



International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination

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Summary record of the 2695th meeting

Held at the Palais Wilson, Geneva, on Wednesday, 5 December 2018, at 3 p.m.

Chair: Mr. Amir

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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-third and twenty-fourth periodic reports of Norway
([CERD/C/NOR/23-24](#); [CERD/C/NOR/Q/23-24](#))

1. *At the invitation of the Chair, the delegation of Norway took places at the Committee table.*
2. **Mr. Skaug** (Norway), introducing the combined twenty-third and twenty-fourth periodic reports of Norway ([CERD/C/NOR/23-24](#)), said that recent efforts on the part of his Government to combat discrimination had included the constitutional amendment of 2014, inserting a new human rights chapter in the Constitution, and the establishment of the National Human Rights Institution in 2015. In addition, responsibility for enforcing the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Act had been assigned to the Anti-Discrimination Tribunal and the courts. The Tribunal could impose fines and, in cases of employment discrimination, award compensation.
3. Although children and youth with an immigrant background constituted only 18 per cent of the child population, that group accounted for 28 per cent of children and adolescents who had received help from the child welfare services in 2017. Care intervention measures differed little between children with an immigrant background and others, but the proportion of those benefiting from voluntary assistance measures — mainly advice and guidance, but also poverty reduction measures — was higher among the immigrant population than the general population.
4. A competence strategy for the municipal child welfare services had been launched with a view to promoting greater sensitivity in working with children and families from minority backgrounds. It covered issues such as violence, the use of interpreters and cultural knowledge.
5. One of his Government's main priorities was the integration of refugees and other immigrants through the provision of opportunities to participate in the workforce and community life. It had recently launched a new strategy, "Integration through Education and Competence", as part of its drive to improve living conditions through employment and education. The Government's policy also included measures to prevent negative social control, female genital mutilation and forced marriage and to support and provide health care for victims of such practices.
6. Since the launch of the Action Plan against Anti-Semitism in 2016, anti-Semitic prejudice appeared to have declined. However, challenges remained. The right to freedom of expression was key to all democratic societies yet it also covered statements that might be perceived as controversial, offensive or shocking. While it was sometimes necessary to tolerate such provocation, hate speech or incitement to hatred and violence, on the other hand, were not acceptable. A strategy introduced by the Government in 2016 aimed to ensure that everyone could take part in public debate without being exposed to hate speech on the basis of gender, ethnicity, religion, disability or sexual orientation. All politicians had been encouraged to play their part by removing any hateful comments from their social media accounts.
7. Between 2016 and 2017, the number of hate crimes reported to the police had increased by 17 per cent. The police defined hate crime as a criminal offence motivated by hatred or negative attitudes to religion or belief, skin colour, national or ethnic origin, homosexual orientation, or disability. All 12 police districts were required by the Director of Public Prosecutions to give priority to hate crimes and the national police had issued guidelines for use in police districts to ensure uniformity of registration of such crimes.
8. The police encouraged the public to report websites that incited hate crime, as well as racist, discriminatory or hateful speech found on the Internet. In order to protect anyone reporting hate crime, crime support centres had been established in each police district to provide professional assistance and follow-up for victims and relatives during judicial proceedings.

9. Amendments had recently been made to the Immigration Act providing for minimum safeguards in respect of detention of minors accompanied by their parents. Furthermore, the provision of the Act protecting women victims of domestic violence had been strengthened so that the law no longer had the effect of forcing them to stay in abusive relationships. In addition, a residence permit could now be granted even in cases of abuse by persons other than the applicant's partner.

10. Regarding the Committee's question in paragraph 29 of its list of themes (CERD/C/NOR/Q/23-24), regarding the impact of other amendments to the Act on the ability of asylum seekers to seek asylum in the State party after having entered through a country in which they were not persecuted, it was not clear in what way the measures introduced might entail racial discrimination within the meaning of the Convention.

11. His Government was dedicated to combating violence in close relationships in Sami communities. It had allocated funds for research and preventive measures in respect of the challenges that victims might face in making use of support services. Follow-up would be conducted in cooperation with the Sami Parliament. Advice was being provided to the relevant police districts on issues connected with Sami culture and language.

12. In addition to continuing its follow-up on the 2016 report of the Sami Language Committee, the Government had presented a targeted plan to revitalize the Kven language, drawn up in cooperation with the Kven minority.

13. As part of the State's collective reparation to the Norwegian Roma, the Roma Culture and Resource Centre had been opened in Oslo. Providing, among other things, a mediator service and after-school youth club, it was intended as a meeting place where Roma and the majority population could get to know each other's lifestyle and culture.

14. **Mr. Wille** (Norwegian National Human Rights Institution) said that, given that concluding observations from human rights treaty bodies generally concerned several ministries and government agencies, it was important to coordinate follow-up. In its report to the Committee, the Norwegian National Human Rights Institution had recommended the establishment by the State party of a mechanism to consider recommendations from international human rights monitoring mechanisms with a view to ensuring that ministries and agencies responded on an informed and coordinated basis.

15. The National Human Rights Institution welcomed the high priority given to combating hate speech and hate crime in all police districts. Some of the measures outlined in the Government's strategy had been implemented, but not all. Again in its report to the Committee, the Institution had recommended that the State party ensure that police districts gave high priority to the investigation of hate speech and hate crimes, as provided for by the Government's strategy; that it ensure comprehensive, reliable and standardized statistical data on hate speech and hate crimes, not only in respect of the number of reports but also on subsequent investigations, prosecutions, and convictions; and that, in order to fully implement those recommendations, it strengthen coordination and clarify responsibility among the various law enforcement and justice sector institutions.

16. Referring to paragraph 30 (b) of the Committee's previous concluding observations (CERD/C/NOR/CO/21-22), he said that work was under way to identify and recognize ownership and usage rights within Finnmark, but little had been done to clarify and secure Sami land and resource rights outside that area. He suggested that the Committee should recommend that the State party prioritize its follow-up to the report of the Sami Rights Committee.

17. He also suggested that the Committee should recommend that the State party step up its efforts to protect and develop the Eastern Sami language and culture, which, as the Government itself acknowledged, were in a vulnerable position.

18. The National Human Rights Institution, with the support of the Sami Parliament and several Sami organizations, was advocating for an action plan on violence within Sami communities.

19. A recent meeting between the Government and representatives of national minorities had highlighted the lack of knowledge in Norwegian society about national minorities and

the challenges they faced. The Government should strengthen its efforts to enhance that knowledge.

20. The Government should also take steps to improve its own interactions with representatives of national minorities and take measures to follow up on the findings of the report of the Government Commission on Romani people/Tatars, strengthen the Kven language and prevent Roma children from dropping out of school. The Committee might also recommend that the Government should increase its knowledge of the living conditions of the national minorities by drawing on the best practices and data-collection methods used in relation to the Sami people.

21. Notwithstanding the information provided by the Government in paragraph 209 of its periodic report, unaccompanied minors aged 15 to 18 years did not receive the same care as other children in the charge of Child Welfare Services. Indeed, the Norwegian National Human Rights Institution had concluded that the differential treatment they received was a breach of their human rights.

22. The unemployment rate among immigrants was three times higher than for the general population, a situation that had barely changed over the past two decades. Although various factors could be at play, discrimination was part of the problem. In that connection, the Norwegian Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombud had recommended in its report to the Committee that the latter request the State party to ensure that public and private employers accord equal treatment to candidates from minority backgrounds in recruitment processes, allocate resources to monitor compliance with the activity and reporting duty set out in the legislation and consider introducing sanctions for companies that failed to comply.

23. **Ms. Ko** (Country Rapporteur) said that she wished to commend the State party for the progress it had made in the period since its previous dialogue with the Committee, which included the establishment of the Norwegian National Human Rights Institution, the creation of the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombud and the enactment of the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Act. While she noted the reasoning behind the State party's decision not to include the term "race" in that Act (CERD/C/NOR/23-24, para. 85), she pointed out that "race" was reportedly being increasingly used in political discourse. She therefore wished to know what measures, if any, the State party had taken to ascertain how its current approach of avoiding the use of the term "race" in its legislation addressed the discriminatory language used in hate speech. Referring to paragraph 86 of the periodic report, she said that she was unconvinced by the State party's rationale for not incorporating the Convention into the Human Rights Act, which, it asserted, should contain only "general" and not "specific" human rights conventions. She emphasized that the Convention concerned discrimination against any and all human beings and she would therefore be grateful to receive more information from the delegation on the issue.

24. She drew attention to the fact that, despite the State party's assertions that ethnicity-related data could not be collected owing to strong opposition from the national minorities, some data on the Sami people did indeed exist. With that in mind, she would welcome information on measures taken to develop indicators on the ethnic composition of the country, such as mother tongues spoken and national or ethnic origin.

25. Notwithstanding the introduction of initiatives to combat hate speech, there had been a rise in hate speech by leading politicians and major players in the media, particularly in relation to refugees, migrants and the topic of integration; an increase in the visibility on social media of racist and neo-Nazi groups; and a surge in reported hate crimes. She therefore wished to know what measures had been put in place to prevent hate speech, particularly on social media, which was not subject to editorial control; whether there were plans to draw up clear guidelines regulating the use of social media by politicians; and whether any awareness-raising campaigns to prevent hate crime had been conducted. In that connection, she pointed out that the Committee had repeatedly drawn attention to the State party's obligation under article 4 (b) of the Convention to prohibit racist organizations. In the light of the emergence of neo-Nazi organizations in Norway, she wondered why the State party had consistently failed to comply with that obligation.

26. Regarding the situation of the Sami people, she noted that, although some progress had been made, several fundamental issues were still to be resolved. She would therefore be grateful to receive updated information on measures taken to guarantee the Sami peoples' rights to their land and resources outside Finnmark; recognize the collective and historical sea fishing rights of the Sami people; and re-establish the rights of the East Sami people to practise their traditional reindeer husbandry livelihoods. She would also be interested to know the status of the bill on the Sami peoples' right to consultation.

27. Since the previous dialogue in 2015, the State party had been affected by the migrant situation in Europe, which had had a significant impact on human rights in the country. In response, the Government had published a white paper setting out its strategy for integrating newly arrived migrants into the labour market and underlining the need for a high rate of labour participation in order to sustain its welfare model. Eliminating discrimination in employment was surely imperative; and yet, immigrants were three times as likely to be unemployed as the general population. She therefore wished to know what the Government was doing to ensure equality with regard to employment opportunities and recruitment processes in the public and private sectors. It would also be useful to know whether the Job Opportunity Programme contained measures to tackle discrimination against specific groups, such as Somalians, who had resided in Norway for years but continued to experience low rates of employment. In that connection, she wondered why the State party had not established any special measures to facilitate access to the labour market by Roma and other national and ethnic minorities, as it had done for migrants. She would be interested to hear the reasons for the differential approach and would also welcome information on the human rights situation of national minorities, such as the Kvens.

28. The State party's efforts to combat discrimination demonstrated why it had long been considered a front runner in the field of human rights. However, she had been shocked to learn that, according to a recent survey, more than half of the population would not wish their child to marry a Muslim or Jewish spouse, which served to show that deep-seated prejudices were persistent. She hoped that the State party could become an example for others on the strength not only of its achievements but also of its approach to dealing with such challenges. In that way, the constructive dialogue was an opportunity to find universal, as well as national, solutions.

29. **Mr. Kut** (Follow-up Coordinator) said that, in its previous concluding observations, the Committee had highlighted three issues for follow-up by the State party within one year (CERD/C/NOR/CO/21-22, para. 46). The Committee had considered the State party's follow-up report (CERD/C/NOR/CO/21-22/Add.1), which had been submitted in a timely manner, and welcomed the establishment of the Norwegian National Human Rights Institution. It remained concerned, however, that the recommendations made with regard to the rights of the Sami people had not been fully implemented. The Committee therefore reiterated its recommendation and requested updated information on the measures taken to comply. Regarding the question of the State party's use of children, next of kin and unqualified persons as interpreters in the health-care services, the Committee would welcome information on the status of the bill on interpretation services in the public sector (CERD/C/NOR/23-24, para. 211).

30. **Mr. Calí Tzay** said reports indicated that almost half of all Sami women had experienced physical, mental or sexual violence, an incidence rate that was significantly higher than among the general population in the area. He wished to know whether the Government intended to formulate a specific plan of action to reduce and ultimately eliminate gender-based violence against Sami women, as had been recommended by the Norwegian Human Rights Institution and various bodies of the United Nations system.

31. He was concerned to learn that, in 2016, the Norwegian and Finnish Governments had signed a bilateral agreement on fishing in the watercourse of the Tana River, despite unanimous opposition from the Sami parliaments of both countries, the local fisheries administration authority and the affected municipalities. According to information received, the views of Sami representatives had been completely ignored during the final stages of the negotiations and the fishing rights of Sami river populations had effectively been given to foreign cabin owners by the Norwegian Government. Salmon fishing was an essential

part of the local Sami culture and was vital for its survival. With that in mind, he wished to know whether the Government would give consideration to renegotiating the agreement and what measures it was taking to safeguard the fishing rights of the Sami people and the local river populations.

32. **Mr. Avtonomov** said that he was pleased to note the regularity with which the State party reported to the Committee. With regard to the legislative situation, he wished to know how the State party had sought to address concerns that a number of the protections established in the Ethnicity Anti-Discrimination Act would not be carried over into the consolidated gender equality and anti-discrimination law that would replace that Act and three others and that the adoption of a new law risked marginalizing the rights of certain groups vulnerable to discrimination. In that connection, the Committee noted that the Ethnicity Anti-Discrimination Act had been interpreted to cover a broad range of grounds of discrimination, including language, and that it was fully in line with the Convention. In addition, he would appreciate information on any cases handled by the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombud and the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Tribunal, including information on their number, nature and outcomes.

33. He would appreciate more information on the policies and other specific steps taken to improve the educational attainment, access to skills development and employment prospects of men and women from Roma, Romani people/Tater and immigrant backgrounds and on the consideration of gender equality concerns in that context. The Government provided Norwegian language courses for immigrants, but it was unclear which of the various forms of the language was taught. Immigrants risked facing discrimination in certain situations if they lacked familiarity with the particular form of the language required. Were immigrants made aware of the distinctions between the different forms of the Norwegian language and the variations in the ways in which they were used?

34. **Ms. Shepherd** said that the State party was to be commended for the strong emphasis that it placed on educating its population on racial discrimination. Recent examples of that emphasis included the Dembra initiative for primary and secondary schools and the targeted research projects supported by the Government. She would be grateful for an update on the report on teaching resources that the University of Stavanger had been due to publish in 2017. What had been the outcomes of the report? Had it been published? With regard to the upper secondary level in particular, she wondered how the teaching of history served to meet the overall objective of the white paper submitted to the Storting in 2016, namely to foster among pupils an attitude of tolerance towards diversity. In that connection, she wondered whether the curriculum included information on the history of Norway prior to its independence, as such information would serve to contextualize some of the stereotypes often held of minorities, in particular persons of African descent, and ultimately further the cause of eliminating racial discrimination.

35. She would encourage the State party to develop an action plan to implement the International Decade for People of African Descent, as it would complement the other laudable strategies undertaken to eliminate racial discrimination on the basis of ethnicity and skin colour, combat bullying in schools, hate crime and hate speech and encourage greater tolerance towards national minorities and other vulnerable groups. Despite evidence that black people faced widespread discrimination in Europe, the report under consideration contained little specific information on the situation of black people in the State party. In that context, she wondered whether the State party would be prepared to offer financial support to civil society groups seeking to develop programmes to achieve the objectives of the Decade. Its overarching aim, after all, was not only to benefit black people themselves, but also to educate the population as a whole. The forthcoming visit of the Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent might shed further light on the options available in that regard.

36. **Mr. Murillo Martínez** said that the State party was to be commended for its clear commitment to strengthening its implementation of the Convention and the active role that it played in the area of international cooperation, particularly with regard to the provision of support for refugees. Concerning the matter of consultation with ethnic groups, he would appreciate more specific information on the State party's implementation of the relevant provisions of the International Labour Organization (ILO) Indigenous and Tribal Peoples

Convention, 1989 (No. 169), and of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, including information on the number and nature of such consultations. In addition, it would be useful to receive an update, including relevant statistics, if possible, on the activities conducted under the action plan for the implementation of the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights: Implementing the United Nations “Protect, Respect and Remedy” Framework.

37. He wished to know how the State party was working with other countries to mount a collective response to the rising tide of extremism, including hate speech, across the world. On a separate point, it was unclear to what extent ethnic minorities, including the Sami, were involved in the State party’s efforts to address the challenges associated with climate change. It would be interesting to learn what progress had been made in closing the wage gap between men and women. He also wondered whether the State party took into account the Committee’s general recommendation No. 35 (2013) on combating racist hate speech in practice. Lastly, although the Green Party held only one seat in the Storting, he would like to know whether the fundamental values for which it stood were shared by other political parties.

38. **Mr. Albuquerque e Silva** said that he would be grateful if the delegation could comment on reports that the Government was preparing legislation that would accord a less prominent place to the Second World War and the Holocaust in secondary school curricula and, if those reports were accurate, explain the rationale behind that decision. Both the president of an Oslo-based Jewish association and a leading Norwegian academic had publicly voiced their opposition to the legislation in question. In that connection, he noted that, in 2015, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) had published a study on the international status of education about the Holocaust, which contained a series of recommendations for stakeholders, including education policymakers, researchers and textbook authors. In addition, some months previously, UNESCO and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe had published a study on addressing anti-Semitism through education. The previous week, the Cable News Network (CNN) had published information that revealed the rise of anti-Semitism in Europe and the lack of awareness of the Holocaust among teenagers.

39. **Mr. Diaby** said that he would like to know whether the Sami Parliament of Norway had already submitted its observations on the draft Nordic Sami convention and, if so, whether the Government was prepared to accept them all. He wished to know whether measures had been taken to compensate Sami persons whose land had been confiscated; whether the restrictions on fishing in the State party were compatible with the cultural significance of fishing for the Sami; whether the number of fishing days available to the Sami were sufficient to meet their specific needs and allow them to live decently; and whether Sami reindeer herders were compensated for the loss of livestock slaughtered during mandatory culls. He wondered whether available data showed that awareness of the problem of hate speech had been raised among the population. In the light of reports that some Norwegians who had fought in the Syrian Arab Republic had subsequently been deprived of their nationality, he wished to know what measures had been taken to ensure that the persons in question had not been rendered stateless as a result. Were they naturalized Norwegians who had previously held another nationality?

40. **Mr. Yeung Sik Yuen** said he wished to note that television and radio programmes were broadcast in only one of the State party’s official minority languages, namely the Sami language, while other States parties with far fewer resources were able to broadcast programmes in several of the languages in use among their national minorities. On a related point, he wondered whether there was any possibility of improving the provision of interpretation services with a view to facilitating communication with persons belonging to minority groups.

41. The Norwegian National Human Rights Institution had stated that the Government should make the prevention of hate crimes, and the prosecution of their perpetrators, a priority. However, when the relevant authorities had been made aware of an anti-Semitic and racist message posted on social media, in which an extreme right-wing Norwegian politician had denied the Holocaust, the official response had been that there were not

sufficient grounds to initiate criminal proceedings. In view of that regrettable response, he wondered what grounds would be deemed sufficient to take legal action in such a case.

The meeting was suspended at 5.10 p.m. and resumed at 5.25 p.m.

42. **Mr. Avtonomov** said that he wished to know whether the State party intended to invite the Russian Federation to become an observer to the Nordic Sami Convention. Additional information would be welcome on the East Sami and opportunities for them to use their language in daily life.

43. **Mr. Calí Tzay**, commending the State party for having promoted consultations with the Sami communities regarding acts that affected them, said that he wished to know whether the Sami were provided with compensation for the loss of their natural resources in cases where consultations with the Government did not result in an agreement. The Special Rapporteur on the rights of indigenous peoples had recommended that more attention should be paid to the details of consultation processes, in particular prior consultations and the need for good faith. Legislation on direct consultations with the Sami should be introduced and any decisions should be taken only with the free, prior and informed consent of the Sami rights holders concerned. Such legislation should contain provisions on appeal processes concerning procedural violations. He was concerned that the fact that the Ministry of Agriculture had been made responsible for issues related to reindeer herding, an activity that was nomadic rather than agricultural in nature, might over time contribute to the decline of Sami culture. In that connection, he noted that the Sami had expressed concern at the lack of support for young reindeer herders in particular.

44. **Ms. Bull Skarstein** (Norway) said that the recently adopted Equality and Anti-Discrimination Act listed, among others, ethnicity, religion and belief as protected grounds of discrimination. The term “ethnicity” referred to national origin, descent, skin colour and language, among other things. The national authorities had deemed it unnecessary and undesirable to refer to the term “race” in the text of Act for the reasons set out in paragraph 85 of the State party report. The provisions of the Convention had been transposed into the domestic legal framework through the adoption of the Act.

45. **Mr. Austad** (Norway) said that the Ministry of Justice and Public Security was in the process of considering a proposal made by the Sami Rights Committee regarding the surveying of existing ownership and usage rights in the traditional Sami areas outside of Finnmark but that process had been delayed because of the need to clarify certain questions, as described in paragraph 189 of the report under consideration. The Ministry was now addressing the Sami Rights Committee proposal for surveying rights south of Finnmark. A body known as the Finnmark Commission had been set up pursuant to the Finnmark Act of 2005 to survey and recognize existing ownership and usage rights on a field-by-field basis. The Commission was required to consider rights to land and natural resources in Finnmark on the basis of national property law, with due consideration being given to the customs and sense of justice of the Sami. The Commission had identified collective, non-exclusive usage rights to natural resources for the Sami people and had concluded that the so-called Finnmark Estate was the predominant owner of the land surveyed to date.

46. Discussions were ongoing on the issue of whether to launch a specific action plan on violence against women within the Sami community, or whether to deal with the issue within the framework of a broader anti-violence strategy. In the meantime, measures were being taken to tackle the issue and research had been carried out in that regard. A 2017 Ministry of Justice and Sami Parliament report on support for Sami women victims of violence within Sami communities had highlighted the specific challenges faced by victims in the use of support services owing to linguistic issues and the lack of a culturally sensitive approach to their needs that had resulted in a lack of trust in officials and care providers. An expert group, partly comprised of Sami-speaking police officers, had been set up to provide police authorities with advice on Sami culture and language. The Ministry of Justice had recently allocated 500,000 Norwegian kroner to research efforts concerning violence against women within Sami communities and further funds to preventive measures; it would work with the Sami Parliament to identify priority topics in that regard. The children’s house in Tromsø had special responsibility for strengthening the use of Sami languages by Sami children who were victims of sexual abuse or violence. A Sami-

speaking psychologist had been employed to assist such children. A campaign had recently been launched to tackle domestic violence and violence against women within the Sami community.

47. **Mr. Megard** (Norway) said that information on negotiations concerning a Nordic Sami Convention could be found in the State party report (CERD/C/NOR/23-24, para. 7). The Sami Parliamentary Council, a body made up of representatives from the Sami parliaments of Finland, Norway and Sweden, had announced that it wished to amend the text of the Convention. The Norwegian authorities would carefully examine both the Council's proposals in that regard and any alternative ways to meet the Council's need for clarification concerning the text of the Convention. Negotiations on specific points of the Convention could be reopened but only with the prior agreement of all three States parties. It was as yet unclear whether that would be possible.

48. In October 2016, the Ministry of Local Government and Modernization had received a report from the Sami Language Committee containing recommendations on, among other things, kindergartens, education and health. The Ministry and the Sami Parliament had made the follow-up to those recommendations a priority and had held several joint meetings in that regard. The Action Plan for Sami Languages had been extended to 2017 to ensure overlap with the work of the Sami Language Committee. As part of an evaluation of the Plan carried out in 2015, the Sami Parliament had pointed out that it should be responsible for Sami language development and revitalization issues. Control of funding for the Plan had been transferred to the Sami Parliament as of 2018.

49. The Sami Rights Committee had submitted a report in 2007 proposing the adoption of a new act on consultations between government authorities at all levels and representatives of Sami interests. In September 2018, following talks with the Sami Parliament and reindeer herders' organizations, the Government had tabled a bill on amendments to the Sami Act to include rules and regulations on consultation. Should the bill be adopted, new statutory rules would replace the current rules governing consultations between the State authorities and the Sami Parliament. The bill would further strengthen and clarify the right of the Sami people to consultations regarding matters directly affecting them.

50. In line with the obligations arising from accession to the ILO Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention, 1989 (No. 169), procedures for consultations between the State authorities and the Sami Parliament had been established and approximately 20 to 40 formalized consultations took place every year. As a part of those consultations, there must be full disclosure regarding all the issues under consideration, in order to ensure that all parties could form an informed view of the situation. Although there was no formal obligation to reach an agreement, consultations were often successful owing to the good faith displayed by all sides.

51. The Government and the Sami Parliament had agreed to establish a new budgetary system for the Sami Parliament from 2019 onward. Budgetary transfers to the Parliament would initially be aggregated under a single budget item. A joint white paper would be presented to the Norwegian Parliament in the second quarter of each year. Under the new system, the Sami Parliament would have more freedom to set priorities, its autonomy would be strengthened and dialogue on Sami policies between the national authorities and the Sami Parliament would be improved.

52. The Government believed that any renegotiation of a bilateral agreement with Finland on joint fishing regulations concerning the fishing area of the Tana River would be unlikely to improve the situation of local fishing rights holders and would delay the implementation of efficient stock-restoration measures. The Sami Parliament and local fishing rights holders had been represented throughout the negotiation process regarding the agreement but had not consented to its conclusion. The preceding agreement had resulted in overfishing detrimental to Sami communities. Salmon were caught both at sea and in rivers and played a major role in Sea Sami culture. The safeguarding of the existence of wild Atlantic salmon was a priority for the Government. Regulations governing sea salmon fisheries were based on the comprehensive consideration of salmon stocks and interests related to Sea Sami culture. Consequently, the sea salmon fishery in the north of

Norway was far more extensive than in the rest of the country. New regulations, based on scientific advice and the precautionary approach, had been introduced in order to limit fishing in that area; the Sami Parliament had been consulted prior to their adoption. The regulations were in line with the guidelines of the North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organization.

53. The East Sami had lost their grazing rights in the late 1920s and early 1930s. Any efforts to re-establish reindeer husbandry for the East Sami would require the expropriation of existing grazing rights from other groups of Sami, who were also entitled to protection of their way of life. Article 27 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights was particularly relevant in that regard. In 2015, following an assessment involving consultations with representatives of the East Sami, the Norwegian authorities had decided that no such expropriation should be carried out. Measures had been taken to support East Sami culture, including the recent opening of a museum of East Sami culture, craft traditions and language, which served as a gathering place for East Sami. Although there were no known speakers of the East Sami language in Norway, a few hundred remained in Finland, and the Norwegian Government had provided support for cross-border projects to strengthen that language.

54. **Ms. Boye** (Norway) said that local authorities were responsible for adapting their services to the diverse needs of users. Under the Public Administration Act, there was a general obligation to provide interpreting services in legal cases if necessary. A new provision prohibiting the use of children as interpreters had been inserted into the Act. Sami-language users residing within the Sami language administrative area had the right to use Sami languages when interacting with public officials, who were obliged to use interpreters where necessary. In 2014, a study had been carried out on interpretation in the public sector. According to that study, interpreting services were underused, there was a lack of requirements regarding qualifications and the procedures for booking interpreters were poorly designed. General working and employment conditions for interpreters varied significantly from one sector to another. The Government was preparing a bill on interpretation that would address the issues identified in the study. The authorities intended to increase the use and efficiency, and improve the quality, of public sector interpreting services. Additional funding had been allocated to efforts to improve interpreter training. A first-degree-level course in interpreting had been set up at a university in Oslo.

The meeting rose at 6 p.m.