



Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment

Distr.: General
18 November 2024

Original: English

Committee against Torture Eighty-first session

Summary record of the 2148th meeting*

Held at the Palais Wilson, Geneva, on Tuesday, 5 November 2024, at 10 a.m.

Chair: Mr. Heller

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* No summary records were issued for the 2144th to 2147th meetings.

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The meeting was called to order at 10 a.m.

Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under article 19 of the Convention *(continued)*

Second periodic report of Thailand (CAT/C/THA/2; CAT/C/THA/QPR/2)

1. *At the invitation of the Chair, the delegation of Thailand joined the meeting.*
2. **A representative of Thailand**, introducing her country's second periodic report (CAT/C/THA/2), said that Thailand had made significant progress in the implementation of the Convention since the review of its initial report. It had withdrawn its interpretative declarations with regard to articles 1, 4 and 5 of the Convention and had become a party to the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance.
3. The enactment of the Act on Prevention and Suppression of Torture and Enforced Disappearance, which had entered into force in February 2023, represented a groundbreaking legislative development. As well as defining and prohibiting acts of torture, cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment and enforced disappearance, the Act established penalties that were in line with international standards and commensurate with the serious nature of such offences. It also introduced measures intended to prevent torture, including the use of audiovisual recordings of arrests and the logging of details of the physical and mental state of detainees, and set out the right of legitimate stakeholders to obtain access to information about detainees with a view to ensuring transparency and accountability. In addition, the Act guaranteed that perpetrators of torture would not be immune from criminal liability and set out penalties for superiors and accomplices involved in the commission of acts of torture.
4. The National Committee on Prevention and Suppression of Torture and Enforced Disappearance, which had been set up to ensure the effective enforcement of the Act, had issued regulations concerning audiovisual recordings of arrests and the detainee information form. In 2022, relevant agencies had met with the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances to discuss pertinent issues.
5. The National Human Rights Plan, which served as a guiding framework for addressing human rights violations, included sections on judicial proceedings and the treatment of accused persons and detainees. Agencies engaged in human rights work were required to submit annual reports on their efforts to implement the Plan.
6. In terms of raising awareness of the Convention and of the Act on Prevention and Suppression of Torture and Enforced Disappearance, in 2024 the Ministry of Justice had organized nationwide training sessions for police officers, military personnel and officials from the Court of Justice and relevant government departments. Authorities and stakeholders had also participated in discussions on the challenges and gaps that existed in the application of the Act. The authorities attached great importance to multi-stakeholder engagement and had met with civil society organizations in preparation for the review of the State party's periodic report to the Committee. Thailand was committed to constructive engagement with international organizations and bodies, including the Committee.
7. **Mr. Liu** (Country Rapporteur) said that he wished to congratulate Thailand on its recent election to the Human Rights Council.
8. The Committee welcomed the State party's withdrawal of its interpretative declarations with regard to articles 1, 4 and 5 of the Convention, its ratification of the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance and its adoption of the Act on Prevention and Suppression of Torture and Enforced Disappearance. There were, however, a number of shortcomings in the Act's definition of torture, including in relation to its coverage of the motivations for torture, the limited scope of responsibility of superiors and the absence of a prohibition on the admissibility of statements obtained through torture or on amnesties. In addition, the Act did not expressly exclude the applicability of the statute of limitations that was set out in article 95 of the Criminal Code. There were also discrepancies between the penalties for torture set out in the Act and those set out in the Criminal Code for the offence of causing death by inflicting injury. He wished to know whether the State party had any plans to address those

shortcomings by amending the Act to bring it fully into line with the Convention and the Committee's general comment No. 2 (2007).

9. He would welcome the delegation's comments on any plans to undertake a comprehensive review of the legal system to strengthen the rule of law and protection of human rights, especially in the area of the prevention and prohibition of torture. The Committee was particularly concerned about legislation, including certain sections of the Constitution and orders issued by the National Council for Peace and Order, which predated the adoption of the Act on Prevention and Suppression of Torture and Enforced Disappearance and which contained provisions that conflicted with the Act and might give rise to immunity from prosecution for acts of torture. It was also concerned that the provisions of the Act on arrest and detention procedures were not applied consistently in all parts of the State party, particularly in areas along the country's southern border where the security provisions known as the "special laws" were in force, which created conditions conducive to arbitrary detention, torture and enforced disappearance. Furthermore, section 226/1 of the Code of Criminal Procedure allowed for exceptions to the exclusion of evidence obtained through improper means, and certain provisions of the Penitentiary Act significantly weakened legal safeguards for persons deprived of liberty. The Narcotics Code authorized, in certain cases, the detention of suspects for up to five days prior to appearing before a judge, while the Immigration Act did not set out a maximum length for the administrative detention of foreign nationals, and the Alien Employment Act lacked safeguards for the legal rights of persons placed in immigration detention. It was unclear whether the State party's anti-torture legislation prevailed over the special laws or vice versa. He also wished to encourage the State party to repeal sections 265 and 276 of the Constitution and all orders of the National Council for Peace and Order issued between 2014 and 2019.

10. He welcomed the fact that the National Human Rights Commission of Thailand had been upgraded to category A status by the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions. However, he wished to know whether the State party planned to strengthen the Commission's legal position and effectiveness through the allocation of the necessary human and technical resources. He would also be interested to hear about the follow-up being given to the recommendations issued by the Global Alliance's Subcommittee on Accreditation, with a particular focus on the mechanisms in place to ensure that the relevant agencies were made aware of and heeded the Commission's recommendations and on steps to expand the Commission's working relationship with civil society. He would like to know whether non-governmental organizations (NGOs) were permitted to participate in the visits to detention centres and border areas conducted by the Commission or other anti-torture mechanisms. In connection with the bill on non-profit associations, which he understood was currently the subject of public consultations, he would be grateful for details of what steps the Government planned to take to safeguard the legal status of NGOs and civil society organizations and ensure that they were free to conduct their work.

11. With reference to the principle of non-refoulement, he would like to know whether the State party would consider developing a comprehensive framework to provide asylum-seekers with legal residence permits, thus giving them access to basic services. It would be useful to learn whether the establishment of the screening committee responsible for determining protected person status had involved the development of new rules consistent with international law and whether the State party would consider establishing a non-discriminatory standard of protection for asylum-seekers that was without nationality restrictions and in line with international standards. He would like to know whether the screening committee was the institution responsible for assessing the risk of torture to which individuals would be exposed if they were returned to their country of origin and what measures were in place to ensure that section 13 of the Act on the Prevention and Suppression of Torture and Enforced Disappearance and article 3 of the Convention against Torture were upheld. He would appreciate information on the steps taken to ensure that extradition requests were not used to circumvent the principle of non-refoulement and on the arrangements in place to ensure that refugees' identities and asylum applications were examined on a case-by-case basis. The State party was urged to ratify the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and the Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees.

12. He would like to know whether the State party envisaged amending the Military Discipline Act to remove the provisions that put conscripts at risk of abuse, establishing an independent oversight body to monitor military training practices and investigating allegations of ill-treatment. He would welcome information on the avenues available to victims of torture and ill-treatment in the military and their families for seeking justice and accountability, including in the civilian courts. With reference to jurisdictional conflicts regarding the deaths of military conscripts during training, he would like to know how the State party ensured that offences under the Anti-Torture Act involving military personnel fell within the jurisdiction of the Criminal Court for Corruption and Misconduct Cases, thereby reducing inequality between the parties.

13. While the Committee welcomed the recent adoption of a law setting the minimum age for marriage at 18 years and legalizing same-sex marriage, concerns nonetheless remained regarding the reportedly ineffective implementation of the 2007 law on the protection of victims of domestic violence. The Committee would appreciate information on the measures envisaged by the State party to prevent and address all forms of violence against women, including by encouraging people to report such violence, establishing effective complaint mechanisms and ensuring that cases of violence against women were thoroughly investigated. The Committee would like to know whether the State party would take steps to ensure that everyone, regardless of their legal status, could report cases without fear of arrest by the immigration authorities; how the State party would ensure that victims had access to effective remedies and means of protection; and what awareness-raising activities had been carried out regarding the unacceptability of violence against women.

14. He would appreciate an update on the bill that would amend the definition of sexual harassment to include non-physical forms of harassment and increase the penalties for such offences, as well as the delegation's comments on the implications of such amendments. It would be useful to learn about any other steps being taken to improve the State party's legislation or the implementation thereof to address gender-based violence, particularly domestic violence, and to protect victims.

15. He would like to know what steps had been taken to ensure that children, especially girls, were familiar with formal mechanisms for reporting cases of abuse, including to the police, to social workers and via helplines. Since online child sexual exploitation and harassment disproportionately affected girls, it would be interesting to learn whether the State party was considering strengthening digital protection measures. In addition, he would like to know whether the State party planned to adopt legislation to prohibit the corporal punishment of children in all settings, what measures had been taken to eliminate child and forced marriages and other harmful marriage practices, and how the State party planned to improve birth registration processes.

16. It would be useful to learn whether the State party was considering amending the Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act to bring it into line with the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, as well as with the Recommended Principles and Guidelines on Human Rights and Human Trafficking. He would also like to know what steps had been taken to ensure that law enforcement officials were properly trained to accurately identify and support victims of trafficking, regardless of their nationality, and what measures had been taken in cooperation with international organizations to ensure safe, regular and orderly migration and to prevent human trafficking and labour exploitation. Lastly, it would be useful to learn whether, in order to improve cross-border child protection, the State party planned to develop standardized procedures and assessment tools for dealing with cases of trafficking and child protection cases, including the development of a formal cross-border mechanism with neighbouring countries for family tracing and follow-up to ensure that the best interests of children were given priority.

17. **Mr. Buchwald** (Country Rapporteur) said that he would like to know what steps the State party was taking to train the personnel involved in implementing the Act on the Prevention and Suppression of Torture and Enforced Disappearance and to accelerate the pace of implementation so as to bring perpetrators to justice and provide redress for victims more promptly. He would welcome the delegation's comments on concerns about the perceived absence of a role for the voice of victims on the National Committee on Prevention

and Suppression of Torture and Enforced Disappearance and about a reported preponderance of security-oriented officials on the National Committee, which might crowd out more human rights-oriented voices and victims' perspectives. It would be useful to learn of any prospects for modifying the rules governing participation in the National Committee. He would be particularly interested in learning what activities that body had undertaken thus far; how often it had met and how often it would meet in the next 12 months; what awareness-raising campaigns it had carried out; whether it had made any recommendations thus far and, if so, how they had been received; and how the work of the four subcommittees was coordinated.

18. It would be useful to have a full account of the National Committee's efforts to work with the Government and NGOs to prevent and suppress torture and to promote research and the compilation of statistics on cases of torture and ill-treatment. The fact that many of the existing allegations of torture had been made against military personnel and police officers raised questions about the propriety of the involvement of individuals in charge of those bodies in conducting investigations into such claims. He wondered, therefore, whether the National Committee's role in carrying out investigations might be reconsidered, or at least reshaped so as to avoid any perceived conflict with the principle that there should be no hierarchical or institutional links between investigators and alleged perpetrators. It would be useful to learn how the National Committee's work in carrying out investigations was coordinated with the similar activities of other bodies, such as the Attorney General's Office, the police force and the National Human Rights Commission. Information about any investigations that had begun and their progress thus far would be welcome.

19. Since language that would have allowed the National Committee to conduct or supervise inspections of places of detention appeared to have been deleted from section 20 of the bill for the prevention and suppression of torture before it had been adopted, he would appreciate clarification as to why and how the decision to delete that language had been taken. He would also appreciate detailed information on the specific activities of the National Committee members; the number of staff members who worked for it and the training they received; the standard of proof applied by the National Committee in establishing a prima facie case of torture and the decision-making process applied in such cases, including with regard to the subsequent steps to be taken; and the participation of alleged victims and their families. He wondered, too, whether the National Committee had the authority to compel witnesses and evidence. It would be useful to learn whether the National Committee was expected to explain to the victim or to the victim's family its rationale for any negative decision and, if so, how such an explanation was conveyed. Finally, he wished to know whether the Government was confident that the National Committee had sufficient resources to fulfil its mandate and, if not, whether it planned to increase that body's budget.

20. Regarding the Tak Bai incident of 2004, he would appreciate an explanation as to why the issuance of an indictment or arrest warrant before the statute of limitations had expired had not been sufficient to prevent it from expiring. He also failed to understand why all the accused persons would have had to have been brought before the court before the 20-year period had expired in order to toll the statute of limitations for any one of them. He would welcome the delegation's comments on how the incident might affect the attitudes of the Thai public concerning the elimination of the statute of limitations for the types of crimes involved in that incident.

21. Recalling the concerns about restraints and solitary confinement raised by the Committee in its previous concluding observations, he wished to know whether the use of restraints as punishment for a disciplinary infraction, the use of chains or irons as a means of restraint and the use of restraints on women during and immediately after childbirth had been prohibited. He also wished to learn about disciplinary procedures in prisons and, more specifically, whether hearings were held, whether prisoners could present their version of events and whether disciplinary decisions were appealable.

22. The 30-day limit on solitary confinement, while shorter than before, remained twice the maximum period allowable under the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (the Nelson Mandela Rules). Therefore, it would be helpful to know whether the new regulation limiting solitary confinement to 15 days had been adopted and, if so, whether it was uniformly followed in practice, whether solitary confinement was applied only in exceptional cases and as a last resort, whether its use was subject to

independent review and whether its use on prisoners with disabilities, women and children was prohibited. Had any action been taken to improve the hygiene conditions in solitary confinement cells?

23. The prison system as a whole was operating well above capacity, and the situation in facilities for men was apparently particularly dire, with Buriram Provincial Prison reportedly at an astonishing 385 per cent of its capacity. The overcrowding appeared to result from the large number of pretrial detainees and persons incarcerated for drug-related offences. Accordingly, the Committee was interested in hearing more about the steps taken since the submission of the report to reduce the prison population, to ensure that pretrial detainees were held separately from convicted offenders and to reduce the use of pretrial detention. It was also interested in the State party's perspective on the recommendations of the National Human Rights Commission to reduce the application of criminal penalties for offences such as defamation and drug-related offences, to abolish the presumption that drug possession was always for the purpose of distribution and to develop a more comprehensive list of offences punishable only by fines.

24. He would be grateful for information on the measures taken or planned to ensure that inmates could confidently lodge complaints with an independent mechanism, to enhance trust in those mechanisms, to protect complainants against reprisals and to ensure that allegations of retaliation were investigated promptly and impartially by investigators outside the prison chain of command. He would also be grateful for any additional information on the handling of complaints of possible sexual or gender-based violence or abuse against minors.

25. He would welcome the delegation's comments on reports that the authorities routinely failed to conduct credible investigations into deaths in custody, except in a few high-profile cases, and that, where such deaths were investigated, criminal prosecution was rarely initiated or full reparation provided to the families. He would also welcome up-to-date data on deaths in custody, including deaths unrelated to illness, disaggregated by place of detention, as well as data on illness-related deaths that were attributable to a lack of quality medical care or delays in responding to emergencies. Furthermore, it would be useful to know what steps had been or were being taken to ensure that all deaths in custody were subject to investigation in accordance with the Minnesota Protocol on the Investigation of Potentially Unlawful Death, that autopsies were systematically performed, that the results of investigations were communicated to the families and representatives of victims and, where appropriate, to the public and that compensation was awarded to the victims' relatives. Had any changes had been made to protocols and procedures for investigating cases of deaths in custody?

26. Information would be welcome regarding allegations of forced labour in prisons, including the case, described in a Reuters article of June 2022, of prisoners being forced to make fishing nets for a private company under threat of violence or delayed release. Similarly, the delegation might comment on reports of abusive treatment and inhumane conditions in migration detention centres, including the prominent case of the incommunicado detention of 43 ethnic Uighurs in life-threatening conditions for over 10 years, which had been the subject of a letter signed by several special procedures in February 2024.

27. The Committee would appreciate receiving updated data on the number of times redress and compensation had been requested, awarded and actually provided to victims of torture, the amount of such compensation and the nature of the redress offered; the same information would be appreciated concerning the southern border provinces specifically. In addition, the Committee wished to hear more about the draft regulations on assistance, remedies and rehabilitation for victims of torture. For instance, the Committee would like to know what the status and expected adoption date of those regulations were; whether they had been the subject of consultations, especially with victims' groups; whether they covered non-financial forms of redress and required regular public reporting on the receipt, processing and outcome of claims; and whether the delivery of a guilty verdict had been removed as an eligibility criterion for the award of redress and compensation.

28. With reference to the July 2024 report of the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances and to the three prominent disappearance cases raised in paragraph 7 of the list of issues prior to reporting, he was interested in learning about the

State party's strategy for making tangible progress – not only on those three cases but on all outstanding disappearance cases – towards prosecuting the perpetrators and providing compensation and redress to the families. He also wished to learn about assistance for vulnerable family members, in particular the process and criteria for granting and discontinuing assistance, any mechanisms for overseeing those decisions and the avenues available to beneficiaries for challenging adverse decisions.

29. In relation to the alleged disappearance or killing of Thai activists who had fled the country, which was an issue that had been raised by several special procedures and the National Human Rights Commission, he would welcome information on measures taken, in law and in practice, to ensure that the right of families and relatives to know the truth was respected, to provide accurate, up-to-date reports on the outcomes of investigations and to provide families with compensation and other redress.

30. He was curious to know to what extent the State party's obligation to conduct prompt and transparent investigations into incidents of excessive use of force against peaceful protesters was fulfilled in practice. He would also like to learn what mechanisms were in place to ensure that the principles of necessity and proportionality were incorporated into the planning, preparation and conduct of law enforcement operations; that all personnel who might utilize less-lethal weapons received appropriate training, including in avoiding their use against individuals who had been subdued or were otherwise unable to resist; and that officers who engaged in excessive use of force were held to account.

31. The delegation was invited to comment on reports that human rights defenders were being arbitrarily detained, mainly on *lèse-majesté* charges, and being subjected to torture while in police custody. Its comments would also be welcome on the Government's commitment to ensure that allegations of such conduct were promptly, impartially and thoroughly investigated and to hold those responsible accountable. In a similar vein, the Committee was keen to hear about investigations into serious attacks against human rights defenders, including the alleged killing of anti-torture activist Roning Dolah in June 2024, and the State party's strategy for protecting human rights defenders from violence. It also wished to hear more about the State party's position and strategy regarding reports of judicial harassment of human rights defenders through the weaponization of overly broad laws, for instance in the areas of *lèse-majesté*, sedition and criminal defamation, and the use of strategic lawsuits against public participation.

32. The delegation was also invited to comment on reports that most applications for bail were denied, particularly in politically sensitive and *lèse-majesté* cases. Specifically, he wished to know what efforts were being made to systematically review the bail process with the aim of reducing the prevalence of pretrial detention, ensuring consistent application of rules and promoting the principle of the presumption of innocence.

33. Lastly, in reference to the 2024 report by Amnesty International titled "Being ourselves is too dangerous", which described numerous cases of "technology-facilitated gender-based violence" and coordinated smear campaigns to delegitimize the advocacy work of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex activists, he wished to hear the delegation's comments on allegations concerning the involvement of State actors in that connection and on the commitment of the Cabinet to implement the recommendation of the National Human Rights Commission to investigate the facts of each case, provide compensation and redress to anyone targeted by such acts and take concrete steps to eradicate the use of such tactics.

34. **Ms. Racu** said that she would welcome information on measures to improve the material conditions in psychiatric institutions and social care homes; on staffing levels and training for personnel in such facilities; on the frequency of cases of abuse and ill-treatment, including of older persons and juveniles; and on any complaint mechanisms that were in place. Information would also be welcome regarding the arrangements for monitoring those facilities, the findings and recommendations of the monitoring authorities and any action taken in response thereto.

35. The State party had one of the highest percentages of incarcerated women in the world, and the shortage of women's prisons meant that many women were detained in facilities far from their families or in overcrowded wings with substandard conditions. Accordingly, the Committee wished to know how many women were currently in custody;

what treatment was afforded to detained pregnant women and mothers, including in terms of access to healthcare services, hygiene products and rehabilitation; what employment and educational opportunities there were for women and girls in detention; and to what extent the United Nations Rules for the Treatment of Women Prisoners and Non-custodial Measures for Women Offenders (the Bangkok Rules) were applied.

36. **Mr. Contesse** said that, given that Thailand had a dualist legal system whereby international human rights treaties, once concluded, first had to be incorporated into Thai law in order to be applicable in the courts, he would welcome any examples of cases in which the Constitutional Court or other Thai courts had made reference to the Convention. He would be interested to learn the reasons behind the State party's disinclination to become a party to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court. In view of the fact that, under section 112 of the Criminal Code, the offence of defaming, insulting or threatening certain members of the Thai monarchy was punishable with a term of imprisonment of up to 15 years and that persons serving such terms might be at risk of being subjected to degrading treatment or punishment, the delegation might comment on why the State party upheld such a law.

The meeting was suspended at 12.10 p.m. and resumed at 12.25 p.m.

37. **A representative of Thailand** said that the Act on Prevention and Suppression of Torture and Enforced Disappearance served as a means of fulfilling the Government's obligations under the Convention. A series of consultations concerning the Act had been held with relevant stakeholders, including victims, their families and representatives of civil society organizations, who had participated actively in the legislative committee that had drafted it. The definition of torture provided in section 5 of the Act listed four motivations for the commission of the offence that were explicitly stated in the Convention. Section 3 of the Act defined a "public official" as a person who exercised or was vested with the authority of the State or who, inter alia, had been appointed or had received permission from holders of State authority to carry out their legal duties and therefore covered both public officials and persons acting on their behalf.

38. The four subcommittees of the National Committee on Prevention and Suppression of Torture and Enforced Disappearance were responsible for developing legislation and regulations for preventing and suppressing acts of torture and enforced disappearance, developing policy in that area and addressing related inquiries from relevant agencies; providing redress, including financial and non-financial support, to victims of torture and enforced disappearance; reviewing complaints, gathering information, conducting forensic investigations and forwarding cases to the appropriate authorities; and investigating cases of enforced or other disappearances of Thai nationals in foreign countries. Draft regulations were under consideration by the Ministry of Finance that would provide for the provision of financial support to injured persons as well as physical and psychological rehabilitation, legal, social and other assistance aimed at restoring the rights, freedom, property and reputation of such persons and returning them to their place of residence. The proposed regulations included measures to ensure inter-agency coordination to prevent revictimization and to help ensure that officials who committed offences and the State agencies to which they belonged publicly apologized to victims.

39. **A representative of Thailand** said that the admission of lawful evidence obtained through unlawful means was not banned absolutely but was admissible only under very specific circumstances. Section 135 of the Criminal Procedure Code prohibited the use of torture or any other improper means to induce a person to make any statement regarding the charges against him or her, and section 226 of the Code prohibited the admission of evidence that had been obtained through such means unless the admission of such evidence served the interests of justice. In using their discretion to admit such evidence, courts had to use the utmost care and ensure that there was also additional evidence to prove the guilt of the accused person beyond a reasonable doubt. Thai courts had not admitted any evidence that had been obtained through torture. The Office of the Judiciary was setting up a committee to review the Criminal Procedure Code, including its provisions on the admissibility of evidence obtained through unlawful means, in order to develop proposals concerning amendments to be presented to the legislature.

40. Section 12 of the Act on Prevention and Suppression of Torture and Enforced Disappearance provided that no special circumstances – including war, an imminent threat of war, domestic political instability or a state of emergency – could be invoked to justify the commission of any of the offences covered by the Act. Although there was no law prohibiting the granting of amnesties for such offences, section 10 of the Act provided that investigations of cases of enforced disappearance as described in section 7 of the Act were to be pursued until the disappeared person could be found or until the death of that person could be ascertained and light could be shed on the details of the commission of the offence and the perpetrator, while section 30 provided that the statute of limitations in such cases did not begin to run until the fate of the disappeared person had been established. The Office of the Judiciary was open to exploring the possibility of jointly organizing capacity training for its personnel with international organizations and other NGOs.

41. **A representative of Thailand** said that shackles were not used to a greater extent on death-row prisoners than they were on other prisoners. Under ministerial regulations on disciplinary sanctions for inmates, prisoners to whom the sanction of solitary confinement was applied had to be given a break of at least 5 days between each 15-day period of solitary confinement served. Solitary confinement cells typically had an area of between three and four square metres, included a toilet, and were monitored using closed-circuit television cameras. Prisoners were allowed to leave solitary confinement cells at a time designated by the prison, to meet with their lawyer and, unless they were being disciplined, to receive visitors in accordance with the standard regulations of the Department of Corrections.

42. The Department of Corrections had taken steps to address the challenges faced by women prisoners while working closely with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime to promote the implementation of the Bangkok Rules; such steps included revising a training manual and checklist related to the Bangkok Rules. The Central Women's Correctional Institution – which had been recognized by various international organizations for its best practices in the treatment of women prisoners – received visits from correctional authorities of many countries. All 107 Thai prisons housing women prisoners had been ordered to comply with the Bangkok Rules and were required to conduct self-assessments and report on their performance twice a year.

43. The Government had introduced reforms to address the problem of prison overcrowding, improve living conditions for prisoners and bring the relevant laws into line with international human rights standards such as the Nelson Mandela Rules and the Bangkok Rules. Under section 33 of the Corrections Act, a regulation had been introduced whereby prisoners who were near the end of their sentence or serving short sentences and who were not considered to be a threat to society would be able to serve their sentence in an alternative place of detention that had been selected in accordance with specified conditions, such as their home, a workplace, a religious institution or a hospital, where they would be monitored electronically and required to work or undergo training. That measure – which was to be implemented by 2025 – was intended not only to reduce prison overcrowding but also to bring prisoners into closer contact with the outside world and enable them to adapt better to society upon release.

44. According to a ministerial regulation introduced under section 46 of the Corrections Act, prisoners could submit complaints either verbally or in writing to any prison official. Under section 47, inmates could report cases of sexual misconduct by a prison official confidentially. Such reports would be reviewed by the Office of the Attorney General in a manner that was in line with the standards established under rules 56 and 57 of the Nelson Mandela Rules. All of the 68 complaints of prison officers assaulting prisoners that had been filed since 2022 had been investigated and disciplinary measures had been imposed on 14 officers so far.

45. **A representative of Thailand** said that all law enforcement agencies had been instructed to take all necessary steps to effectively enforce the Act on Prevention and Suppression of Torture and Enforced Disappearance. Officials who committed an offence covered by the Act or who allowed such an offence to be committed through neglect were subject to severe penalties, including life imprisonment; commanding officers who neglected to prevent or stop the commission of offences covered by the Act were also subject to penalties.

46. The police force provided ongoing training to police officers at all levels to ensure that they understood the purpose and rationale of the Act. More than US\$ 17 million had been allocated for the procurement of the necessary equipment, including audio and video equipment for the continuous recording of arrest and detention processes pursuant to section 22 of the Act. Ongoing cooperation between the Thai and British police forces to exchange best practices and expertise had resulted in the organization of courses on criminal investigation methods for 657 police officers that had included instruction on combating violence against women and the proper handling of sexual violence cases, including the proper way to interview victims of sexual assault. The police force had asked the Government to allocate almost US\$ 48 million in additional funding between 2025 and 2031 for the procurement of equipment for every police officer in Thailand, the development of courses and seminars to help police officers to carry out their duties in accordance with the law and the organization of international exchanges to better align police practices with international standards. All police officers were required to wear body cameras during the arrest and detention of suspects.

47. The police force had made extensive efforts to raise awareness among members of the public of people's right to file complaints against police officers who failed to comply with the law. Such complaints could be filed with provincial administrations, the office of the public prosecutor, the Department of Special Investigation or the Thai police force, which facilitated the filing of complaints and helped to prevent possible interference in the complaints procedure. Recent cases involving high-ranking police officials attested to the determination of the Thai police to hold all perpetrators accountable for their crimes.

48. Of four cases of torture registered under section 5 of the Act on Prevention and Suppression of Torture and Enforced Disappearance, one was under investigation, two would be prosecuted and one had been dismissed. All seven cases of acts of cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment registered under section 6 of the Act would be prosecuted. An act of torture committed by a police officer in order to obtain a confession had been investigated by the Department of Special Investigation and the office of the public prosecutor and, as a result, both the officer in question and a police colonel had been indicted under the Act.

The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.