



International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination

Distr.: General
22 August 2024

Original: English

Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination 113th session

Summary record of the 3084th meeting

Held at the Palais Wilson, Geneva, on Thursday, 8 August 2024, at 10 a.m.

Chair: Ms. Shepherd (Vice-Chair)

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Ms. Shepherd (Vice-Chair) took the Chair.

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 twentieth to twenty-seventh reports of the Islamic Republic of Iran (continued) (CERD/C/IRN/20-27; CERD/C/IRN/Q/20-27)

1. *At the invitation of the Chair, the delegation of the Islamic Republic of Iran joined the meeting.*

2. **A representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran** said that the Government faced serious challenges in the areas of education, health and social security, and in promoting equality and combating deprivation as a result of the unilateral coercive measures imposed by the United States of America. University students and professors had been deprived of opportunities to cooperate with their international counterparts. The banking system had been placed under unprecedented pressure and cut off from the world. During the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, the population had been prevented from having access to medicines, resulting in the death and suffering of many innocent people. Unilateral coercive measures were inhumane and amounted to discrimination against an entire nation.

3. **A representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran** said that article 19 of the Constitution in no way infringed upon the rights of foreign nationals or refugees. The country was a party to the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and the Protocol thereto, and the Government considered itself duty-bound to implement those instruments. Certain rights, such as rights of political participation, were reserved for nationals. However, as article 1 (2) of the Convention made clear, the Convention did not apply to distinctions, exclusions, restrictions or preferences made by a State party between citizens and non-citizens. Article 19 of the Constitution was in full conformity with the Convention.

4. **A representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran** said that, of the 9,500 non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that were active in the country, 73 had consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council. During the preparation of the periodic report, the Government had received 29 submissions, including 19 reports from NGOs. Civil society had taken part in the preparation of the report.

5. **A representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran** said that, in relation to article 77 of the Constitution, the Government respected instruments that had been ratified by the parliament prior to the Iranian revolution. It was serious about eliminating discrimination, in accordance with its obligations under the Convention. The aim of the Legal Certainty Document, which supplemented the Constitution, was to deliver justice, to the satisfaction of the people. The document made clear that all persons could turn to the courts to assert public rights and file complaints of discrimination.

6. **A representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran** said that, since the Committee's last consideration of a periodic report from the State party, the Government had strived to protect human rights in a context of sanctions imposed on the country's people. It had enacted a raft of legislation in areas such as citizenship, criminal justice, protection of the family, natural disaster insurance, health, housing, disability rights, women's safety and efforts to combat deprivation and discrimination.

7. **Mr. Balcerzak** (Country Rapporteur) said that the Committee was aware of the country's cultural richness and extensive multi-ethnic diversity. The report referred to some aspects of policies towards minorities, but the information sometimes lacked clarity. The Committee had received information that ethnic, religious and other minorities, in particular the Sunni Kurd and Baloch minorities, were subjected to structural and systemic discrimination. Regions inhabited by ethnic or linguistic minority populations reportedly suffered from economic deprivation and underinvestment, resulting in poverty. Cultural suppression undermined the identity and cohesion of ethnic minorities. Representatives of ethnic minorities had allegedly been subjected to repressive measures such as arbitrary and prolonged detention, extrajudicial killings and enforced disappearances. He would therefore be interested to know what action the Government had taken to ensure that minority ethnic

communities could enjoy their own culture, practise their religion and use their own language in accordance with international human rights standards. He would also appreciate information on the employment rate in Sistan and Baluchestan Province and on measures to improve the province's economic status. It would be useful to know whether Baloch and Kurdish children could receive schooling in their mother tongue and how many such children were enrolled in primary and secondary education. He would welcome information on access to health care in Sistan and Baluchestan Province, including the number of hospitals and health facilities. He wondered whether any structures or institutions had been established to strengthen communication with minorities and to facilitate consultation and dialogue, and thus a better understanding of their needs.

8. The Committee had been informed that ethnic, religious and other minorities, including Sunni Kurds, Baloch people, Azerbaijani Turks and Ahwazi Arabs, had been disproportionately impacted by the Government's response to the protests that had erupted in September 2022 following the death of Mahsa Amini. The security forces had reportedly killed and injured a large number of protesters in regions predominantly populated by minorities, with over 100 protesters killed in Zahedan on a single day. The Committee was deeply saddened to note that many persons, including persons belonging to ethnic minorities, had been sentenced to death and executed. Just two days previously, a member of the Kurdish minority had been executed on the basis of a confession reportedly extracted under torture, after being denied the right to be assisted by a lawyer of his choice.

9. The Committee would appreciate information on the situation of minorities affected by the September 2022 protests. It would be interested to know how many criminal investigations had been opened into the illegal or disproportionate use of lethal force by members of law enforcement or the military, how many such investigations had been completed and whether anyone had been brought to justice. The delegation might comment on reports that members of ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities, including women and children, had been subjected to arbitrary detention, torture and other forms of ill-treatment, including sexual violence. He wondered whether the Government had taken any steps to review or change its policy towards ethnic minorities and whether it considered that the disproportionate use of force and other acts of violence and abuse against the members of minorities must be adequately investigated and redressed.

10. Could the delegation provide information on the outcomes of investigations into "school poisonings" – chemical attacks by unknown perpetrators which had affected mostly schoolgirls and female students in multiple locations?

11. The Committee would be interested to know more about the State party's policy on the use of languages by ethnic and religious minorities. For example, it would like to know whether minority languages were taught in schools and could be used in public life. The Committee was deeply concerned about reports that high-ranking public officials, law enforcement officers and the State-controlled media regularly described Kurds, Baloch people and Ahwazi Arabs as "separatists", "terrorists" or "foreign agents", while certain religious minorities were described as "perverse sects". Such language, which degraded and dehumanized members of minorities and promoted racial hatred, was prohibited by article 4 of the Convention. He would be interested to know whether there had been any cases in which its use had been investigated and punished.

12. It was the Committee's understanding that many high-ranking government positions – including those of the President, government ministers and provincial governors – were reserved for Shiite Muslims. Which positions in public and political life were accessible to members of ethnic or religious minorities? How many seats in the parliament were held by members of religious minorities, and what percentage of posts in the health, education and justice sectors were held by them?

13. **A representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran** said that various governmental institutions and civil society organizations promoted dialogue and understanding between the diverse parts of society, including different ethnicities and minorities. Many of the country's 9,500 NGOs were active in the cultural sphere at both the national and provincial levels. For example, in Kurdistan Province, NGOs worked in areas related to the literature, language and the history of the Kurdish people. A post of adviser to the President on ethnic and religious

minority affairs had been established some years previously, presenting an opportunity for dialogue at the highest level. The post was currently held by a Kurdish scholar. Every year, many festivals and conferences were held to celebrate the country's cultural diversity, with the participation of government, academia and the private sector. The President and the Supreme Leader often visited the provinces and took the time to listen to the concerns of local people and engage in dialogue with them.

14. The Ministry of the Interior allocated a special budget to the country's 57 recognized religious organizations, including those of the Christian, Jewish and Zoroastrian faiths. Religious minorities had their own media, including publications that had existed for decades. There were over 380 churches, 16 synagogues and 87 Zoroastrian fire temples. Members of the religious minorities were thus able to practise their religions freely.

15. Allegations of a systematic violation of the right of minorities to use their own languages were baseless. Many books were published on the history, language and culture of ethnic minorities. More than 23 provinces had broadcasting channels that offered local programming. The national broadcaster, Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting, had a Kurdish language channel. At least 86 university postgraduate courses covered the country's cultural history and heritage, including courses specializing in religion.

16. **A representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran** said that many persons from minorities occupied high-ranking positions. For example, the Commander of the Iranian Navy was a Sunni of Kurdish ethnicity. The Constitution protected the political, economic, social and cultural rights of all citizens and enshrined the principles of non-discrimination, equality before the law and equal enjoyment of rights irrespective of skin colour, ethnicity or origin. The country had several oversight mechanisms that ensured people's rights, and all persons living in the country and its citizens living abroad could assert their rights before the courts.

17. Article 41 of the Constitution provided that all Iranians had an inalienable right to citizenship and that the Government could not withdraw citizenship unless the person concerned requested it. Under article 42, foreign nationals were entitled to acquire citizenship in accordance with the country's laws.

18. Foreign nationals without Iranian citizenship had equal rights with citizens. They had legal rights, such as those provided for under article 13 of the Constitution, and the courts were obligated to rule on issues such as inheritance in accordance with the religious rules and practices by which those persons lived. That principle also applied to certain offences. For example, under the Islamic Penal Code, the consumption of alcohol by non-Muslims was not a punishable offence, provided that it was not consumed in public spaces. Specialized courts dealt specifically with cases involving religious minorities. There were also dispute resolution councils, the members of which were selected from among the relevant minorities, such as the Qashqai clans and the nomadic peoples, which dealt with legal disputes in those communities.

19. Women and men had equal rights when it came to the dissolution of marriage. Women could, for example, include their own terms and conditions in a marriage agreement, and if it was later proved that the husband had breached those provisions, they could serve as grounds for divorce. The same was true if the woman was subjected to difficult or dire living conditions, which could also constitute grounds for divorce.

20. **A representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran** said that, while under the Constitution the official language of his country was Persian, the use of regional and tribal languages was permitted in the press and mass media and in the teaching of relevant religious literature in schools. The High Council of Education had devised a scheme that enabled schools to adapt their educational activities to meet the specific needs, characteristics and languages of the local population and, thus, of their students. For example, the Assyrian and Zoroastrian languages and writing systems were taught in such schools. In Tehran, a number of schools and universities included teaching in minority languages in order to promote educational justice and strengthen intangible heritage.

21. Efforts had been taken to tackle school dropout rates. For example, some 1,130 schools had been built in Sistan and Baluchestan, and the number of dropouts at

primary level had now fallen. A law adopted in 2024 on the Seventh Development Plan had provisions to get primary school dropouts to return to school. They included the drafting of appropriate curricula, which had now been approved by the High Council; the provision of free school meals and money to cover school bus fares and other basic needs, such as shoes; and the establishment of boarding schools and distance learning for pupils from nomadic backgrounds. The Ministry of Education had set up a system to aid in the identification of school dropouts and, in cooperation with NGOs, was taking steps to facilitate their reintegration.

22. **Mr. Balcerzak** said that he wished to find out whether Baloch and Kurdish schoolchildren could take classes in their own languages as well as in Persian and how the Government ensured that ethnic minorities could gain access to health care. He would also welcome information on the situation of ethnic, linguistic and religious minorities in the aftermath of the protests that had occurred in in September 2022, including on any investigations that had been launched against members of law enforcement following allegations of excessive use of force or abuse of power. The terms “ethnic minority” or “religious minority” were perhaps not used in the State party. Nonetheless, the Committee’s interest was in the rights of those persons with an ethnic background that differed from that of the majority of the population.

23. **Mr. Amir** said that he wished to highlight the history and culture of the country, which had one of the world’s oldest civilizations, in particular its contribution to scientific knowledge. He would like to thank the delegation for informing the Committee of the realities of life in the State party as it defended itself against attacks from the West, in particular from recent attacks launched by Israel against the country and against Palestinians.

24. **Ms. Stavrinaki**, recalling the death of Mahsa Amini, an Iranian Kurdish woman, said that the Committee had received reports that minority groups had suffered disproportionately in the aftermath of the “Women, life, freedom” movement. She would therefore welcome data, disaggregated by ethnic origin, language and religion, on those persons who had been arrested, detained and convicted in connection with the protests.

25. She would be interested to know whether attacks that had reportedly been carried out by private individuals in relation to the mandatory hijab regulations had been investigated by the authorities; who was responsible for enforcing such regulations; and what measures had been taken to protect minorities, in particular minority women and children, from violent attacks, in accordance with the State party’s obligations under article 2 of the Convention.

26. She would be grateful to receive data on the incidence of child, early and forced marriage among children belonging to minority groups. Reports suggested that, in 2018/19 alone, more than 30,000 girls under 14 years of age had been involved in such marriages.

27. **Ms. Esseneme** said that she wished to know why Ahwazi Arabs were reportedly among the most disadvantaged groups in the country in terms of access to education and what was being done to tackle the high dropout rates among children from that ethnic minority at primary and secondary levels.

28. **Mr. Gwalawala Sibande** (Country Task Force) said that he wished to reiterate a question he had raised during the previous meeting ([CERD/C/SR.3083](#)) on whether the Government planned to amend the Constitution to recognize the full range of religious minorities that lived in the country. He had also asked for information on the alleged killing of more than 500 persons, including women and children, during the protests of September 2022, and for data concerning the execution of hundreds of persons who had been sentenced to the death penalty, including the offences for which they had been convicted. If he had understood the delegation’s explanation correctly, the Citizenship Rights Charter had not been adopted as a law, and it was therefore not enforceable. More information on that point would be welcomed.

29. **Ms. Boker-Wilson** said that, with reference to the Committee’s previous concluding observations ([CERD/C/IRN/CO/18-19](#), para. 10), she wished to know what measures had been taken to combat the double discrimination faced by women of minority origin, including those who were in conflict with the law. According to reports, many of the women prisoners on death row had been convicted of killing their abusive husbands, with several of those

women allegedly having been victims of child, early or forced marriages, without the right to divorce. She wondered whether the judges took a defendant's experience of gender-based violence into account during sentencing.

30. **Mr. Rayess** said that he wished to emphasize that Committee members must be wary of pressure from certain States and should refrain from repeating hate speech that had been uttered by certain Judeo-American lobbyists since the Iranian revolution. The Committee should pose questions that reflected the current situation. It could not ignore the heinous events that were happening in certain parts of the world. He wished to express his unshakeable support for those who worked for the Iranian people to rectify the intolerable injustices the country faced simply because it presented an alternative to the West.

31. **Ms. Tlakula**, speaking in her capacity as Follow-up Coordinator, said that in its previous concluding observations the Committee had requested detailed information in the next periodic report on the measures taken to ensure the effective protection of the Arab, Azeri, Baloch and Kurdish communities from discrimination. Information in that regard would therefore be welcome.

32. **Mr. Yeung Sik Yuen** said that he wished to know at what age schoolchildren started primary education and whether children attended religious schools, or madrasas, on an extracurricular or full-time basis.

33. **A representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran** said that he wished to emphasize once again that the concept of so-called ethnic minorities did not exist in his country. Arabs and Azeris featured among the country's highest-ranking officials, including the Supreme Leader, who was of Azeri descent. The Committee should raise questions that related specifically to the Convention and, in so doing, preserve its standing.

34. All persons who lived in his country, irrespective of their ethnicity or religion, were respected, as long as they did not break the law. The principle was applied without exception. There were many Shiite convicted prisoners, for example; there was no impunity. By the same token, people should not be free to commit espionage or terrorist acts supported by countries that were against the Islamic Republic of Iran simply because they were from a so-called religious minority background.

35. Judges were highly trained, knowledgeable and respectful of all persons from any and all walks of life. Judges who failed to be respectful ran the risk of disciplinary action. Questions alleging that Baloch persons were the subject of arbitrary implementation of justice were therefore misguided.

36. The High Council for Human Rights had met with representatives of the armed forces to discuss the events of September 2022. All allegations of misconduct against members of law enforcement and security agencies had been duly investigated. No one was considered above the law. Detailed information on investigations and convictions would be provided in writing.

37. The Islamic Penal Code specified that persons who were under age at the time of commission of an offence were subject to an assessment of their mental maturity, ordered by a court. If the accused person was deemed to be sufficiently mature to incur criminal responsibility and a death sentence was imposed, the sentence was normally executed only after the defendant turned 18. All death sentences could be appealed.

38. The so-called "school poisonings" had occurred in all 31 provinces and had been duly investigated. The poisonings were part of a larger, sinister plan to cast an unfavourable image of the country and undermine its sovereignty. It was truly regrettable that the information provided to the Committee by other sources reflected an inaccurate picture of the real situation on the ground. As for the question of whether to offer Baloch children teaching in their own language, it was important to bear in mind the country's vast size and large population, and the need to address the population's concerns as a whole.

39. **A representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran** said that the Higher Education Council had given schools a considerable degree of freedom to teach children from ethnic minorities about their culture and land. Under the Constitution, Persian was the country's official language, but the use in schools of regional and tribal languages and the teaching of

their literature was also permitted. The Constitution had been approved by referendum, by 98 per cent of voters, and could not simply be amended.

40. The minimum age of primary school enrolment was 6 years. The high secondary school dropout rates in Khuzestan were not an indication of deficiencies in the education on offer. Some 60 per cent of the 7,000 schools built over the past two years were located in underdeveloped rural and nomadic areas, and many were in Khuzestan Province. The Assyrian and Zoroastrian languages were taught in schools for minorities. There were no special religious schools.

41. **A representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran** said that marriage of girls under 13 years of age and boys under 15 years of age was subject to three conditions: permission of the parents or guardian; suitability of the child; and authorization by a court. In addition, girls under 13 years of age underwent a sociomedical examination to assess fitness for marriage. If the marriage was deemed to be against the best interests of the child, no authorization was granted. Contracting marriage in violation of those provisions was considered a punishable offence.

42. Given the country's size and population diversity and differences in its belief systems, it was difficult to enforce provisions relating to early marriage evenly throughout the country. Change had to be gradual. It had to be rooted in culture change, failing which there would be clandestine marriages. In clandestine marriages, children were put at risk of deprivation of legal identity, because their parents, who married outside official channels, might fail to register births for fear of prosecution. According to statistics from 2022, the number of marriages of girls under 15 years of age had recently dropped by 33 per cent, and for girls under 18 years of age the number had dropped by 25 per cent. A law had been adopted to establish a legal requirement for consultation of a family counsellor prior to the marriage of girls under 18 years of age.

The meeting was suspended at 11.45 and resumed at 11.50 a.m.

43. **Mr. Balcerzak** said that the sole purpose of the Committee's dialogue with States parties was to assess the way in which the Convention was implemented on the ground. Members were independent experts whose role was not to judge, but to explore specific situations and engage with delegations for the benefit of the people protected under the Convention. That exchange must be based on the utmost mutual respect.

44. **Mr. Gwalawala Sibande** said that the Committee would be grateful to receive data on the ethnic and religious composition of the parliament, for example in writing. Updated information on the number of migrants, asylum-seekers, refugees and stateless persons currently residing in the country, disaggregated by nationality, would also be appreciated. It would further be useful to learn of measures taken to prevent statelessness and to facilitate the birth registration of children born to migrants, asylum-seekers, refugees and stateless persons.

45. The Committee would welcome detailed information on measures taken to address discrimination against refugees. He wished to know whether it was true that Afghan nationals faced barriers to education, housing, employment, health care and banking services, and that 1 million Afghan refugees had been deported to Afghanistan. It would be helpful to find out whether allegations of abuse, deportation without due process and killing of Afghan refugees by members of the Iranian police had been investigated, and whether such conduct was tolerated by the Iranian population. The delegation might wish to comment on reports that undocumented migrants were frequently detained without due process.

46. The Committee would be grateful to obtain information on measures taken to protect Afghan immigrants from labour exploitation, to investigate allegations of discrimination faced by Afghan refugees in schools, workplaces and public spaces and to provide human rights education to public officials to combat prejudice, intolerance and stereotyping of refugees. He requested the delegation to provide some clarification about reports of restrictions on the freedom of movement of Afghan refugees and allegations of ill-treatment of refugees by security forces at ports of entry.

47. How did the State party respond to the reports of discrimination, persecution and incitement to hatred against Afghan nationals in the media, and to allegations that such acts

were sometimes abetted by government officials? Had any research been conducted into anti-Afghan sentiments among the population?

48. **A representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran** said that the Health Transformation Plan launched in 2014 had enabled considerable progress in providing equitable access to quality health services throughout the country, especially in underdeveloped and nomadic areas. The share of out-of-pocket payment for hospital expenses had been reduced from 37 to 3 per cent in villages and to 6 per cent in urban areas; 26 million hospitalized patients had received financial support. The recruitment of doctors in rural and nomadic areas and in cities with fewer than 20,000 inhabitants had increased by 47 per cent. In suburban and urban zones, each area with 25,000 to 50,000 inhabitants had a comprehensive health-care centre inter alia offering nutritional and psychological counselling. In 2020, 126 mobile health units had been established to serve nomadic peoples. Additional information and statistics on the measures taken under the Health Transformation Plan were contained in the third-cycle universal periodic review mid-term report submitted to the Human Rights Council.

49. **A representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran** said that a plethora of plans and measures had been drawn up over the past decade to reduce poverty and generate employment in underdeveloped areas. There was no discrimination in access to employment. Of the 23 million persons in employment in the country, 4 million lived in Kurdistan, Kermanshah, Baluchestan and Khuzestan, and employment statistics revealed no meaningful difference in employment rates in the different provinces. The Government's ambitious development plan for Kurdistan and Baluchestan had nevertheless fallen short of expectations because of the withdrawal of foreign investors as a result of the sanctions. The harsh climate and propensity to drought of Baluchestan represented a considerable challenge to development, but the province remained at the top of the Government's agenda.

50. **A representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran** said that the five members of the Islamic Consultative Assembly who were designated to represent religious minorities accounted for a population of some 130,000, or one representative for about 26,000 inhabitants. For the majority population, the ratio was one representative for 200,000 inhabitants. Religious minorities thus had favourable political representation.

51. The status of refugees, asylum-seekers and displaced persons was regulated inter alia by the Civil Code, in conformity with the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees. His country had filed reservations to articles 17, 23, 24 and 26 of the Convention. Over the past four decades, it had seen a major influx of Afghan refugees. Even those who had entered the country unlawfully enjoyed a range of services, including access to employment, education and government benefits. Detailed information on the services delivered to refugees would be submitted in writing.

52. Subsequent to the withdrawal of the military forces of the United States of America from Afghanistan, more refugees had crossed the border, bringing the official number of refugees and displaced persons to well over 3 million, which placed a considerable burden on the country. The vast majority lived in urban centres and villages; 1 per cent of refugees lived in reception settlements. The authorities were doing their utmost to guarantee the safety and security of persons who had entered the country unlawfully and who were returned to Afghanistan.

53. A significant number of schools for foreign nationals had been built from 2011 to 2021, and more than 200,000 Afghan nationals had participated in literacy programmes. Over 100 health centres for foreign nationals had been constructed using funds from the State budget, while a further 39 had been financed through international aid. More than 1 million foreign nationals had health insurance, and additional support was provided to more than 1,000 individuals with incurable or complex conditions. More than 4 million foreigners had been vaccinated against the COVID-19. Support for foreign nationals was provided by the Government, NGOs and a number of United Nations agencies. Legal proceedings had been initiated against two media outlets that had insulted foreigners, in particular Afghan nationals. Ten media outlets were run by Afghan nationals, and their objectives included fostering a better understanding of the Afghan community and improving its position in society.

54. **A representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran** said that the Supreme Leader and the Cabinet had approved the provision of free education for refugees and foreign nationals. Some 600,000 Afghan students, around 50 per cent of whom were girls, were taught within the country's education system, and some 123,000 had been permitted to enrol in school despite lacking the required documentation. Twenty-two schools had been set up outside the public system to serve mostly Afghan students. Approximately 70 per cent of foreign students were of primary school age. Those who were older were entitled to continue their education at vocational and technical schools, where female students currently outnumbered their male counterparts.

55. **Mr. Gwalawala Sibande** said that he would be grateful for further information on the measures taken by the Government to educate the population and would like to find out whether the State party hosted refugees from countries other than Afghanistan. The delegation was invited to clarify the provisions of the 2019 nationality law concerning the renunciation of foreign nationality, since the Committee was concerned that such provisions might lead to statelessness among certain children. It would be helpful for the delegation to comment on reports of a lack of transparency in the refugee status application procedure. It was reportedly unclear to applicants what the procedure entailed and whether they were entitled to legal representation.

56. **Mr. Diaby** said that it was commendable that, according to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the State party currently hosted the largest number of refugees in the world. He wished to know whether the Government intended to ratify the Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons and the Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness. In view of information that women who had children with non-citizens were unable to transmit their nationality to those children, it would be helpful to learn what provisions were in place to mitigate the risk of statelessness, for example among the children of stateless fathers. The Committee would be interested to hear about any measures taken to prevent statelessness by ensuring that individuals who were set to lose their nationality also held the nationality of another country. He would appreciate information on whether the State party had implemented a national plan on statelessness that was tied to the Global Action Plan to End Statelessness 2014–2024 and, if so, whether it would be able to offer an assessment of that plan.

57. **A representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran** said that the Constitution established that, every 10 years, the number of parliamentarians could be increased by up to 20, depending on the demographic situation in the country. The Sunni community was currently represented by 22 parliamentarians, who formed their own fraction within the parliament. Sunni parliamentarians could be elected in any constituency; in the city of Urmia, for instance, two Sunni representatives had recently been elected to replace Shiite office holders.

58. **A representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran** said that figures from UNHCR showed that, in addition to the large number of Afghan refugees, the country was currently hosting some 12,000 refugees from Iraq. Every child born in the country was registered, regardless of the nationality of the parents. Children born to nationals received an identity document, while those born to foreign parents were entitled to receive documents that would subsequently enable them to naturalize. The nationality law had been amended in 2019 to prevent statelessness by enabling women nationals married to foreigners to transmit their nationality to their children. More than 26,000 of the country's national identity documents had since been issued to children born to parents in that situation.

59. **A representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran** said that the Government had taken many measures in recent years to improve understanding of the issues faced by religious minorities. In 2022 and 2023, for instance, the President and the Minister of Culture and Islamic Guidance had held several consultations and meetings with representatives of those minorities. Government officials had also attended events organized by such groups in order to discuss the challenges they faced. The Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance organized human rights festivals, and between 2021 and 2024 had supported the publication of 186 books on human rights and the rejection of religious and gender-based discrimination. Video games on the topic of human rights had also been released. From 2021 to 2024, 158 books had been published by individuals belonging to religious minorities, and a large

number of educational books had been published for the Armenian, Zoroastrian and Jewish minorities. Publishers from ethnic and religious minorities were entitled to government subsidies and tax exemptions to support and promote their work.

60. Steps had been taken to expedite the issuance of media permits to women belonging to religious minorities. Overall, more than 1,000 media permits had been granted to individuals from minority groups in the past three years; 27 media outlets specifically served members of minority groups, including 14 for the Jewish minority, 7 for the Armenian minority, 5 for the Zoroastrian minority and 1 for the Syrian minority. Other outlets were run by managing directors from minority groups. Television channels were available in a range of languages, including Kurdish, Arabic, Turkish, Turkmen and Balochi. The number of media publications available in languages such as Azeri, Balochi had increased from 260 to 647 in the past five years.

61. **A representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran** said that, since the Iranian revolution, progress had been made in eliminating gender-based discrimination in education. Some 60 per cent of university students were women, and women accounted for 6 per cent of teachers. There had also been a significant increase in the number of female academics.

62. The Government's efforts to promote human rights were underpinned by the teachings of the Qur'an. It attached great importance to human rights training, and the Ministry of Education had developed several programmes to disseminate information on human rights. Any promotion of violence was prohibited. Students from across the country were entitled to run for election to the student council, which published its own magazine. The council's objectives included enabling students to make their own decisions on matters and promoting mutual respect and understanding among all racial and ethnic groups. Efforts had been made to publish school textbooks on the topic of human rights.

63. **A representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran** said that thousands of public officials and members of the judiciary had received training in areas such as citizenship rights. Specific training had been delivered to prison staff on topics including Islamic human rights, the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (the Nelson Mandela Rules) and the regulations of the country's Prisons Organization on respect for human rights.

64. **Ms. Tlakula** said that the Committee's concluding observations would include a request for the State party to provide the Committee with follow-up information on certain topics within one year of reception of those observations. She strongly encouraged the State party to comply with that request.

65. **Mr. Balcerzak** said that he wished to thank the delegation for its participation in the dialogue and looked forward to receiving any additional information that the delegation might deem useful.

66. The Committee was an independent and impartial body that sought to ensure that its comments and recommendations were made with the interests of the population of each State party in mind. He hoped that the State party's authorities would remain in contact with the Committee and work with it to eliminate racial discrimination and ensure respect for the rights and freedoms provided in the Convention.

67. **A representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran** said that, since the previous dialogue with the Committee, the Government had taken a number of steps to give effect to the Convention and the Committee's recommendations, and it would continue to do so. State institutions were engaging more effectively with the Convention, and the involvement of civil society organizations in the Government's efforts had increased. Socioeconomic indicators showed that all parts of the country, including those that were particularly vulnerable, had enjoyed comprehensive development. Nonetheless, he wished to draw the Committee's attention to the negative impact that the imposition of unilateral coercive measures had had on those development efforts.

68. The current dialogue was being held as the world witnessed Palestinians facing basic violations of their rights. It was his expectation that United Nations human rights mechanisms would closely monitor that situation and take appropriate action in order to ensure justice for the Palestinian people. All stakeholders had a shared responsibility to put an end to the brutal

imposition of Israeli apartheid. He wished to conclude by reiterating his Government's unwavering commitment to the principles contained in the Convention and the great value it attached to the constructive dialogue with the Committee. He looked forward to that collaboration continuing in the future.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.