



International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination

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Summary record of the 3213th meeting

Held at the Palais Wilson, Geneva, on Thursday, 23 April 2026, at 3 p.m.

Chair: Mr. Kut

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The meeting was called to order at 3 p.m.

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

Combined twenty-second to twenty-sixth periodic reports of Cuba
([CERD/C/CUB/22-26](#); [CERD/C/CUB/Q/22-26](#))

1. *At the invitation of the Chair, the delegation of Cuba joined the meeting.*
2. **A representative of Cuba**, introducing his country's combined twenty-second to twenty-sixth periodic reports ([CERD/C/CUB/22-26](#)), said that the dialogue was taking place against a particularly complex backdrop. In recent months, the Government of the United States had intensified its embargo on Cuba, including through an energy siege. The embargo constituted a gross, flagrant and systematic violation of the human rights of the Cuban people and was the main obstacle to the country's development. The Government of Cuba firmly rejected Executive Order No. 14380, issued by the President of the United States on 29 January 2026, which was aimed at overturning the Cuban constitutional order. Notwithstanding the difficulties it was facing, the Government was committed to upholding its obligations under the Convention.
3. The report under consideration had been informed by the collective input of government agencies and civil society organizations. Since the previous review, in 2018, comprehensive and wide-ranging legislative reforms had been introduced to combat racism, racial discrimination, intolerance and all forms of violence. Of particular note was the promulgation, in 2019, of a new Constitution, which had been approved by the Cuban people in a referendum. Of the 38 recommendations set out in the Committee's previous concluding observations ([CERD/C/CUB/CO/19-21](#)), 35 had been fully or partially implemented.
4. Through dialogue with civil society, a number of challenges had been identified, such as the need for improved data-gathering to identify patterns of discrimination and for greater awareness of complaints mechanisms and of the Programme against Racism and Racial Discrimination "Color Cubano". The Programme had been adopted in 2019, and the National Commission against Racism and Racial Discrimination "Color Cubano" had been established to ensure the achievement of the Programme's objectives. In addition, the Social Observatory "Color Cubano" had been set up in 2023. One of the main pillars supporting the implementation of the Color Cubano Programme was the genetic research that had been done to identify a distinct Cuban ethnicity. Among the population aged 15 years and over, 64% of people self-identified as white, 26% as mulatto and 10% as black.
5. One of the most productive ways to honour the victims of slavery and the slave trade was to demonstrate solidarity with the countries from which people had been forcibly transferred. Despite the growing threats to its sovereignty and its unjustified inclusion on the list arbitrarily and unilaterally compiled by the United States, in which it was described as providing State support for terrorism, Cuba remained committed to cooperating with African countries and to giving effect to the Committee's recommendations. In addition, as part of its ongoing commitment to anti-discrimination efforts, Cuba would host the second international conference on anti-racist thought and action.
6. **Mr. Tlemçani** (Country Rapporteur) said that, while the Committee took due note of the social and economic challenges resulting from the embargo imposed on the State Party, fulfilment of the duty to protect human rights should not be dependent on relations between States.
7. He would like to receive more detailed disaggregated and up-to-date data on the ethnic and demographic composition of the population, alongside information on any significant disparities in outcomes between population groups in key areas including education, employment and income and access to healthcare services, housing and social protection. He wished to better understand how variables on ethnicity and skin colour were incorporated into censuses, household surveys and public registers, including at the local level, to allow for self-identification and how the authorities ensured that respondents were fully informed about self-identification and that their choices in that regard were respected during data collection.

8. The delegation might clarify why, in the State Party's report, the population was declared to be 9 million people, while the results of the census conducted in 2012 had shown that it was 11 million.

9. He would be interested to know what practical effects the adoption of the new Constitution and the updated Criminal Code and other recent legislative changes had had on the day-to-day operation of the judicial system and on citizens' ability to seek protection of their rights. The delegation might specify the hierarchical rank accorded to the Convention and whether its provisions could be directly invoked before the courts. If so, he would welcome concrete examples of any such instances. He would like to know how many applications relating to cases of racial discrimination had been filed since the introduction of the Act on the *amparo* procedure for protection of constitutional rights and what the outcome of those applications had been.

10. He wished to receive additional information about any training that was provided to law enforcement officers, lawyers, judges, prosecutors and public officials on the Convention and on combating racial discrimination. The delegation might describe any safe and accessible mechanisms that were in place to receive complaints of discriminatory behaviour or racial profiling by law enforcement officers and any penalties that had been imposed in such cases. He would like to know how the authorities ensured that the population, including persons living in marginalized areas, was aware of the legal remedies available to them in connection with Convention rights.

11. Details would be welcome of any steps that had been or would be taken towards the drafting of comprehensive anti-discrimination legislation that contained a clear definition of racial discrimination, including in its direct and indirect forms, that was aligned with article 1 of the Convention. It would be useful to know whether multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination were explicitly recognized in national legislation and how they were dealt with by the judiciary, as well as whether there were any legislative gaps that needed to be filled with regard to discrimination in public and private life.

12. The delegation might clarify whether the Color Cubano Programme was simply a policy instrument or whether it set out binding obligations for public bodies. He would appreciate an account of any consultations that had been conducted with civil society, and in particular with organizations of people of African descent, as part of the process of designing anti-discrimination policies.

13. He wished to know more about the mandate of the National Ombudsman's Office, including whether it was competent to receive complaints from individuals, conduct visits to places of detention and issue recommendations, and the extent to which it was an independent institution, as well as about any efforts to establish a national human rights institution that was aligned with the Paris Principles. He would also like to know more about the National Commission against Racism and Racial Discrimination "Color Cubano", including details of its mandate, resources, operations and degree of independence and the extent of its powers to conduct evaluations and issue recommendations, and to better understand how the work of the Ombudsman's Office, the Color Cubano Commission and other relevant institutions was coordinated in order to avoid overlap and guarantee independent oversight of the activities of the authorities. He would welcome details of the ethnic diversity among the staff of the Color Cubano Commission and the extent to which people of African descent were represented in positions of responsibility, as well as an account of how the Commission involved civil society in its work, including evaluation and decision-making processes.

14. The delegation might describe any mechanisms designed to ensure that people of African descent and victims of discrimination could file complaints with effective legal assistance and without fear of reprisals. It might also provide information about any formal consultation mechanisms designed to obtain input from human rights defenders and the communities concerned to inform public policies.

15. He wished to know what special measures had been taken to strengthen institutional capacity to make lasting changes to combat the structural causes of discrimination and how the implementation of policies aimed at reducing inequality was monitored and evaluated in a transparent manner. It would be useful to receive details of the human, financial and technical resources that were allocated to such policies.

16. **A representative of Cuba** said that the national statistical machinery in Cuba consisted of three layers. The first, the National Statistics and Information Office, was responsible for censuses and household surveys and for all statistics reporting at the national and international levels. The second was composed of central administrative bodies tasked with reporting statistics to the National Office; for example, the relevant body of the national health system reported data on births and deaths. The third layer was comprised of local statistics mechanisms that reported municipal and provincial data.

17. The most recent census had been conducted in 2012. Another had been due in 2022, but the authorities had been unable to proceed with it owing to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic. Although tentative plans had been made to postpone it until 2024, the prevailing socioeconomic conditions at that time had not been conducive to conducting a census. The 2012 census had revealed a population size of slightly more than 11 million people. In the absence of more up-to-date figures, the authorities were currently working on the basis of data from household and occupational surveys, which had shown that there were 9.3 million people aged 15 years and above residing in the country. The continued lack of economic resources – an injection of US\$ 13.5 million was required – meant that the census had yet to be conducted. The authorities were assessing the possibility of proceeding with it in 2027 and had begun to train enumerators.

18. The proportion of people who self-identified as having a particular skin colour varied across the three regions of the country. In the central region, where the capital was located, 20% of people self-identified as black, while in the western region, 80% of people self-identified as white. Around 88% of people continued to live in the province in which they had been born. Internal migration tended to be from the eastern areas of the country towards the west and was primarily driven by economic factors.

19. With regard to the ethnic composition of the population, the country's history had been marked by the mixing of peoples from different parts of the world – the original inhabitants of the island, the Spanish colonizers, the slaves who had been brought from Africa and the Chinese workers who had replaced them – that had resulted in the creation of a distinct Cuban ethnicity that had been scientifically proven. In 20 years of research, geneticists had not found a single Cuban individual without both African and European genetic material. That reality made classifying people on the basis of skin tone a complex endeavour. In addition, perception of skin colour was context-dependent; a person identifying as mulatto in a predominantly white area might identify as white in a predominantly black area. For those reasons, people were asked to self-identify in censuses and surveys. The long-standing and widespread blending of races in Cuba meant that discriminatory treatment was almost non-existent; in the public healthcare system, for example, everyone received the same standard of treatment and service provision without discrimination on the basis of skin colour.

20. **A representative of Cuba** said that the Constitution of 2019 was fully aligned with the principles of respect for equality, non-discrimination and equal access to opportunities. In addition, the Criminal Code contained specific provisions on discrimination-related matters such as apartheid and genocide and set out stringent penalties for conduct that caused affront to human dignity. The Family Code contained a definition of discrimination in family settings, and the Act on the *amparo* procedure provided a legal pathway for the defence of human rights. Together, those pieces of legislation and others, including the Code of Criminal Procedure, created a framework for combating all forms of discrimination. There was therefore no need for the adoption of a stand-alone comprehensive anti-discrimination law. Under the Constitution, the provisions of the Convention were directly applicable. No cases of discrimination had been brought before the courts.

21. While some training on the Convention and anti-discrimination legislation had been provided to judges, lawyers and prosecutors, more efforts were needed in that area. There was also room for improvement in the standard of university-level training for justice officials. Racism was not generally an issue in Cuba, and police officers did not engage in racial profiling.

22. **A representative of Cuba** said that, pursuant to the Constitution, the State must create the necessary conditions conducive to upholding the principle of equality. Any violations of that principle were punishable by law.
23. **Mr. Tlemçani** asked how the designation of “mulatto” was employed in official statistics and what action was being taken in preparation for a census to be conducted in 2027.
24. **Mr. Guan** asked how, against the backdrop of the long-running economic embargo, the authorities ensured the deployment of resources to enable civil society organizations to carry out their work.
25. **Ms. Tlakula** (Follow-up Rapporteur) said that she was pleased to see that the State Party’s report included additional information pertaining to the recommendations made in the Committee’s previous concluding observations. She was curious, however, about the use, in paragraph 11 of the information the State Party had submitted in follow-up to those concluding observations ([CERD/C/CUB/FCO/19-21](#)), of the term “non-white”, which held connotations of racial superiority.
26. She would welcome more information on the impact of the measures set out in the Color Cubano Programme, as well as on how that impact was evaluated and on whether people of African descent had been involved in the Programme’s design.
27. **Ms. Chung** (Country Task Force) said that she wished to know whether the Color Cubano Programme had been created at the instigation of government agencies or of civil society groups. It was unclear how civil society representatives who were involved in the Programme’s implementation maintained their independence from the Government.
28. She would like to know whether people were permitted to self-identify with respect to religious affiliation as well as to skin colour and, if so, whether people were free to self-identify as belonging to a traditional religion. She would be pleased to receive statistical information on Cuban diaspora communities, disaggregated by country, age, sex, education level, skin colour and other characteristics.
29. **Mr. Diaby** said that he would like to know whether any legislation had been introduced with the aim of establishing a national human rights institution, in line with the Paris Principles and the Committee’s general recommendation No. 17 (1993). He would welcome an update on any steps that had been taken to adopt a law aimed at protecting human rights defenders from reprisals.
30. **Mr. Vicente Vázquez** said that the delegation might comment on the possibility of engaging in a more wide-ranging reflection on blackness and the experiences of people of African descent in Cuba that would enrich understanding of the historical struggle of the Cuban people.
31. **A representative of Cuba** said that the cumulative financial impact of the economic embargo on Cuba, which was a violation of the Charter of the United Nations, amounted to US\$ 2.1 billion. The biggest impact was felt by the most disadvantaged groups, many of which included mulatto or black people.
32. While the practice of establishing a national human rights institution was widespread, there was no international obligation for States to do so. As the existing domestic legal framework, which had already been described, was deemed to promote and protect human rights to a sufficiently high standard, there were no plans to create such an institution in Cuba. The National Ombudsman’s Office was located within the Ministry of Justice and had a clear mandate to act as a legal resource for persons in situations of vulnerability or who had been subjected to violence or discriminatory treatment, with a particular focus on children and older persons.
33. A number of mechanisms were in place to handle issues relating to human rights, such as the working group responsible for the implementation of the National Programme for the Advancement of Women and the national commission responsible for monitoring the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Civil society participated in all such mechanisms, and there were plans to increase the involvement of civil society representatives in the implementation of the Color Cubano Programme. There had been a marked increase in the activities of civil society associations since 2018, in particular

those that worked to uphold the rights of mulatto and black people. Following consultation with civil society, the Government had decided to accept all the race-related recommendations that had been made to it in the context of the fourth cycle of the universal periodic review. In addition, a meeting had been held between government and civil society representatives to prepare for the dialogue with the Committee and identify the areas where progress had been made and where challenges remained with regard to the implementation of the Convention.

34. The Declaration on Human Rights Defenders clearly stated that human rights defenders must act within the framework of domestic law. Unfortunately, some people who were described as human rights defenders wished to provoke social unrest and subvert the constitutional order and, to those ends, acted in ways that did not conform with Cuban law. Engaging in lawful activities to uphold human rights was permitted; breaking the law was not tolerated.

35. **A representative of Cuba** said that, in 2021, the Color Cubano Programme had been updated to move on from the first phase, which had focused on correction and recognition, and incorporate a comprehensive and affirmative approach, a change that had been driven by civil society. The Color Cubano Commission had 48 members, 20 of whom were representatives of civil society. In total, 58.4% of the Commission members were white and 41.6% were black or mulatto.

36. In Cuba, no public policies advanced racism or racial discrimination, either in their design or in their outcomes. Racism was not inherent in State practices or in social, economic or political decisions. The Color Cubano Programme contained binding commitments in terms of combating racism and racial discrimination.

37. Civil society representatives who were members of the Color Cubano Commission participated in the process of reaching agreements that were to be respected by civil society organizations, State entities and businesses alike.

38. **A representative of Cuba** said that details of the Government's Economic and Social Programme 2026, including its targets and indicators, were available online, as was full information on the Color Cubano Programme.

39. **Ms. Chung** said that, while she welcomed the amendments that had been made to the Criminal Code to better align it with article 4 of the Convention, no prohibition of discrimination on the ground of descent had been introduced and the provision of any assistance to racist activities, including the financing thereof, had not been made a criminal offence. She would like to know what plans the authorities had to ensure that all prohibited grounds for discrimination set out in the Convention were reflected in national legislation. She would welcome information on cases of discrimination, or of promotion of or incitement to discrimination, on the grounds of ethnic origin, skin colour or national origin in which the relevant provisions of the Criminal Code had been applied, with a particular focus on the number of such cases that had been investigated and prosecuted, the penalties that had been imposed and the reparations that had been provided to victims or their families. It would also be interesting to hear about cases in which discrimination on the grounds of ethnic origin, skin colour or national origin had been found to be an aggravating circumstance. It was unclear which legal basis could be used to bring cases of discrimination before the criminal courts.

40. She wished to know more about any legislative, administrative or policy measures that were in place to prevent and combat racist hate speech and xenophobia, including in the traditional media and on the Internet and social media platforms. The delegation might provide statistics on the number of complaints, investigations and prosecutions related to racist hate speech, the penalties imposed and the reparations provided, as well as examples of such cases. She would like to know what action had been taken to facilitate the filing of complaints and the launching of investigations relating to racist hate speech offences and what systems were in place for the recording and collection of data on such offences, disaggregated by ground of discrimination, ethnic or racial origin, sexual orientation, sex and migration status and whether multiple or intersecting forms of discrimination were involved.

41. It would be interesting to know more about any activities that had been organized by the State Party within the framework of the International Decade for People of African Descent, as well as about any consultation and participation mechanisms for people of African descent and their organizations concerning the design, implementation and follow-up of those activities and about the tangible results achieved. She would welcome an account of the progress made with regard to actions and activities, including consultations with people of African descent and their organizations, for the Second International Decade for People of African Descent.

42. She would like to receive more information about the measures taken to strengthen human rights education at all levels, with a particular focus on combating racial discrimination and xenophobia, and to integrate content on areas related to the Convention into initial and in-service training for teachers and other professionals in the public and private sectors. The delegation might specify the extent to which people of African descent were represented in textbooks and curricula across all subject areas and describe the measures taken to increase understanding and awareness, within the educational community and among the general public, of the cultural heritage and history of people of African descent and their contributions to the national identity and culture of the State Party. She wished to know how the authorities ensured the effective and inclusive participation of civil society organizations and people of African descent in the design, implementation and evaluation of human rights curricula and teaching materials, as well as the meaningful inclusion in those materials of the history of the transatlantic slave trade and its consequences.

43. The delegation might provide an account of the measures adopted to prevent and combat the reportedly persistent discriminatory practices, racial prejudice, xenophobia and dissemination of stereotypes in the media and on social media platforms and to raise awareness, among public officials, law enforcement officers and the general public, of the importance of cultural diversity, tolerance and inter-ethnic understanding and the need to avoid stereotypes, discriminatory practices, racial prejudice and xenophobia. She wished to receive details of recent nationwide anti-discrimination campaigns, including their objectives, target audiences and communication channels and the indicators and baselines used to assess research outcomes and behaviour changes.

44. **A representative of Cuba** said that due process guarantees, including access to legal channels, were set out in the Constitution. While discrimination on the ground of descent was not expressly prohibited in law, the authorities considered that it was encompassed by article 42 of the Constitution, which provided for equality for all persons, without discrimination on the specific grounds listed therein or on the basis of any other personal condition or circumstance.

45. Under the Code of Criminal Procedure adopted in 2022, victims had the right to be a party to criminal proceedings, to be represented by legal counsel and to request certain measures, such as restraining orders, and compensation for any harm caused. The Attorney General's Office was responsible for ensuring that due process guarantees were respected in criminal proceedings, both for the complainant and for the defendant. The Office operated a 24-hour hotline through which people could submit complaints. Police officers, prosecutors and judges were also competent to receive complaints.

46. While 1,088 training activities had been held for prosecutors on the Convention and related topics, the authorities recognized the need for training and awareness-raising to be stepped up. Protocols had been drafted for prosecutors, judges and the National Ombudsman's Office on the handling of cases of violence or discrimination and were available on the website of the Attorney General's Office.

47. The Social Communication Act covered three specific areas: the establishment of a communications body made up of individuals as well as national agencies and entities; the prohibition on the publication of content that did not comply with the Constitution, national legislation and international treaties; and the ban on the dissemination of content designed to humiliate or discriminate against any person.

48. **A representative of Cuba** said that, within the framework of the International Decade for People of African Descent, the Centre for Psychological and Sociological Research had jointly organized, in 2017, the first international postgraduate seminar entitled "Beyond the

International Decade for People of African Descent”. Up to and including 2024, activities and awareness campaigns were organized around significant days, such as the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, the International Day of Women and Girls of African Descent and Africa Day. In the cultural sector, an exhibition had been staged of the works of the important Afro-Cuban artist Manuel Mendive, and technological upgrades had been made to exhibits at a museum commemorating the route taken by enslaved people. Work was already under way in preparation for the Second International Decade, including in the area of planned improvements to the Color Cubano Programme.

49. **A representative of Cuba** said that, in 2025, more than 47,800 professionals in the education sector had received training on the principles of the Convention. A number of protocols were in place to prevent violence or discrimination in educational settings and to handle any cases that did arise. Curricula were reviewed on a regular basis, and the education sector was now in the third year of a transformative roll-out of new and updated textbooks and teaching methodologies that had been designed to strengthen equality and combat all forms of discrimination. All of the new materials could be found on the CubaEduca platform. The standard curriculum covered important black historical figures such as Mariana Grajales and Quintín Bandera and topics including Cuban ethnicity.

50. In March 2026, 70 schools and community centres in Havana and Artemisa Province had participated in an event organized by the Cuban National Commission for UNESCO to mark the launch of an educational game about the African diaspora that was designed to promote among young children a culture of inclusion and respect for diversity. Family education centres had placed particular emphasis on equality and non-discrimination in their course offerings.

51. Universities were also taking action to combat discrimination on the basis of skin colour. Following the establishment of an honorary professorship, 3,000 people in Havana had received relevant training. Africa-related content had been added to the syllabuses of courses on ancient, medieval and contemporary history.

52. **Ms. Chung** said that she would like to receive more information on the penalties imposed for hate speech and hate crimes. The delegation might comment on the use of the term “people of African descent” in the State Party.

53. **Ms. Ali Al-Misnad** asked the delegation to respond to reports that some parents had stopped sending their children to school as a form of silent protest at the economic situation in the State Party.

54. **Ms. Shepherd** said that she would be interested to hear about any efforts to decolonialize the history curriculum and to deconstruct language use, for example by employing the term “enslaved Africans” instead of the term “slaves”.

55. **Ms. Esseneme** said that, in the light of the delegation’s explanation of the scientific research that had resulted in the identification of a distinct Cuban ethnicity, it was difficult to understand why black people in the State Party continued to be marginalized. She would also like to know how the Attorney General’s Office had determined that the six complaints of discrimination on the basis of skin colour referred to in paragraph 180 of the State Party’s report were unsubstantiated.

56. **Mr. Guissé** said that he wished to know more about how the economic sanctions imposed on the State Party impacted different human rights in different ways.

57. **A representative of Cuba** said that 27.2% of the working population identified as mulatto and 10.2% as black, broadly mirroring the make-up of the population as a whole. In managerial and director-level posts and scientific and intellectual professions, persons identifying as mulatto were slightly overrepresented, while persons identifying as black were slightly overrepresented in service and sales roles and in the education sector.

58. Among people who held doctoral or master’s degrees, 67% were white, 22% were mulatto and 10% were black. In schools, 55% of students were white, 35% were mulatto and 10% were black. Among persons with protected vulnerability characteristics, 23% were

black, 29% were mulatto and 47% were white. A total of 1,227 communities had been identified as socioeconomically vulnerable, and a social transformation process was under way in 1,212 of them.

59. Disparities between skin colour groups had been observed in the area of housing, notably access to quality housing and to electricity, drinking water and sanitation. The Color Cubano Programme was focused on addressing the root causes of social disparities between skin colour groups in seven main areas, namely education, health and well-being, employment, housing and living conditions, income, socioeconomic disadvantage, and discrimination and racial integration.

60. **A representative of Cuba** said that between March 2024 and February 2025, the economic embargo had caused material losses of US\$ 7,556 million, an increase of 49% compared to the previous 12-month period. That figure did not take into account the worsening situation that had emerged since the imposition of the fuel siege in January 2026. The education sector was particularly affected, especially in terms of technological resources. In the healthcare sector, the scale of the impact between May 2024 and February 2025 had been estimated at US\$ 288 million. The implementation of the housing-related aspects of the Color Cubano Programme was also affected, making it more difficult to close the inequality gaps in that sector.

61. The embargo was the main obstacle to the Government's efforts to give effect to human rights and was slowing progress in the area of racial discrimination.

62. **A representative of Cuba** said that hate speech was dealt with under the provisions of the Criminal Code relating to the offence of infringing the right to equality. In the 2022 iteration of the Code, the penalty for that offence had been increased to 2 to 5 years' imprisonment and/or a fine of up to 1,000 times the daily minimum wage. The use of information and communications technology in the commission of the offence was considered an aggravated circumstance. Article 21 of the Code established the offence of violating the provisions of any international treaties in force. Anyone accused of providing financial or material support for the commission of such an offence was treated as a perpetrator rather than as an accomplice or participant.

63. Although no cases of discrimination had been brought before the criminal courts, the Attorney General's Office had received 82,382 complaints between 2019 and 2025 and had provided assistance to 667,438 people. Owing to the fuel siege, the Office's staff were now forced to deal with cases manually rather than through the computer system. The six complaints of employment-related discrimination on the basis of skin colour had been investigated thoroughly and found to be without merit.

64. **A representative of Cuba** said that the State and civil society were engaged in an ongoing debate about potential changes to the self-identification categories available in the census. It was uncommon in Cuba to describe people as being Afrodescendants or of African descent. If those terms were used, it was usually in the context of sociological, anthropological or cultural topics. The Cuban population was a melting pot of skin tones, and people generally referred to themselves as white, black or mulatto. The authorities were fully cognizant of the existence of racial discrimination and of the disadvantages faced by certain racial groups and were committed to using education and legal and other channels to put an end to them.

65. **A representative of Cuba** said that topics related to African heritage and colonialism were embedded not only in the history curriculum but also in the teaching of citizenship, Spanish language, literature and biology classes. Schoolchildren engaged in a range of activities, including visits to historic sites linked to the trade in enslaved Africans.

66. **A representative of Cuba** said that blackouts had become more common as a result of the fuel siege. They had an impact on many areas, including the water supply and the healthcare system, where, for example, patients requiring oxygen or daily dialysis could no longer access the treatment they needed. While there had been some issues in schools, reports of silent protests by parents who kept their children at home were unfounded. Persons in situations of vulnerability were the most affected.

67. One of the objectives set out in the Economic and Social Programme was aimed at ensuring protection for vulnerable households and communities and was accompanied by specific, measurable targets and indicators. The tools deployed to that end included, for example, scientific innovations, vaccines and solar panels.

68. **Ms. Shepherd** said that she supported the discontinuation of the use of the term “mulatto”, which was associated with pigmentocracy. She was curious to know how the State Party’s population viewed the return of Cuban doctors and nurses who were no longer permitted to work in certain countries as a result of pressure exerted by the United States.

69. **A representative of Cuba** said that, since 1963, Cuba had operated medical assistance programmes in the Caribbean, Latin America and Africa. Those programmes had unfortunately begun to be politicized by the United States, which had exerted intense pressure on sovereign governments to suspend them. In targeting such South-South cooperation, the Government of the United States was negatively affecting not only the Cuban doctors involved with the programmes, but also the rural and marginalized communities that benefited from those programmes. The Cuban Government was fully committed to continuing the programmes, to the extent possible.

The meeting rose at 6 p.m.