



International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination

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Summary record of the 2880th meeting

Held at the Palais Wilson, Geneva, on Friday, 22 April 2022, at 10 a.m.

Chair: Ms. Shepherd

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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 eighth to tenth periodic reports of Kazakhstan (continued)
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1. *At the invitation of the Chair, the delegation of Kazakhstan joined the meeting.*
2. **Ms. Al-Misnad** (Country Rapporteur) said that the Committee welcomed the State party's efforts to create harmony between the various ethnic groups but was concerned about the reported denial of inter-ethnic tensions and the absence of a deeper analysis and open discussion of the underlying issues. She wondered what action, if any, the authorities had taken to address the situation. Additional details were needed of the mechanism used to monitor the inter-ethnic and interfaith situation referred to in paragraph 213 of the State party report. It would also be useful to find out about measures taken to counteract negative trends in inter-ethnic relations and any official research conducted into ethnic tensions and conflicts. Was it true that inter-ethnic tensions often originated in socioeconomic difficulties, ethnic isolation of diasporas, social polarization and corruption of law enforcement? If so, what was being done to address those causes and to counter hate speech in different media?
3. She wished to learn more about measures taken to counter the reported polarization within Kazakh society caused by the Russian military aggression against Ukraine. She wondered whether local government and law enforcement officials were trained to deal with ethnic tension and conflict. Additional clarification was needed on the State party's inter-ethnicity policy, including in the framework of the Kazakhstan 2050 strategy. The delegation might wish to explain the rationale behind the recent changes to the State party's administrative and territorial structure and their impact on ethnic groups living in the areas concerned. The Committee would also further welcome data on persons of African descent, including socioeconomic data, and information on discrimination against that population.
4. Given the reported lack of legal or political power of the Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan, she wished to know what was being done to strengthen the Assembly's capacity to tackle ethnic tensions and conflict. She asked why the quota for Assembly members in the Majilis (the lower house of the Parliament) had been transferred to the Senate (the upper house), reducing it from nine to five members, and whether the delegation considered that number to be an adequate representation of the State party's many ethnic minorities. She wondered whether there were ethnic minority quotas for the selection of candidates for the Majilis and what measures had been taken to increase minority representation in top government positions. It might be worth making a more in-depth analysis of the reasons underlying the low representation of persons from ethnic minorities in the civil service, as the alleged lack of interest and preference for private sector employment might be only part of the truth.
5. In light of the State party's success in achieving near-universal enrolment in primary and secondary education, she would appreciate receiving disaggregated statistical data on enrolment rates for minority students, especially in post-secondary institutions. It would also be helpful to find out which vulnerable groups were covered by quotas during the distribution of education grants and whether there were any quotas for children from ethnic minorities. Additional information was needed on the measures taken to improve access to higher education for students from all ethnic groups, including statistical data to illustrate the success of those measures.
6. She wished to know what measures had been taken to ensure that the promotion of Kazakh, Russian and English did not come at the expense of minority language teaching. The delegation should explain the decline in availability of teaching in Uighur, Dungan, Uzbek, Tajik and other minority languages and describe measures taken to reverse that trend. Clarification was also needed with regard to the reported decrease in the number of Russian-language schools and the dearth of preschool education for children from linguistic minorities. It was unclear whether and how children of undocumented parents could enrol in education.

7. She was curious to learn more about the way in which issues of discrimination and racial diversity were reflected in school curricula, and about the strategies employed to promote the principles of tolerance and respect for diversity.

8. The Committee would welcome updated statistical information on the number of persons with undetermined nationality, stateless persons and persons at risk of statelessness. She wished to know what had been done to facilitate the naturalization of stateless persons who were unable to provide proof that they did not hold citizenship of another State, as required under the Citizenship Act. Given that the Act prohibited dual citizenship, the delegation should indicate which safeguards were in place to ensure that the revocation of citizenship on grounds of terrorism or other grave damage to the vital interests of the State did not result in statelessness. It was also unclear by which means the State party ensured that the requirement for citizenship applicants to renounce any pre-existing citizenship – before acquiring Kazakh nationality and in the absence of any assurances that their request would be granted – did not lead to statelessness. Statistical data on revocations of citizenship, disaggregated by ethnicity, and information on avenues of appeal would be appreciated. The delegation should specify which medical services other than emergency and acute care were available to stateless persons and indicate whether stateless children had equal access to education.

9. The Committee would welcome details of the 10 actions to eliminate statelessness referred to in the addendum to the State party report. Did the State party plan to review and amend nationality legislation to remove provisions that could potentially produce statelessness?

10. **Ms. Chung** (Country Task Force) said that it would be useful to know whether the State party was aware of the inter-ethnic tensions created by its policy for the repatriation of ethnic Kazakhs to certain regions to make them more culturally and linguistically Kazakh. If so, the delegation should describe the measures taken to prevent or mitigate those tensions. She wished to know whether it was true that the idea of a “special historical mission” of Kazaks in the country was reflected in school and university curricula and, if so, why that was the case. She wondered whether the reportedly frequent conflicts between ethnic Kazakhs and members of ethnic minority groups might disclose a degree of Kazakh-centrism.

11. It appeared that the number of Roma living in Kazakhstan had decreased by about one-fifth in the previous decade, from over 5,000 in 2008 to 4,100 based on the 2021 census; it would be useful to learn of the reasons for that trend. It was unclear what legal status was attributed to Roma who had not been provided with identity documents or stateless person certificates, and which criteria were used for assigning them to one category or another. The delegation might wish to explain on what grounds the 65 Roma applicants for citizenship had been investigated and why 10 of them had been taken to court. Did the purported absence of systemic racism in the State party also apply to the Roma?

12. She wondered whether any progress had been made in the implementation of the Committee’s recommendation regarding the establishment of standardized asylum procedures, as contained paragraph 18 of the concluding observations on the combined sixth and seventh periodic reports of Kazakhstan ([CERD/SC/KAZ/CO/6-7](#)). It was unclear whether the State party applied the principle of non-refoulement without exception. Given the State party’s apparently frequent acceptance of diplomatic guarantees that no one would be tortured, it would be useful to know in how many cases such guarantees had been accepted and what mechanisms were in place to monitor adherence. She asked whether there were plans to address the barriers to employment and public services for refugees that resulted from their temporary residence status. Information was also needed on the provisions in place to ensure complementary protection for persons who were not formally recognized as refugees and to enable them to access health care, employment and social services. Did the State party intend to amend legislation barring refugees from applying for citizenship?

13. Updated statistical data were needed on asylum applications and rejections and on expulsions of asylum seekers, disaggregated by ethnicity and nationality. Given that asylum seekers from Ukraine – and certain other countries – had allegedly been routinely rejected, it would be useful to learn about the current policy vis-à-vis asylum seekers from Ukraine. She wished to know whether it was true that asylum seekers from the Xinjiang Uighur

Autonomous Region of China were refused that status and deported to countries where they might be subjected to torture and other violations. Clarification was needed on the measures taken to ensure that minorities enjoyed the right to asylum, regardless of their country of origin, to prevent political and security considerations from playing a role in the asylum procedure, and to ensure that the agreement between China and Kazakhstan on the transfer of convicted persons did not undermine the right to asylum.

14. It was unclear what was meant by “an authorized body” which, according to paragraph 111 of the State party report, was competent to determine the medical services to be provided to refugees and asylum seekers. It would be useful to learn more about the measures taken during the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic to support migrant workers, refugees and stateless persons who needed medical care, had lost their jobs or their homes, or required assistance to return home.

15. Was it true that some schools denied access to children of asylum seekers and refugees?

16. **Ms. McDougall** said that the delegation might wish to elaborate on the State party’s understanding of racial discrimination and its obligations under the Convention. It would be interesting to find out how the repeated assertion that there was no systemic racism in the State party fit with article 2 (1) of the Convention.

17. **Mr. Yeung Sik Yuen** said that it would be useful to know whether the State party had adopted, or planned to adopt, specific legislation to criminalize the categories of misconduct described in article 4 of the Convention, in order to enable its domestic implementation.

18. **Mr. Guissé** said that the Office of the Commissioner for Human Rights (Ombudsman) of Kazakhstan, in its 2019 report, had identified a series of problems in the acquisition of citizenship by children born to foreign parents and by stateless persons, among others, arising from Kazakh nationality legislation. It would be useful to hear about measures taken to implement the recommendations contained in the report.

19. **Mr. Diaby** said that he would appreciate additional information on the alleged refoulement of activists persecuted in China. Clarification was also needed with regard to the alleged ban on Uighur language teaching in the State party and the status of minority languages other than Russian in terms of language teaching and use in local newspapers. He asked what measures had been taken to ensure quality translations, for example from Russian into Kazakh. Did the State party intend to ratify the 1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons and the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness, and did it envisage developing a national version of the Global Action Plan to End Statelessness 2014–2024?

The meeting was suspended at 10.40 a.m. and resumed at 11.05 a.m.

20. **Mr. Abishev** (Kazakhstan) said that the Human Rights Commission under the Office of the President of Kazakhstan was responsible for assisting the President in the discharge of his mandate as guarantor of human rights and freedoms and for helping to improve national legislation and law enforcement practices. It served as a platform for dialogue between human rights organizations, State bodies and the President. It was composed of 37 representatives of State bodies and non-governmental organizations, who participated in its work on an equal footing.

21. The Office of the Human Rights Commissioner (Ombudsman) was a separate institution for the protection of human rights that had been established in 2002. The Ombudsman had initially been appointed by the President. In 2017, the Constitution had been amended to state that the Ombudsman was to be elected by the Senate at the proposal of the President. In December 2021, a law had been passed to establish the independence of the Ombudsman, in line with the Paris Principles.

22. Discrimination on the basis of gender was prohibited by the Constitution. Since 2009, it had been possible to undergo sex change operations on a voluntary basis, subject to medical authorization. It was not necessary to have undergone surgery of that kind in order to change one’s name or gender marker.

23. The Academy of Justice under the Supreme Court offered bachelor's and master's degree courses in law. The academy under the Prosecutor General's Office provided initial training for prosecutors and further training for all justice officials. There were also four legal training institutions that provided initial and further training for staff of the Ministry of the Interior.

24. The notions of racial discrimination and discrimination on the basis of nationality were interpreted in accordance with the Convention, the Constitution and national legislation. Any form of discrimination on the basis of race, origin or ethnicity, whether direct or indirect, was prohibited.

25. The provisions of the Convention were directly applicable in Kazakhstan. The Supreme Court had issued a regulatory decision on the application of international treaties in 2008. Some provisions of the Convention had also been incorporated into national legislation. For example, article 145 of the Criminal Code dealt with violations of the right to equality. The Human Rights Commission supported the Committee's recommendation that the State should pass a specific law against racial discrimination and would advocate for the adoption of such a law.

26. **Mr. Shalabayev** (Kazakhstan) said that the appointment of judges was regulated by the Constitution, the Constitutional Act on the Judicial System and the Status of Judges, and the Act on the Supreme Judicial Council. Judges must be at least 30 years old, must have completed higher education in the field of law, must have an unimpeachable reputation and must have obtained the necessary medical certificate. They were also required to have passed qualifying examinations and to have completed an internship in a court. The appointment procedure involved written examinations and an interview with a panel of judges.

27. There were 15 judges per 100,000 people in Kazakhstan, compared with the European average of 24. Over 1 million cases were dealt with by judges each year. In order to improve the efficiency of the judicial system, steps were being taken to increase the responsibilities of notaries and to broaden the mandate of the Prosecutor General's Office. The judicial system was in line with the relevant international standards.

28. **Mr. Nurgaliyev** (Kazakhstan) said that, in response to the Committee's recommendations, the Government had taken measures to ensure that children from ethnic minorities had the opportunity to learn their native languages and to be educated in those languages. To that end, new schools had been opened and equipped with appropriate resources. In areas that were densely populated by ethnic groups, Sunday schools offering classes in national and minority cultures and languages had been set up to supplement the education provided by regular schools.

29. There were around 7,400 schools in Kazakhstan, catering for over 3 million students. Kazakh was the language of instruction in 51 per cent of schools, while 35 per cent of schools were multilingual. The number of schools in which Russian was the language of instruction had increased to around 1,300. The Government planned to open as many multilingual schools as possible, in order to give children the opportunity to learn several languages. There were 12 schools that offered education in Uzbek and 11 that provided education in Uighur. The schools where teaching was provided in Tajik had not been closed; on the contrary, they continued to cater for over 500 students. A wide range of ethnic minorities had access to education in their native languages that satisfied national education requirements. Measures were taken to ensure that the children of Kazakh repatriates had access to education. There were over 2,000 such children enrolled in schools.

30. **Mr. Abishev** (Kazakhstan) said that, as at 1 April 2022, there were 7,323 stateless persons in Kazakhstan, of whom 281 were under 16 years old. Between 2018 and 2021, Kazakh citizenship had been granted to over 6,000 stateless persons by the President, pursuant to the Citizenship Act. As at 1 April 2022, there were 340 refugees from various countries, including Afghanistan and the Syrian Arab Republic.

31. All persons in Kazakhstan, including migrants, refugees and stateless persons, had access to a basic health-care package, which included vaccination, hospital treatment for acute illnesses and free medicines for diseases such as tuberculosis, cancer and HIV. Refugees and asylum seekers had access to preventive and diagnostic treatment on an equal

basis with Kazakh nationals. Refugees were issued with a document that allowed them to enter into an employment contract, in accordance with the Labour Code.

32. In accordance with the Refugees Act, adopted to give effect to the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, it was prohibited to expel or return asylum seekers to the frontiers of territories where their life would be threatened on account of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion. Asylum seekers could apply for refugee status prior to their arrival via the diplomatic mission of Kazakhstan in their country of origin; within five days of their arrival in Kazakhstan; or at a later stage via the Ombudsman, upon learning that they might be at risk of persecution if they were to return to their country of origin. In cases where migrants who had been detained for entering the country illegally expressed their wish to apply for asylum, the relevant authorities were informed within one day. All asylum applications must be registered within a specified period. Asylum seekers could not be returned to their country of origin while their applications were pending. The asylum application procedure was applicable to all asylum seekers, even if they were wanted by the authorities in their country of origin. Asylum seekers whose applications were rejected could challenge the decision before a court.

33. **Mr. Shoikin** (Kazakhstan) said that the Majilis had 107 members, while the Senate had 46 members. Thirty-five of the 153 members of the Parliament were non-Kazakhs, representing 11 ethnic groups. Those groups were thus fully represented in the Parliament, and especially in the Senate. Non-Kazakhs represented 16 per cent of members of local assemblies and around 8 per cent of civil servants. Women accounted for 27 per cent of members of the Parliament, 55 per cent of civil servants, 15 per cent of deputy ministers and 9 per cent of deputy regional governors. Civil servants were recruited through a competitive process that was open to anyone without discrimination.

34. Around 750 Kazakh nationals, including over 500 children, had been returned from the Syrian Arab Republic and Libya. Steps had been taken to ensure that all child returnees had access to rehabilitation programmes and were reintegrated into schools. Additional support had been provided to the 46 child returnees who lacked parental support, 16 of whom had been placed with foster families or in rehabilitation facilities. All child returnees had been issued with documents stating that they were Kazakh nationals who had been born in Kazakhstan, in order to ensure that they were not bullied or subjected to restrictions in the future. No children were currently registered as stateless.

35. With regard to the President's proposed political reforms and initiatives, several government agencies were preparing constitutional and legislative bills, which would be considered by the Parliament in late 2022. The main objectives of the proposed reforms were to strengthen the legislature by introducing a proportional representation system and simplifying the registration process for political parties; to build the capacities of human rights institutions, including the Office of the Ombudsman; to establish a constitutional court; to increase the competitiveness of the media industry; and to bolster the role of civil society organizations.

36. The Government was seriously concerned about the problem of hate speech, in particular with regard to social media. In cooperation with the International Center for Journalism and the Konrad Adenauer Foundation, the Government was preparing guidelines on preventing hate speech in public discourse, with a specific focus on inter-ethnic relations. It was also preparing guidance in that regard for circulation among the general public. The Government monitored social network platforms and requested the administrators of those platforms to remove or correct publications containing hate speech or disinformation. It also carried out educational work with the authors of such publications, as well as with bloggers and journalists.

37. In relation to the situation in Korday district, criminal investigations had been launched into the damage done to the property of persons from the Dungan community. Once the perpetrators had been identified, the authorities would take measures to ensure that the victims were compensated for their losses. Material support had already been provided to members of the community who wished to repair or rebuild damaged property. A number of complaints of damaged property had been submitted by persons who had been unable to prove legal ownership of the assets in question. Some of those complaints related to buildings

that had been constructed illegally on public land. In such cases, no compensation could be awarded. Special funds had been established to provide assistance to the persons affected by the events.

38. Many in-depth studies had been conducted on various aspects of the question of inter-ethnic relations, some of which were available online and discussed openly in public forums. There were no issues that could not be discussed by the media, which were independent and free to raise the question of inter-ethnic relations and criticize State policies in that regard. The Government was open to such discussions, provided they were constructive. It had been found that the majority of inter-ethnic conflicts stemmed from the commission of crimes of physical or sexual violence or from incidents involving neighbouring communities that were publicized and exacerbated through social media, where the facts of the matter were distorted by disinformation and hate speech. The Government was conducting campaigns to raise public awareness of the unacceptable nature of hate speech and disinformation. It was also taking measures to address social inequalities.

39. Pursuant to an initiative of the President, three administrative regions that had been abolished in 1997 were to be re-established. The regions had been dissolved in order to reduce administrative costs incumbent on the Government at the time, but the public had requested their restoration on multiple occasions through petitions and campaigns. The borders of the new regions had been delineated and, according to the authorities' assessments, there were no serious inter-ethnic tensions in the areas concerned. Government offices would be established in the new regions to handle questions related to inter-ethnic relations.

40. Considerable changes were being made to the role of the Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan. In the past, the Assembly had focused on promoting the development of languages and culture. In 2020, its mandate had been updated and it had been tasked with facilitating the resolution of inter-ethnic conflict, including by conducting analytical studies, issuing recommendations and coordinating mediation measures with local councils. The quota applicable to the number of representatives of the Assembly of the People in the Majilis had been abolished and re-established with respect to the Senate, in keeping with recommendations issued by the Human Rights Committee and the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe. The Assembly rotated its delegates to the Parliament, in order to ensure that all ethnic groups were represented equitably.

41. **Mr. Nurgaliyev** (Kazakhstan) said that the Government had taken a number of measures to stop the spread of COVID-19, including border closures. Administrative sanctions had not been applied to persons who infringed the restrictive measures imposed. At the outset of the pandemic, foreign nationals whose residence permits or visas were due to expire by 5 June 2021 had been given the opportunity to leave the country. Nonetheless, over 1 million persons had remained in the country on expired documents. The Government had taken steps to regularize their legal residence status.

42. **Mr. Abishev** (Kazakhstan) said that children born in Kazakhstan of a Kazakh parent or a parent with permanent resident status in Kazakhstan and a foreign parent automatically acquired Kazakh nationality. In the case of a child born of a Kazakh parent and a foreign parent living abroad, the child took Kazakh nationality if so requested in writing by the parents. The courts were competent to determine whether the child should be granted Kazakh nationality in the event of disagreement between the parents. Children born of a Kazakh parent and a parent who was stateless or of unknown nationality acquired Kazakh nationality regardless of the child's place of birth. Children born in Kazakhstan of unknown parents acquired Kazakh nationality, as did children born to stateless parents who permanently resided in Kazakhstan.

43. The translation of legislation from Kazakh to Russian, or vice versa, was performed by trained linguists who mastered both languages. He recognized, however, that mistakes could still be made. Currently, legislation was drafted and adopted in the Kazakh language then translated into Russian.

44. **Mr. Nurgaliyev** (Kazakhstan) said that over 1 million ethnic Kazakhs had returned to Kazakhstan since the country had gained its independence. Of those, around 66 per cent had come from Uzbekistan, 11.3 per cent from China, and the remainder from Turkmenistan

or Mongolia. Most ethnic Kazakhs were resettled in the southern part of the country, in areas where labour resources were scarce, under a compensated resettlement scheme. Citizens and stateless persons who arrived in Kazakhstan were nonetheless entitled to settle in other regions of the country with State support. It was true that, in 2019, five ethnic Kazakhs had unlawfully entered Kazakhstan from China and had subsequently been convicted of illegally crossing a national border; they had not, however, been deported to China. In October 2019, four of the five persons in question had been granted refugee status. According to the latest information from the border service, since 24 February 2022, a total of 63 Ukrainian citizens had applied for refugee status in Kazakhstan, all of whom would receive support from the Government. Their applications were being processed.

45. **Ms. Al-Misnad** said that she would be grateful if the delegation could reply to her earlier question with regard to access to education for the children of migrants in an irregular administrative situation. She wished to know what proportion of children enrolled in school belonged to an ethnic minority, and she would welcome clarification of the scope, purpose and content of Order No. 607 on the determination of the legal status of persons residing in the territory of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

46. **Ms. Chung** said that she had not received a reply to her earlier questions on systemic discrimination, the Roma community, reports that Syrian refugees' applications for asylum were systematically rejected, and reports of tensions between resettled Kazakh repatriates and ethnic minorities living in resettlement areas.

47. **Mr. Abishev** (Kazakhstan) said that the children of undocumented migrants were entitled to free primary and secondary education, irrespective of the status of their parents. The parents were required to request their child's enrolment in school.

48. **Mr. Nurgaliyev** (Kazakhstan) said that Kazakh repatriates received additional State support, including assistance when renting housing, as well as the lump sums paid to all persons who resettled in one of the six regions of the country with labour shortages. Pension payments varied, and the recently established working group on pension system reform would examine the difficulties encountered in evaluating the work history of those who had worked abroad.

49. **Mr. Abishev** (Kazakhstan) said that Kazakhs who resided abroad as a result of political repression or other inhumane actions could return to Kazakhstan and receive compensation, without discrimination, should they so wish. Stateless persons received documentation confirming their status and were eligible for citizenship after five years in the country. Foreign nationals could obtain citizenship after three years. Refugee status was granted for one year, renewable annually, and refugees could acquire citizenship after five years' consecutive residence.

50. **Mr. Shoikin** (Kazakhstan) said that education was provided in different languages, and students from more than 80 ethnic groups were represented at the country's universities. Numerous scholarship programmes allowed students from Kazakhstan, including members of the Dungan and Slavic ethnic groups, to study abroad, and many students living in Kazakhstan commuted across the border to attend university in Kyrgyzstan.

51. The figure of 5,000 mentioned by the Committee as being the total Roma population was provisional. No complaints of persecution on grounds of ethnicity had been received from members of the Roma community, and there were no data on the excessive use of force by the police. More than 2,500 Roma had received official documents, and there were Roma associations that provided assistance to the community and were members of the Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan.

52. **Mr. Abishev** (Kazakhstan) said that the State could not control the decrease in the Roma population caused by their exercising of their right to travel freely across the border to other countries.

53. **Ms. Tebie** asked how many, if any, media outlets had faced legal action relating to the dissemination of hate speech and what sanctions had been imposed.

54. **Mr. Diaby** asked whether the State party planned to ratify the statelessness conventions, whether the Human Rights Commission received complaints of discrimination

from stateless persons, and whether the State party would increase the Commission's independence and resources.

55. **Mr. Rayess** said that he wished to know what percentage of crimes committed in the State party were violations of the Convention, and how public officials and private individuals in conflict with the authorities could access justice. He asked whether there were regulations governing the judiciary, whether judges adhered to the principle of immutability, how the justice system was organized, whether the principle of concurrent jurisdiction existed in the State party and whether attempts were made to bring the Majilis and the Senate into agreement prior to the latter taking the final decision on legislation.

56. **Ms. Stavrinaki** said that she would be interested to hear the delegation's response to her questions on hate crimes.

57. **Ms. McDougall** said that the Government should make greater efforts to fulfil its obligation under the Convention to eliminate all forms of racism. It was not enough to state that no complaints of discrimination against the Roma had been received; indeed, that indicated a procedural problem, and steps should be taken to truly understand the issues faced by that community.

58. **Mr. Abishev** (Kazakhstan) said that the Human Rights Commission worked closely with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in Central Asia. A report analysing the situation of stateless persons, refugees and repatriates had been produced, and the Government was expected to ratify the statelessness conventions in the near future, as recommended by the Human Rights Commission.

59. **Mr. Shalabayev** (Kazakhstan) said that measures to strengthen the judiciary had included a reduction in the number of levels in the court system from five to three, the introduction of strict requirements regarding judges' work and decisions, and the establishment of an academy for the judiciary. Most judges had worked extensively in law enforcement. Statistical data on criminal offences and on cases brought under civil and administrative law would be submitted in writing.

60. **Mr. Abishev** (Kazakhstan) said that international human rights treaties formed part of the Kazakh legal framework, and the Supreme Court had issued a decree that judicial bodies must apply the provisions of ratified international instruments. The State party had made considerable progress in that regard.

61. **Mr. Shoikin** (Kazakhstan) said that, since 2014, 452 reports of crimes had been lodged by members of the Roma community, although none had related to rights violations on the basis of ethnicity. While the authorities could close media outlets that disseminated hate speech, such action required a court decision and had not been undertaken during the previous year, although complaints of that nature had been received.

62. **Ms. Ali Al-Misnad** said that the Government must acknowledge ethnic tensions in the State party, and, rather than blaming external influences, rivalries or criminal actors, seek to address them through regulations, policies and education for law enforcement officials on respecting the rights of minority groups, as well as serious, transparent public debate on the matter. In particular, a programme to assist young persons from ethnic minorities in passing the national university admission examinations was required. Kazakhstan was in a phase of transition, and she hoped that its reforms were genuine.

63. **Mr. Shoikin** (Kazakhstan) said that the recent election of Kazakhstan to the Human Rights Council was a recognition of its work to actively implement international human rights standards. The Committee's recommendations would guide his Government's anti-discrimination work, contributing to its steady progress towards eliminating all forms of racial discrimination.

The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.