance with established legal procedures. A State-commissioned historical and cultural assessment conducted in 2025 had found that none of the 217 residential buildings in the project area were listed in the national register of immovable cultural heritage sites, most having been built before the 1980s. A comprehensive technical, environmental and health and sanitation assessment had established that 133 of the 217 properties did not meet health and hygiene requirements at all; 27 courtyards were located in an area of extreme environmental erosion; 43 buildings had been erected without planning permission; and 67 buildings (36 per cent) lacked cadastral registration. The

buildings stood on the site of the Chokardiz Cemetery, with gravestones used as foundations, which predetermined their low structural stability, and the absence of any sewerage system had polluted the nearest body of water; the working group had concluded that the combination of these factors created a very high likelihood of serious impacts on residents' health and safety.

60. The project aimed to transform Samarkand into an international centre for pilgrimage tourism to mark the anniversary of the birth of Imam al-Maturidi, founder of the Maturidi school followed by over 70 per cent of the world's Muslims. In line with international standards, a heritage impact assessment had been prepared by the International Institute for Central Asia together with the Samarkand regional department for the protection of cultural heritage and the Samarkand archaeological institute, with the participation of experts from International Council on Monuments and Sites, and two monitoring visits had been carried out by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) International Advisory Committee in November 2024 and May 2025, including a study and a survey of the local population. As a result, 173 court cases concerning the expropriation of land plots had been concluded: in 131, the court had ruled in favour of the claimant, ordering payment of compensation prior to eviction; 41 had been settled by mutual agreement; and one claim had been dismissed without consideration at the claimant's request. All enforcement orders had been fully executed, and compensation totalling over 204 billion sum had been paid.

61. **A representative of Uzbekistan** said that the Lyuli communities had no particular reason to move to the cities. Uzbekistan was undergoing dynamic development, with sustained growth in gross domestic product and gross national income per capita expected, and urbanization was actively under way; as part of those processes, all citizens regardless of ethnicity, including members of the Lyuli communities, were being given opportunities to live in urban areas on an equal footing with others. Social support measures were applied equally to all ethnic groups, and the various programmes for women, young people and persons with disabilities were open to all on an equal basis.

62. **Ms. Tebie** said that she wished to know whether all persons who had been forced to move from their homes had been compensated and whether, beyond compensation, the State envisaged a social housing policy, or whether the minorities, once compensated, were left to find housing for themselves.

63. She wished to know how many women in the judiciary and law enforcement were from ethnic minority communities. No reply had been given on the measures taken with regard to the health of Roma women. There was a compulsory system of residence registration inherited from the Soviet era, known as *propiska*, which conditioned access to many public services, including healthcare, and asked how the State ensured that the absence of a *propiska* did not become a discriminatory obstacle to access to healthcare, particularly for Roma.

64. **Ms. Stavrinaki** said that she wished to understand whether open access to all public positions on the basis of qualifications applied to every conceivable special measure. Noting that studies suggested it would take between 138 and 300 years to achieve gender equality if reliance were placed on laws functioning perfectly on their own, she questioned whether equality could be reached without quotas or special measures.

65. **Ms. Tlakula** said that the Committee appreciated the information in paragraphs 74 to 93 of the current report, including the statistics and the outcome of the surveys conducted. However, it remained concerned that the measures taken to provide members of the Lyuli/Roma ethnic group with documents had had very little effect: of the 53,666 Lyuli/Roma interviewed, only 22 held residence certificates for stateless persons and only 3 held residence permits for foreign nationals, as indicated in paragraph 75. No statistics had been provided on preschool enrolment, as the Committee had recommended in its previous concluding observations. On the right to education, the statistics in paragraph 81 were a matter of concern, since 58.9 per cent of those surveyed had confirmed that they had no education at all, and only 53 Lyuli/Roma students were studying at two higher and seven specialized secondary vocational education institutions. Those figures were very low. She asked what

measures were being taken to improve them and would welcome updated statistics, given the time that had elapsed since the submission of the report.

66. **Mr. Vicente Vázquez** said that he would like to know how the State Party had responded to the concerns raised by the special procedure mandate holders in October 2025 concerning the forced evictions and housing demolitions in Samarkand and attacks on the Multoni Roma community in Samarkand. While education was provided in the languages of various ethnic groups, the Committee had nonetheless received reports of a sustained decline in the availability of education in the Tajik language, particularly in Samarkand and Bukhara Oblasts. He asked whether the delegation could provide up-to-date, disaggregated data on the number of schools offering instruction in Tajik, the trend since 2015 and enrolment figures for those schools, and what corrective measures had been taken to address the decline, should it be confirmed.

67. **Mr. Diaby**, noting the many concerns that had been expressed regarding the right to decent housing, said that the acts of demolition and expropriation had often been carried out without consultation and that the victims had reportedly been intimidated. Furthermore, the available judicial remedy had proved ineffective. As for non-judicial remedies, such as those that the national human rights institution might offer, it had been reported that the institution only partially complied with the Paris Principles, particularly with regard to its independence. He wished to know what measures the Government intended to take to bring the institution into full compliance and to inspire the confidence of victims and the population, so that people would increasingly turn to it to report violations.

68. **A representative of Uzbekistan** said that, following the visit by the Special Rapporteur on the right to adequate housing in 2024, the National Centre for Human Rights and the relevant ministries and agencies had drawn up a draft national action plan to implement his recommendations, which was currently under discussion. During the visit, the Special Rapporteur had held 24 bilateral meetings with State bodies and 5 with local authorities, made 11 visits to mahallas and been given guided tours of three construction sites; the Government was taking steps to implement his recommendations.

69. The right to housing was a constitutional right guaranteed by article 47 of the Constitution. Over the previous 7 years, 10 times as many flats and houses had been built as in all the years since independence; housing provision had risen from 15 to 18 m<sup>2</sup> per person; title had been recognized for over 120 residential properties that had lacked title deeds; and a mortgage subsidy programme had received over 700,000 applications, with 113,000 approvals issued. Priority in the allocation of subsidies had been given to young people, women in difficult circumstances and persons with disabilities; 93,000 families from vulnerable groups had been provided with housing or had seen improvements to their living conditions. To ensure housing accessibility for persons with disabilities, a presidential decree of July 2024 had approved specific measures to create barrier-free environments.

70. With regard to compensation, following the demolitions in Samarkand, the process had been based on the principles of objectivity and transparency: owners had been provided with written reports from independent organizations and informed that they could themselves engage an appraisal company to carry out an assessment. Compensation had been offered primarily in cash, depending on the size, condition and legal status of the property, ranging from a minimum of \$40,000 to a maximum of \$250,000, with field surveys indicating an average of between \$60,000 and \$150,000. Enforcement of the court rulings had been overseen by the Samarkand oblast procurator's office.

71. Regarding the concerns expressed by Committee members about intimidation of the Lyuli/Roma communities, according to data from the Ministry of Internal Affairs, law enforcement agencies and the national human rights institution, no complaints or reports of intimidation had been received. In accordance with the Special Rapporteur's recommendations concerning the demolition of housing in Samarkand, a special commission comprising representatives of the relevant ministries and agencies had been established; it had examined the Special Rapporteur's arguments, and the Government had provided an appropriate response.

72. **A representative of Uzbekistan** said that young people were currently taught in seven languages. The number of pupils studying Tajik exceeded 64,000. With regard to the questions raised concerning the Lyuli/Roma community, Uzbekistan demonstrated its commitment to the principle of leave no one behind. Under the new Constitution, a foundation was being laid whereby ethnic origin was not a barrier to the realization of human rights. As of 2016, 13.17 per cent of the population from ethnic minority groups were fully covered by the compulsory education system. The system of preschool and school education comprised more than 38,000 nurseries, serving over 2 million children aged 3 to 7, with a coverage rate of 77 per cent, compared with 27 per cent in 2017. Systematic work was being carried out to ensure pupils' attendance at lessons, and statistical data on attendance and completion of education.

73. Out of a total of 246 female judges, one was a Deputy President of the Supreme Court and 13 served on the Supreme Court. Two presidents of regional courts were women, and 63 female judges served at the regional level. In addition, 23 court presidents were women. Of the 246 female judges, 32 belonged to ethnic minority groups. Moreover, a Deputy President of the Supreme Judicial Council and a judge of the Constitutional Court were women from ethnic minority groups.

74. A document had been approved setting out the procedure for admission to professional retraining courses at the Academy of Justice, which provided that, when admitting candidates to professional retraining courses as candidates for the position of judge in each specialization, namely criminal, civil, economic and administrative law, provision had been made for the allocation of three additional quotas for women, in addition to the general admission quota. Taking into account the allocation of three quotas for each judicial specialization, the total number amounted to 12 quotas, which were not fixed and were allocated annually.

75. **A representative of Uzbekistan** said that, with regard to the national human rights institutions, the Government of Uzbekistan attached priority to that issue. In particular, article 56 of the Constitution provided that national human rights institutions complemented existing forms and means of protecting human rights and freedoms and contributed to the development of civil society in promoting a culture of human rights.

76. In 2014, a law had been adopted amending the legislation governing the activities of the Human Rights Commissioner (Ombudsman) of the Oliy Majlis, which gave the Ombudsman the right to initiate legislation. The status of regional representatives had been strengthened, and the Ombudsman's powers to protect citizens' rights had been reinforced. Furthermore, the Ombudsman had been granted the right to visit places of detention and to monitor such facilities without prior notice. Thus, the institutional model of the Ombudsman complied with the requirements of the Paris Principles. The Ombudsman had been accredited with category B status. Measures were being taken to bring the relevant legislation into line with those requirements and to achieve category A status.

77. With regard to gender equality and the temporary measures in place, that issue was a priority for the Government, particularly with respect to the advancement of women's rights. In 2004, legislative amendments had introduced a 30 per cent quota for women's participation in nominations for parliamentary seats, and in 2023 further amendments had raised that quota to 40 per cent. As a result, positive outcomes had been achieved: 38 per cent of parliamentarians were women, and the figure stood at 25 per cent in the Senate. As for the local councils of people's deputies, women currently made up 32 per cent of councillors.

78. Women from ethnic minority groups were actively involved in public life. According to election results, the Legislative Chamber comprised five Russian women, three Kazakh women, three Tajik women, two Korean women, one Turkmen woman and one Kyrgyz woman. By raising the gender quota from 30 per cent to 40 per cent and introducing a mixed electoral system, Uzbekistan had made significant progress in terms of women's participation in politics. At the same time, the representation of national minorities, including women, had increased, as confirmed by official statistics following the 2004 elections, showed that 12 per cent of the total candidates elected were members of non-Uzbek groups.

79. **A representative of Uzbekistan** said that the President of Uzbekistan had repeatedly stated that the country's greatest asset was its multi-ethnic population. Members of more than

130 ethnic groups currently lived in Uzbekistan, and 157 national cultural centres were in operation. Their activities were protected by law and supported by funds from the parliament. The heads of those national cultural centres received a regular salary and funding to organize their events.

80. With regard to support for national cultural centres, another significant event in the previous year had been the creation, on the President's initiative, of the Pavilion of National Cultural Centres at the offices of the Committee for Inter-Ethnic Relations. That complex, symbolizing national unity, comprised 22 national houses built in the traditional architectural styles of various ethnic groups. The opening ceremony for that pavilion had been attended by heads and staff of diplomatic missions from around 30 States accredited in the country and representatives of international organizations.

81. **A representative of Uzbekistan** said that government policy in the housing sector was aimed at implementing measures to improve access to quality housing for various categories and sections of the population, including government investment programmes and additional measures to provide housing through the allocation of mortgages based on market principles. Over the past three years, around 93,000 families had been provided with living space and had improved their housing conditions by obtaining loans for renovation. Furthermore, in accordance with a 2022 presidential decree, measures had been adopted to support women in obtaining social housing.

82. A systematic approach to housing allocation was also being ensured through the adoption of a government decision in 2024, under which an automated system was being established to register citizens in need of improved housing conditions, alongside a transparent mechanism for placing them on the waiting list and securing housing. Those mechanisms were being implemented by local councils at the level of district and city levels and by organizations managing departmental housing stock; the designated municipal housing stock was at their disposal, and they acted as landlords when providing housing under the terms of a tenancy agreement.

83. **Ms. Stavrinaki** said that the Committee welcomed the implementation, if only partial, of its recommendations, including improved data collection, efforts to reduce statelessness and the strengthening of institutional frameworks. However, it remained concerned about the continued reluctance to adopt a comprehensive equality framework. The authorities relied excessively on the assurance that laws applied to all without discrimination simply because those laws existed, whereas the Convention required more than that. Authorities were required to recognize, acknowledge, accept, measure and address inequalities proactively through special measures specific to ethnic groups, including in the exercise of civil and political rights.

84. The events of July 2022 underscored the urgent need to reconsider the approach to extremism and cultivate a culture of pluralism, accountability and redress for human rights violations. The State Party was thus encouraged to move beyond a purely formal approach to equality, participation and representation and to adopt targeted, measurable and accountable strategies to ensure the full and effective enjoyment of rights by ethnic groups in practice.

85. **A representative of Uzbekistan** said that the Committee's concluding observations would be given careful consideration. The Government of Uzbekistan planned to adopt a national action plan to implement the Committee's recommendations and reaffirmed its commitment to further constructive engagement with the Committee.

*The meeting rose at 1 p.m.*