



**International Convention on the
Protection of the Rights of
All Migrant Workers and
Members of Their Families**

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**Committee on the Protection of the Rights of All
Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families
Thirty-eighth session**

Summary record of the 553rd meeting

Held at the Palais Wilson, Geneva, on Tuesday, 4 June 2024, at 10 a.m.

Chair: Mr. Corzo Sosa

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

Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under article 73 of the Convention *(continued)*

Second periodic report of Türkiye (continued) (CMW/C/TUR/2;
CMW/C/TUR/QPR/2)

1. *At the invitation of the Chair, the delegation of Türkiye joined the meeting.*
2. *In accordance with the guidelines on the independence and impartiality of members of the human rights treaty bodies (the Addis Ababa guidelines), Mr. Ünver withdrew during the consideration of the second periodic report of Türkiye.*
3. **A representative of Türkiye** said that foreigners who had applied for international protection or been granted international protection status and members of their families were entitled to primary and secondary education in Türkiye in accordance with the Foreigners and International Protection Act. Under the Temporary Protection Regulation, foreigners under temporary protection had access to health, education, labour market, social, interpretation and other similar services.
4. The Constitution and laws of Türkiye guaranteed the right of everyone to education without discrimination or exclusion. The principles of equality, justice and non-discrimination formed the basis of Turkish education policies and laws. The Ministry of National Education carried out activities to ensure that all children in the country benefited from equal and inclusive education regardless of their nationality and status.
5. As at March 2024, over 1 million children had been included in the Turkish education system. The enrolment rate of foreigners in Türkiye was 90 per cent in primary schools, 92 per cent in secondary schools and 58 per cent in high schools, all of which were well above world averages. With a view to increasing those rates, the Government carried out information activities for families and offered scholarships, catch-up training and conditional cash transfers for the education of refugees. Prevention and intervention systems were being developed to reduce school dropout rates and absenteeism.
6. Turkish language training was provided to facilitate the social integration of people who had been left out of formal education. A Turkish as a foreign language programme had been designed for foreign students, enabling them to gradually progress from a basic to an advanced level. Turkish language training for foreign adults was provided free of charge in public education centres. Programmes had also been developed to increase the professional and technical skills of foreign adults, to promote early childhood education for Syrian children in Türkiye and vulnerable Turkish children, and to integrate refugees into the Turkish education system. Psychological counselling services were provided by guidance counsellors and trained teachers to children experiencing trauma.
7. **A representative of Türkiye** said that a work permit for foreigners under temporary protection cost about \$100 for one year and was paid by the employer. Work permit exemptions for seasonal agriculture and animal husbandry work were granted free of charge.
8. Turkish people living in other countries faced discriminatory practices at work and in politics, limitations on their social security benefits and the transfer thereof, unemployment, unequal opportunities in education, problems with family reunification and with work and residence permits, and barriers to access to health services. They also had to contend with the scapegoating of immigrants by politicians and in the media, racism and support for far-right policies. Hate attacks and crimes against Turkish nationals abroad had numbered over 1,100 from 2018 to 2022. In 2022, more than 130 attacks had been carried out against Turkish citizens in 24 countries, most of which had been motivated by racism or faith-based discrimination.
9. In the Kingdom of the Netherlands, Turkish nationals and other foreigners, especially pensioners, faced problems in transferring their social security benefits. If they chose to reside in another country or returned to their country of origin, they would not receive the full amount of their pension. Turkish nationals living in the Kingdom of the Netherlands sometimes faced discrimination by employers. Türkiye was working closely with the

Kingdom of the Netherlands to solve those problems. Regular meetings were organized within the framework of their bilateral agreements regarding migrant workers.

10. **A representative of Türkiye** said that legal counsellors had been operating within embassies and consulates general of Türkiye since 2001, providing free legal services and assistance to Turks living abroad on cases of discrimination, work-related matters and their rights under bilateral or international agreements. They were not intended to replace lawyers.

11. The right of petition, which was important for the healthy and effective functioning of the democratic system, was a long-established right in Türkiye that had been enshrined in the Constitution. Foreigners residing in Türkiye could exercise that right subject to the principle of reciprocity. That condition had been established in the Constitution in order to protect the 7 million Turks living abroad and ensure that they enjoyed the same right in their host countries.

12. In addition to the Human Rights and Equality Institution, the Ombudsman Institution had been established in Türkiye in accordance with the Paris Principles. It was a constitutional entity that operated independently, serving as an effective complaint-handling mechanism. It also had the authority to conduct independent research and prepare special reports.

13. Syrians under temporary protection were limited to residing in the province in which they were registered, in accordance with the relevant laws. They had the right to change their residence address for health, education or work purposes. They could also go to another province for up to 90 days to carry out short-term maintenance work on their own products. That rule was compatible with international law, and Germany had similar laws. Türkiye was dealing with about 3.2 million Syrians under temporary protection, which was a huge burden. If they were free to change their area of residence as they pleased, planning for key infrastructure such as education and health care would be difficult. The rules were in place to keep public services functioning.

14. **A representative of Türkiye** said that, if foreigners under temporary protection wished to work in a city other than the one in which they were registered, their employer must submit an application to the Ministry of Labour and Social Security. If the application was approved, a work permit would be issued allowing the foreigner to move to another city for work purposes.

15. **A representative of Türkiye** said that the Foreigners and International Protection Act set out the judicial remedy to challenge a deportation decision. If a migrant in an irregular situation who was challenging a deportation decision did not have sufficient financial means, a lawyer would be assigned to him or her. Foreigners who were admitted to a removal centre were informed verbally and in writing, in a language that they understood, of their legal guarantees, the centre's rules and the available legal aid. Brochures on legal aid were available in the seven most widely spoken languages. Pay phones were available in the removal centres for contacting relatives or legal representatives. Free phone cards were provided to those without sufficient financial means. In centres equipped with the relevant technical facilities, foreign detainees were given the opportunity to contact their families through an online platform. Foreign detainees were allowed to meet their legal representatives in an interview room in the centre.

16. Article 90 of the Constitution stipulated that international agreements duly ratified had the force of law. No appeal could be filed on the grounds that such agreements were unconstitutional. In the case of a conflict between an international agreement duly ratified and national law, the provisions of the international agreement prevailed. As a principal human rights document, the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families therefore took precedence over national law.

17. Many workshops and meetings had been held with relevant public institutions and non-governmental organizations to evaluate alternatives to detention and ensure that such alternatives were applied in a uniform manner throughout the country. An information brochure had been prepared on the rights and obligations of migrants in irregular situations in the context of alternatives to detention. To standardize the application of alternatives to

detention, checklists, standard operating procedures and workflow charts had been developed, and coordination meetings had been held with law enforcement agencies.

18. The Harmonization Strategy Paper covering the period 2018–2023 had expired, and an updated document covering the period 2024–2028 would be completed soon.

19. Foreigners who were considered a threat to public order or public security were taken under administrative detention to removal centres, in accordance with the Foreigners and International Protection Act. The deportation of foreign terrorist fighters was carried out in accordance with the procedures specified in the Security Council resolutions on foreign terrorist fighters.

20. In line with the Constitution and the principle of the best interest of the child under the Convention on the Rights of the Child, measures were taken to protect all rights of children, regardless of their race, language, religion, sect or ethnicity, and to ensure their access to education, health care, housing, social services and assistance. Unaccompanied minors who had entered the country in an irregular manner were provided services in accordance with the Foreigners and International Protection Act and the Unaccompanied Minors Directive of 2015. The situation of such children was assessed to determine the most suitable protective and supportive measures under the Child Protection Act. With a view to protecting all children in the country, mobile teams had been established in all provinces to identify children begging and living on the street, and efforts were being made to tackle child labour.

21. Türkiye was committed to supporting the full and effective participation of persons with disabilities in social life, advancing their rights, protecting their dignity and promoting their access to employment, education, goods and services. To that end, it had taken numerous protective and supportive measures in accordance with its laws and international standards. The 2030 Barrier-Free Vision Document set out a road map for carrying forward developments in the field of disability rights. In terms of supporting the rights of persons with disabilities in the international arena, Türkiye had been one of the first countries to sign the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and had ratified the Optional Protocol thereto in 2015. According to the Constitution of Türkiye, that Convention took precedence over national law.

22. Türkiye attached great importance to the protection of the rights and freedoms of migrants, refugees and asylum-seekers and opposed any form of inhuman or discriminatory treatment towards them, regardless of their status. Türkiye was firmly against the practice of pushbacks, which violated the fundamental rights of migrants, the prohibition of collective expulsion stipulated in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union and the principle of non-refoulement. Any acts resulting in ill-treatment towards migrants or threats to their life were contrary to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. A considerable number of pushbacks continued to be observed at European borders. In some European countries, asylum-seekers and migrants were systematically and collectively deprived of their rights under international human rights and refugee law. The numbers of deaths and disappearances according to the Missing Migrants Project of the International Organization for Migration were alarming, with most occurring in the central Mediterranean area.

23. Certain non-governmental organizations had published reports containing allegations that Syrians had been deported and Afghans had faced pushbacks by the Turkish authorities. The Government had responded in writing to those allegations and rejected them. How could they be true when Türkiye hosted more than 120,000 migrants in irregular situations? Türkiye also hosted almost 4.6 million foreigners and thus shouldered an enormous burden, without benefiting from any international burden- or responsibility-sharing. Some European countries believed that they could bring irregular migration down to zero, but that was impossible given the many push factors involved. The migration routes had existed for thousands of years and were shaped by the landscape.

24. The Government was doing its best to protect the rights of migrants and refugees within its jurisdiction. Given the threats of terrorist attacks and smuggling facing Türkiye, the Turkish border forces had a duty to act. The Subcommittee on Prevention of Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment and the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment had visited

and monitored the removal centres that had been mentioned in those reports and had not found any evidence to support the allegations. Furthermore, the non-governmental organizations had not shared their research methodology.

25. Türkiye was one of the few States parties to the Convention to recognize the authority of the European Court of Human Rights and the right of all persons to file an application with the Court to seek a remedy when their rights were violated. The Government was implementing reforms with a view to furthering strengthening democracy, consolidating the rule of law and ensuring full respect for fundamental freedoms. Türkiye was a party to 16 United Nations human rights conventions and made legislative amendments in line with them. Many effective domestic legal remedies were also available, including the right to file an individual application with the courts, including the Constitutional Court. The Human Rights and Equality Institution and the Ombudsman Institution contributed to the enhancement of democracy, human rights and the rule of law in the country. The Government had improved the national legal framework by taking into account the provisions of the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (European Convention on Human Rights), the case law of the European Court of Human Rights and human rights conventions and other instruments of the United Nations, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and the European Union.

26. Türkiye categorically rejected the suggestion that people from the sub-Saharan region faced discrimination in Türkiye. That was misinformation spread on social media. All people from the sub-Saharan region were entitled to lodge applications with the appeal bodies in Türkiye, and all allegations were addressed. Türkiye enjoyed close cooperation with the countries of the region, both bilaterally and multilaterally. The Turkish people were known for their hospitality, and it was not in their nature to discriminate against others.

27. **Mr. Ceriani Cernadas** (Country Rapporteur) said that the Committee had received many reports about the return practices of European countries, the majority of which had unfortunately not ratified the Convention. The commitment of Türkiye to abiding by international law, cooperating with the treaty bodies and engaging in dialogues with them was welcome. The Committee continued to call for European and other countries to ratify the Convention and hoped to hold dialogues with the countries engaging in such practices, with a view to establishing the number of people who died or disappeared on migration routes and addressing other serious issues. He wished to reiterate his question regarding those reports and the action taken by Türkiye in response to them. Türkiye was not being accused of systematically returning people. The data were clear on the numbers of migrants residing in Türkiye and the various permits granted to them. However, as in any democracy, the security forces might sometimes take arbitrary measures and engage in ill-treatment, notwithstanding the mechanisms in place to ensure access to justice and prevent ill-treatment.

28. He would welcome examples of the application of the Convention by the courts and more information on the application of the European Convention on Human Rights. Having taken note of the information provided by the delegation regarding the criminalization of trafficking in persons under the Criminal Code and the establishment of tougher penalties for that crime, the Committee would be interested to know whether the State party had any holistic laws on trafficking in persons that provided for prevention policies, comprehensive remedies and assistance for victims of trafficking, and interinstitutional coordination on the issue. He asked whether anything was being done, in line with the Committee's general comment No. 5 (2021) on migrants' rights to liberty and freedom from arbitrary detention and their connection with other human rights, to ensure that victims of trafficking did not end up in detention centres.

29. The delegation was invited to provide statistics on investigations into crimes of hate, racism or xenophobia against migrants and on cases of xenophobic bullying of children at school. He was curious to know what the main reasons were for foreign children remaining outside the school system and what was being done to reduce their numbers. He wished to reiterate his earlier questions about female migrants who were victims of violence.

30. He also wished to reiterate his questions regarding the granting of work permits and the potential negative effects of the unavailability or inaccessibility of work permits on social and economic inclusion in Türkiye and the Turkish economy and tax system. He would be

grateful for clarification as to whether work permits were granted only when an employer wished to hire a person or whether a migrant with regular residency status could obtain a work permit without a job offer from an employer. He asked whether, if a labour inspection revealed that a migrant in an irregular situation was working without a work permit, both the employer and the worker would be punished, what type of penalty would be applied, and whether the worker would be detained and sent to a centre for return to their country of origin.

31. Lastly, he asked whether foreign terrorist fighters were sent to the same detention centres as migrants in irregular situations and whether there were any national laws governing the deportation of foreign terrorist fighters.

32. **Ms. Dzumhur** (Country Rapporteur) said that the Committee would welcome more information about the 7 million Turkish people living abroad. Given that a significant number of pensioners who had been living abroad returned to Türkiye, the Committee would like to know how the State party ensured that their rights and those of their family members were respected. She would be interested to learn about current migration trends among Turkish people, including whether they continued to migrate from other countries, the countries to which they migrated and their reasons for migrating.

33. Given the obligation for consulates to provide legal assistance to Turkish citizens abroad, she wished to learn more about the capacities of consulates in countries with the largest numbers of Turkish migrants. The Committee had received information suggesting that the mandate of the labour attachés in consulates had expired and wished to know whether there were plans to replace them, given their importance to Turkish migrants.

34. The delegation was invited to provide information on birth registration for children born in Türkiye to foreign parents. The delegation had stated that migrants had access to health care on an equal footing with Turkish citizens, provided they paid the national universal health insurance premium, but it was not clear whether migrants who were unable to pay the premium had such access.

35. The Human Rights and Equality Institution had been accredited with category B status under the Paris Principles, which was a mark of significant progress. She asked what further support would be provided to the Institution to enable it to apply for A status. The Institution must have the financial and human resources to be able to communicate with international bodies and produce comprehensive reports.

36. **Ms. Gahar** asked whether the centres that had been established throughout Türkiye under the fourth National Action Plan on Combating Violence against Women had a specific strategy for combating and preventing violence against migrant women. Information on any measures to provide medical and psychological care to migrant women and empower them would be welcome. She would also like to know whether training programmes were in place for the specialized personnel of those centres and, if so, whether the content of the Convention was covered in those programmes. Lastly, she would be interested to hear about interinstitutional coordination in combating the various forms of discrimination based on migratory status and gender.

37. **Mr. Kariyawasam** said that the delegation had provided a breakdown of the nationalities of victims of trafficking in persons identified in Türkiye in table 4 of its periodic report. It appeared that the numbers were low and that there might be other victims who had not been identified. He commended the State party for signing cooperation protocols on combating trafficking in persons with other countries. Given that most of the countries listed in table 4 were States parties to the Convention, he would like to know whether Türkiye had considered signing protocols with those countries with a view to providing the best possible remedies to victims of trafficking.

38. **Mr. Babacar** said that, in the light of the information provided by the delegation that 1,000 labour inspectors were operating across Türkiye, he wished to draw the delegation's attention to two conventions of the International Labour Organization (ILO) for guaranteeing the independence of labour inspectors: the Private Employment Agencies Convention, 1997 (No. 181) and the Labour Inspection (Agriculture) Convention, 1969 (No. 129). Türkiye had not ratified either of those Conventions, nor had it ratified the Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29), the Migrant Workers (Supplementary Provisions) Convention, 1975

(No. 143), the Domestic Workers Convention, 2011 (No. 189) or the Violence and Harassment Convention, 2019 (No. 190). He asked whether Türkiye intended to ratify those Conventions, which would be an important step because it would entail the obligation to implement them and translate them into national law. He asked whether the labour inspectors operating in Türkiye were granted special status that guaranteed decent living conditions for them, their independence and their impartiality with regard to social partners, including judges.

39. **Mr. Charef** said that he would be interested to learn more about the organization representing the Turkish diaspora, known under the acronym YTB, which had been established in Ankara to assist Turks and Turkish descendants living abroad, including how it functioned, its role and its objectives. Many skilled Turks were living around the world, such as the footballer Mesut Özil and the scientists Ugur Sahin and Özlem Türeci, who had founded a company that had developed one of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) vaccines. He wondered whether a strategy was in place to support the deployment of the skills of Turks and Turkish descendants living around the world and how those skills could be aligned with the needs of Turkish society.

40. Turkish people might be known for their hospitality, but no society was free from the risks of racism. In 2018, Türkiye had established a platform to combat hate crimes and discrimination. All Turks who were victims of mistreatment, including those living abroad, were requested to register on that platform. He asked whether any statistics were available from the platform and how such statistics were used. He wondered whether a similar platform existed for foreigners and refugees living in Türkiye.

41. **Ms. Diallo** said that the Committee was aware of the economic role played by Türkiye in sub-Saharan Africa and its various partnerships and opportunities for cooperation with the South in general and sub-Saharan Africa in particular. Nonetheless, even in a country known for its hospitality, the police and other authorities could commit violations from time to time. All the Committee could do was to draw the delegation's attention to such issues, some of which might indeed be misinformation.

42. In the periodic report, the State party had stated that seven alternatives to administrative detention were implemented, without specifying what they were. More information on those alternatives would be welcome. Were they really alternatives to detention or were they simply other measures that could be more protective or more coercive in nature?

43. It was her understanding from paragraphs 119 and 120 of the report that support for a child from a poor family could take two forms: either his or her family received direct financial support or he or she was cared for by a foster family on a voluntary or paid basis. She wished to know what mechanisms were in place to facilitate contact between a child from an immigrant family who had been placed in foster care with his or her birth family and to preserve family unity.

44. She asked whether Türkiye had plans to facilitate the access of non-governmental organizations to detention centres with a view to enabling migrant workers and migrants in general to obtain additional legal assistance, including from non-State bodies.

45. **The Chair** said that he would be interested to hear more about the mobile migration points and what they had achieved. He asked what measures had been taken to support migrant workers who had been displaced as a result of the huge earthquakes in Türkiye the previous year. The Committee would be interested to know whether there were any migrants with disabilities in Türkiye and what measures were in place to support them. He would welcome more details on the State party's reasons for maintaining its reservations to articles 15, 40, 46, 55, 76 and 77 of the Convention.

46. Türkiye had ratified the Convention 20 years previously but was appearing before the Committee for only the second time in those 20 years. During the first review, the Committee had recommended that courts in Türkiye should enforce the Convention. Acting on that recommendation would demonstrate the State's commitment to implementing the Convention. Given that the delegation had stated that the Convention took precedence over national law, the courts must enforce it.

47. During the first review, the Committee had also recommended that the children of migrant workers should be registered at birth and provided with national identity documents and had highlighted the need to raise awareness among migrant workers, especially those in irregular situations, of birth registration. He asked whether such children were registered and provided with national identity documents immediately; and whether the State party had ratified the Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness of 1961 and the European Convention on Nationality of 1997.

48. **A representative of Türkiye** said that the Government had established a mechanism to support the voluntary return of migrants in irregular situations to their countries of origin and to assist them once they had returned. The aim was to create a positive environment for returnees in their home countries. It was a big undertaking, but the Government believed that the adverse effects of irregular migration could be tackled through holistic global action. The regulation governing the mechanism had been developed with input from the Turkish Red Crescent Society, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and other stakeholders.

The meeting was suspended at 11.45 a.m. and resumed at 12.20 p.m.

49. **Mr. Ceriani Cernadas** said that he would appreciate more details on the procedures for determining the age of unaccompanied children. It was his understanding that the methods used by Türkiye were similar to those used by other countries and allowed for a large margin of error.

50. The delegation had explained the reasons for restricting the freedom of movement of migrants within the country, but he would like to hear about long-term plans for their integration. The law established that refugees, conditional refugees, persons under temporary protection and persons under subsidiary protection were not entitled to the long-term residence permit that was usually granted after eight years of continuous residence in the country. He therefore asked whether there was a long-term policy for the full integration and inclusion of those who were unable to obtain a long-term residence permit, faced difficulties in obtaining a work permit and were restricted in their movements within the country.

51. Given that many people who migrated in waves of mass migration ended up staying in the destination country for the rest of their lives, he wondered how destination countries and their development policies, economies, labour markets and industries could be supported. Lastly, he asked whether Türkiye had any initiatives in line with article 42 of the Convention to recognize the right of foreigners who had resided in the country for a certain number of years to vote, whether nationally or locally.

52. **A representative of Türkiye** said that field visits were conducted to identify out-of-school children and direct them to schools. Enrolment rates in Türkiye were over 90 per cent in primary and secondary schools. Some of the children who appeared to be out of school might have left Türkiye but still be registered in the system. According to a 2021 report of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the global schooling rate of refugees was 34 per cent, whereas in Türkiye it was over 76 per cent.

53. To tackle bullying in the Turkish education system, the Government organized guidance and psychological services, violence prevention programmes and training for school administrators, teachers and families. Activities were organized in and outside schools to promote intercultural communication between foreign and host students and thus create an inclusive school environment.

54. Peer bullying and schooling rates were issues that did not have a single cause or a single solution. The Government's field research showed that the causes of such problems varied regionally. The Government was trying to determine whether refugees were affected differently by those problems and to research and implement differentiated prevention and intervention systems.

55. Foreign children who had been living in the provinces affected by the earthquakes had continued their education in other provinces.

56. **A representative of Türkiye** said that foreigners who were victims of trafficking, including women, were exempted from the requirement to satisfy certain criteria in their work

permit applications, thus facilitating their access to the labour market. Labour inspectors received training on the issue of trafficking in persons.

57. Different types of work permits were available. A foreigner could apply for a work permit for self-employment or to set up a company. In general, a work permit was attached to a specific employer. That enabled the Government to monitor the thousands of foreigners who were entering the labour market as well as market needs and dynamics. A foreigner must first register as a resident to be able to apply for a work permit.

58. The independence of labour inspectors was ensured by the law. The 1,000 labour inspectors and 2,700 social security auditors all carried out their inspections independently. Any cases of foreigners working without a work permit were reported to the Ministry of Labour and Social Security, which then imposed an administrative fine on both the employer and the employee. The employer paid double the amount paid by the employee. In order to benefit from tax and employment incentives, employers must have a clear track record of hiring registered workers. In addition to inspections, the Ministry of Labour and Social Security used technical tools for monitoring and reporting to identify cases of employment of unregistered workers, whether Turkish nationals or foreigners. Long-term plans needed to be discussed with all stakeholders, including the Migration Board and the International Labour Force Policy Advisory Board.

59. The Ministry of Labour and Social Security published annual reports on Turkish citizens living and working abroad that included a breakdown of the countries in which they were residing. The reports were available in the Turkish language only on the Ministry's website. Türkiye had concluded social security agreements with 35 countries, most of which were in Europe, where the majority of the Turkish diaspora was living. Those agreements clearly set out how social rights and pensions were transferred. To provide Turkish citizens abroad with the necessary services and information, the Ministry had a Director General for Foreign Relations, a social security institution and a hotline.

60. The Ministry of Labour and Social Security had 57 labour attaché offices in 29 countries. The mandates of the labour attachés had indeed expired, but the offices were not vacant, because locally recruited staff had been providing services to Turkish citizens. The Ministry also provided digital services. The Ministry would take the Committee's recommendation that labour attachés should be appointed into consideration in its future personnel planning.

61. International protection applicants who had no health insurance and were unable to pay were subject to the Social Security and General Health Insurance Act for a period of one year from the registration of their application for international protection. The State thus guaranteed health insurance for such applicants. Foreigners with pending international protection applications or who had been granted international protection status and were recognized as stateless persons could also obtain access to health-care services. All foreigners residing in Türkiye, regardless of their employment status, were covered by the health-care system, provided they paid the national health security premium. The health-care and medicine expenses of Syrians under temporary protection were paid by the State, with no requirement for a minimum period of contribution or residence.

62. Türkiye had ratified 59 ILO Conventions, including all 10 fundamental Conventions. Türkiye had ratified the Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29) in 1998 and was about to ratify the Protocol of 2014 thereto. Türkiye had also ratified the Labour Inspection Convention, 1947 (No. 81). The Domestic Workers Convention, 2011 (No. 189) and the Violence and Harassment Convention, 2019 (No. 190) were relatively new and were thus still being assessed in Türkiye. The Government would consult with relevant social partners and stakeholders regarding their ratification.

63. **A representative of Türkiye** said that the mobile migration points provided access to an official database that law enforcement bodies could use to verify whether a person had a legal identity in Türkiye. They were an important tool for law enforcement bodies in remote areas.

64. Syrians who were registered in Türkiye received a temporary identification number that enabled them to obtain health services, including emergency, preventive and curative care, at the health centre in their province of residence. Those who did not have a number had access only to emergency care.

65. International protection applicants and status holders could receive birth reports from the hospital for their children born in Türkiye and apply to a registration office to receive a birth notification form. An international protection applicant or status holder document was issued for the newborn child in accordance with the status of the person with custody of the child.

66. Safe and voluntary return in accordance with the established rules of UNHCR was the best solution to the plight of refugees. The focus should be on creating the necessary security and physical infrastructure conditions in the return country.

67. The Turkish diaspora contributed significantly to both their host countries and the Turkish economy. Third- and fourth-generation Turkish migrants were becoming scientists, employers and politicians. The founders of one of the COVID-19 vaccine producers had indeed been Turkish, and Aziz Sancar, a Turkish migrant, had won the Noble Prize in chemistry. Turkish people living abroad were offered language training and labour and family consultancy services. Legal consultancy services were provided in the countries in which the largest numbers of Turkish people were living.

68. If there were doubts as to the age of an unaccompanied child, bone tests were used. Unaccompanied children were kept in a special area and were never placed with other adults.

69. According to the Constitution of Türkiye, only Turkish nationals had the right to vote. Foreigners who became Turkish citizens were able to vote. The Turkish diaspora also had the right to vote, except in local elections, which were conducted at the local level only.

70. Türkiye maintained its reservations to the Convention. Should the relevant authorities one day decide otherwise, the Committee would be informed.

71. Following the earthquakes, the capacity of health facilities had shrunk to 17 per cent. Nevertheless, humanitarian aid had been brought to all affected people without any distinction. All services had been offered equally to Turkish nationals and migrants living in the affected areas. Türkiye was grateful to the countries that had sent emergency medical teams and humanitarian aid.

72. Türkiye offered many remedies in cases of discrimination and would address any concerns raised by people from sub-Saharan Africa. There had been and would be no cases of discrimination against people from sub-Saharan Africa in Türkiye.

73. Türkiye was doing its utmost to address trafficking in persons, seeking to increase its capacities to counter that social and criminal problem, bring perpetrators to justice and protect victims. All law enforcement officials, judges and prosecutors received the necessary training to raise their awareness of the problem. Turkish people abroad could also become victims of trafficking. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs therefore provided relevant training to consular officers.

74. **Mr. Taghi-Zada** (Country Rapporteur) said that he would be grateful if the delegation could provide in writing some analysis of the differences between the Convention, which had not been ratified by, for example, Germany or the Kingdom of the Netherlands, and the agreements signed by Türkiye with such countries.

75. **Mr. Ceriani Cernadas** said that the Committee was committed, through dialogue and the provision of recommendations, to contributing to and strengthening the efforts of Türkiye to address the challenges it was facing in terms of human mobility. Protecting rights was not only a legal obligation; it also contributed to strengthened societies and countries, and to better living conditions for both the people arriving in a country and its entire population. The Committee hoped that its recommendations would have positive results for the whole of Turkish society.

76. **A representative of Türkiye** said that migration was a global challenge that required countries to work together to develop collective solutions. The questions and comments of the Committee had been duly noted and would be addressed by the relevant authorities in Türkiye. The knowledge and findings gained during the dialogue would be applied by the relevant Turkish ministries and institutions. Continued collaboration on migration was crucial for developing sustainable policies that upheld human rights.

The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.