



# International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights

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## Human Rights Committee 143rd session

### Summary record of the 4196th meeting

Held at the Palais Wilson, Geneva, on Tuesday, 11 March 2025, at 10 a.m.

*Chair:* Mr. Soh

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(*continued*)

*Seventh periodic report of Mongolia (continued)*

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

**Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under article 40 of the Covenant**  
(continued)

*Seventh periodic report of Mongolia (continued)* ([CCPR/C/MNG/7](#);  
[CCPR/C/MNG/Q/7](#); [CCPR/C/MNG/RQ/7](#))

1. *At the invitation of the Chair, the delegation of Mongolia joined the meeting.*
2. **A representative of Mongolia**, resuming her delegation's replies to the questions raised at the previous meeting, said that national minorities, including the Kazakh minority, had full access to public services and social welfare. They had the right to vote and to be elected, as well as the right to receive information in their own language. Secondary school textbooks were available in the Kazakh language and there was a national Kazakh-language television channel. Discrimination was a criminal offence, and acts of discrimination, including those committed against members of the LGBTIQ+ community, should be reported to the police for investigation.
3. Law enforcement officers, prosecutors, members of the judiciary and lawyers had received training on the issue of trafficking in children. Following recent amendments to the Code of Criminal Procedure, the limitation period for trafficking in persons was applicable only from the date on which the victim turned 18 years old. Convicted perpetrators of trafficking in persons were not eligible for early release, amnesty or probation. The maximum penalty that could be imposed for trafficking in persons was life imprisonment.
4. Shelters for victims of trafficking were funded by the Government and run by non-governmental organizations (NGOs). The revised Law on Child Protection contained provisions on the rights of child victims of trafficking and the services provided to them, which accounted for a large share of the overall budget allocated to the protection of trafficking victims.
5. **A representative of Mongolia** said that various measures had been taken to mitigate the impact of climate change and to support the transition to a green economy. A bill on climate change, focusing on the reduction of solid fuel consumption, had been drawn up. Subsidies had been introduced to incentivize households to switch to green heating systems. Companies that promoted green technologies received tax breaks and a green credit programme had been introduced.
6. **A representative of Mongolia** said that labour inspections could be announced or unannounced. Labour inspectors could impose fines on companies that failed to meet labour standards. The budget allocated to labour inspectors had increased by 35 per cent between 2024 and 2025. There were 114 labour inspectors, of whom 34 specialized in child labour. The number of child labour inspectors was set to triple over the course of 2025. Children who were at least 13 years old could perform certain types of work, as specified in the Labour Law, under the strict oversight of labour inspectors. The worst forms of child labour were strictly prohibited. Under the Labour Law, all companies were required to adopt a child protection policy. Provincial governors reported annually to the Prime Minister on the outcomes and effectiveness of any activities carried out to protect child rights.
7. **Mr. Quezada Cabrera** said that he would welcome information on the disciplinary procedure applicable to judges, the legal safeguards in place to protect their right of defence and the avenues for appeal against decisions issued by the Judicial Disciplinary Committee. The Committee had received reports of cases in which judges had been suspended or dismissed on the basis of unfounded accusations in 2013 and 2019. He would like to know how those cases had been resolved and whether the judges had been reinstated. It would be helpful if the delegation could explain how the independence of prosecutors was guaranteed and describe the disciplinary procedure applicable to them, as well as the functions and composition of the Prosecutor's Ethics Council and the way in which its members were appointed. He would like more information on the nature and independence of the circuit courts mentioned in the State Party's report ([CCPR/C/MNG/7](#), para. 97), as well as on the regulations relating to the financing of the judiciary. In particular, he wondered whether the judiciary's annual budget was administered by the judiciary itself or another State body.

8. The Committee had received reports of the excessive use of force by law enforcement officers to disperse public demonstrations and of the arrest and detention of peaceful protesters. He would like the delegation to comment on the cases in which five activists had been sentenced in November 2022 to 12 months' confinement in their places of residence for resisting a law enforcement officer during a peaceful demonstration and had unsuccessfully appealed against their convictions. He would also like the delegation to respond to reports that lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons faced restrictions on their right of peaceful assembly and had been prevented from holding the Equality Walk in the capital since 2021. He would welcome more information on the content of the bill on freedom of assembly, its compatibility with article 21 of the Covenant and the timeline for its adoption. He wished to reiterate the Committee's request for an update on the status of the bill to amend the Criminal Code to impose prison sentences for the obstruction of mining and other development projects. Lastly, he would appreciate more information on the status and content of the bill on the legal status of associations and its compatibility with article 22 of the Covenant.

9. **Mr. Yigezu** said that he would like to know whether Mongolia was considering acceding to the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and the 1967 Protocol thereto and if so, what progress had been made towards doing so. He wondered what efforts were being made to develop specific legislation and procedures to protect the rights of asylum-seekers and refugees; and what measures would be taken to ensure that migrants, refugees and asylum-seekers had access to basic social services and to educational, employment and income-generating opportunities, in accordance with international standards. He would like to know what would be done to identify and amend any legal provisions that might lead to situations of statelessness, in order to guarantee the right of all persons to acquire a nationality and safeguard against statelessness among children. He would like to know about any plans to address the issue of statelessness by improving registration systems and expediting procedures for the reacquisition of nationality, as well as any steps taken towards accession to the 1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons and the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness.

10. **Mr. Helfer** said that he would appreciate more information on the division of responsibilities for data protection between the National Human Rights Commission and the Ministry of Digital Development, Innovation and Communications and the nature of the measures taken to protect the data privacy of human rights defenders. He would welcome information on any cases of unauthorized use of personal data during the reporting period, as well as statistical data illustrating the application of the Law on Personal Data Protection since its enactment in 2021. It would be helpful if the delegation could describe the efforts made by the State Party to comply with the international data protection treaties that it had ratified. He would appreciate information on the remedies available to individuals whose data privacy had been violated and the effectiveness of those remedies. He wondered what steps were being taken to disseminate information about data privacy legislation among civil servants, members of the judiciary and law enforcement officers and to raise awareness of data privacy among the general population.

11. In view of reports that the procedures for the registration of religious organizations were applied inconsistently and that some religious groups faced arbitrary denial of registration or delays in registration, he would like to know what steps would be taken to ensure that registration was based on objective and uniform criteria, and whether the Government would consider establishing a mechanism whereby organizations could challenge registration denial in court. The Committee was concerned that some provisions of Mongolian law prevented foreign nationals from exercising their right to freedom of religion and would like to know what steps were being taken by the State Party to ensure that its laws allowed all religious communities, including those involving foreign nationals, to exercise that right.

12. It would be helpful if the delegation could indicate how many individuals had been granted the status of conscientious objectors and comment on reports that alternative civilian service lasted for twice as long as compulsory military service. In the light of reports that persons who qualified for alternative service were required to participate in training delivered by members of the armed forces or pay a fee equivalent to the training and upkeep of one

soldier for a period of 12 months, he wished to know how the State Party ensured that the options available to conscientious objectors did not constitute discrimination against them and how the option to pay a fee was compatible with the Covenant, considering that it required conscientious objectors to support the military and had an adverse impact on people of limited means.

13. **Mr. Teraya** said that he would like to know the timeline for the adoption of the revised bill on freedom of the press. The Committee was concerned at reports that most media outlets were affiliated with or influenced by political interests, that media ownership remained opaque and that many journalists engaged in self-censorship to avoid offending political or business interests. He wondered how the revised bill addressed those concerns and whether it dealt with the regulation of freedom of expression online. He would like the delegation to explain how the country's legislation on access to information was applied in practice and what factors hindered its implementation. The Committee had received reports that the Law on State and Official Secrets was used to unduly restrict access to information, undermining transparency and public accountability. He would be interested to know whether the proposed amendments to the Law addressed that concern. In addition, he would welcome more information on the status of the proposed legislative amendments concerning the dissemination of false information and their compatibility with article 19 (3) of the Covenant.

14. He would appreciate further information on the circumstances surrounding the conviction of Unurtsetseg Naran and the prosecution of Bayarmaa Ayurzana, both journalists, for offences relating to the dissemination of false information. In that regard, it would be useful to receive a full account of the steps taken to ensure that journalists were able to carry out their work free from harassment, intimidation or prosecution, in accordance with the State Party's international human rights obligations. He would also welcome information on the measures being taken to strengthen legal protections for press freedom and to safeguard journalists against undue restrictions and retaliation.

15. He wondered whether the State Party had plans to amend existing prohibitions and restrictions in relation to the right to participate in public affairs, such as the denial of suffrage to persons with intellectual disabilities and the blanket disenfranchisement of convicted prisoners. He would also appreciate information on actions taken to address concerns related to vote-buying and the misuse of campaign funds to benefit incumbents, and on other measures to ensure a level playing field among all political actors and strengthen public trust in electoral processes. Lastly, he would welcome the delegation's comments on reports that five candidates in the 2020 parliamentary elections had been arrested, in view of widespread concerns that the arrests had been politically motivated and had targeted individuals opposed to the Prime Minister or the President.

16. **Ms. Donders** said that she wished to know how the State Party ensured that its legislation was fully aligned with international standards concerning child labour and the safeguarding of children's rights. She wondered what steps had been taken to allocate sufficient human and financial resources for the effective enforcement of child labour regulations and the provision of training to law enforcement officials on the subject. It would be useful to know how the State Party raised awareness among families about the prohibition of child labour, workplace hazards and the importance of education. Additionally, she would welcome clarification as to whether the State Party intended to follow up on the Committee's previous recommendation to prohibit the employment of children as jockeys.

17. She wondered how the State Party raised awareness of the availability of free legal assistance for minor victims of sexual violence and trafficking and facilitated access to that assistance. She wished to know more about the capacity and resources of the rehabilitation centre for child trafficking victims. It would be interesting to learn how the State Party provided direct support to child victims of violence, trafficking and sexual abuse. She would also appreciate clarification regarding the training of law enforcement officials to identify victims of trafficking, investigate sex trafficking and forced labour crimes, and avoid criminalizing trafficking victims, especially children, for acts committed as a direct consequence of being trafficked.

18. It would be useful to receive a full account of measures to reduce the number of children in street situations, including efforts to facilitate their registration and to resolve the underlying causes of their situation, such as poverty and neglect.

*The meeting was suspended at 10.50 a.m. and resumed at 11.10 a.m.*

19. **A representative of Mongolia** said that the revised Law on Courts provided a disciplinary framework for judicial officials. The Judicial Disciplinary Committee, which comprised judges responsible for imposing disciplinary measures on their peers, was integrated within the judiciary rather than being a separate public body. Judges could be removed from office before their term expired only by the President on the basis of a lawfully issued court order. The judiciary submitted annual budget proposals to the Government, which were subsequently debated and approved by the parliament. Judicial budgets had increased considerably in recent years and were expected to rise further.

20. The bill on freedom of assembly had been submitted to the parliament in January 2025. The bill would replace the current approval-based system for organizing demonstrations with a notification-based system, whereby organizers would be required only to notify authorities of their event 48 hours in advance, providing all relevant details. However, demonstrations or gatherings that would block main roads would require police authorization, and gatherings whose explicit purpose was the dissemination of propaganda would be prohibited.

21. The Law on Personal Data Protection tasked the Ministry of Digital Development, Innovation and Communications and the National Human Rights Commission with investigating and responding to incidents involving the misuse of personal data, which was a criminal offence and subject to penalties. Victims had the right to file a complaint with the competent authorities and to seek damages.

22. A bill to amend the Law on Freedom of the Press had been developed following consultations with stakeholders, including civil society, journalists and media stakeholders, and submitted to the parliament. The bill would provide for measures to prohibit government censorship of the media and establish self-regulatory mechanisms within the industry. The right of journalists to protect their sources was enshrined in law. Disseminating intentionally false information was a criminal offence in Mongolia. To avoid ambiguous interpretation of existing provisions, a revised version of the bill had been submitted to the parliament clarifying and redefining the crime of disseminating false information, ensuring alignment with international standards and best practices.

23. Following recent constitutional amendments, the total number of members of parliament had increased to 126. Of those, 98 members were elected from constituencies, while the remaining members were chosen from party nomination lists. Measures were in place to prevent interference and ensure transparency in campaign financing, including legally binding spending limits for political parties. Parties exceeding those limits risked having votes cast for them invalidated. Civil servants and public officials were explicitly prohibited from engaging in political campaigns to maintain neutrality, except for supervised participation in the organization of elections.

24. **A representative of Mongolia** said that, under the Law on Relations between State and Religious Institutions, the responsibility for reviewing and approving applications from religious organizations for registration and renewal of their permits lay with the citizens' representative khurals (assemblies). There were Buddhist, Christian, Muslim and other religious organizations currently operating in the country. A working group had been established to draft amendments to the aforementioned Law in order to clarify some of its provisions. In January 2017, the Citizens' Representative Khural of the Capital City had taken the decision to revoke the registration of the Jehovah's Witnesses as a religious organization, as it had been found that the doctrines they spread in Mongolia were contrary to articles 14 (2) and 16 of the Constitution, the Law on Military Service and the Law on Education. The law stated that the teachings of religious organizations must not undermine national security. No other restrictions were imposed on religious organizations.

25. The Mongolian Bar Association conducted a training programme designed to enhance the effectiveness of the system of free legal assistance for child victims of trafficking in

persons and sexual exploitation. NGOs were involved in providing services to child victims, including through shelters and one-stop service centres. Police departments had introduced specially equipped child-friendly interview rooms.

26. **A representative of Mongolia** said that amendments to the Law on the National Naadam Festival had increased the minimum age for jockeys from 7 to 8 years. Child jockeys were fully covered by accident and life insurance. The amendments to the Law also aimed to protect the safety and health of child jockeys and to hold parents and legal guardians accountable for their well-being. The registration of jockeys had been digitalized to make the process more transparent. The Naadam Festival had been inscribed on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). The Government attached great importance to prohibiting children from participating as jockeys in any festival other than Naadam. It gave priority to safety gear for jockeys, such as helmets. Labour inspectors and police officers conducted regular inspections to ensure children's safety during Naadam.

27. The number of children in street situations was increasing because there were households without officially registered addresses. In 2024, around 220 children had been reunited with their families. Some of those children had experienced online gaming addiction. A dedicated facility had been established to assist children in re-establishing contact with their families and offer them psychological support.

28. The Government recognized the need to give priority to human development as a means of promoting the development of children and safeguarding their interests. In line with that objective, it had established the Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Protection. The Government also recognized that Mongolia, like many other countries, was at risk of losing its national identity, culture and traditions as a result of technological advances and the increased use of digital platforms, especially among children. It was therefore vital for it to provide a supportive environment for children, in which they could thrive mentally and physically.

29. **A representative of Mongolia** said that permits had been issued to 26 asylum-seekers, including 23 male and 3 female applicants, and that 9 of them had already departed from the country. In accordance with the Law on the Legal Status of Foreign Citizens, refugees and asylum-seekers and their children were granted residence permits, which could be extended. They were also offered income-generating opportunities. Permanent residence permits gave persons access to social benefits and public services. The majority of persons seeking to become residents were from Eurasian countries. The National Security Concept of Mongolia, which outlined the national security policy, included a limit on the number of stateless persons in the country. Children born to stateless parents were eligible to apply for Mongolian citizenship upon reaching the age of 16. To date, there were 37 stateless persons in Mongolia, of whom 24 had already applied for citizenship. The children of those persons would become citizens if their applications were approved. Mongolia did not recognize dual citizenship. However, those who wished to restore their Mongolian citizenship could do so under a fast-track procedure, and their applications were transmitted to the President for a final decision.

30. **A representative of Mongolia** said that the Government had introduced more effective anti-corruption laws. Under the new legislation, persons accused or convicted of corruption-related offences were disqualified from standing for election. There had been no arbitrary restrictions on the electoral rights of politicians in the context of the 2020 parliamentary election. However, numerous investigations involving high-ranking officials had been conducted and cases had been referred to the courts. Two candidates in the election had been charged with offences and their trials were ongoing.

31. **A representative of Mongolia** said that, in accordance with national electoral laws, persons declared by the court as having limited or no legal capacity and persons in correctional facilities were disqualified from voting. However, persons who had been sentenced to alternative non-custodial measures enjoyed their full voting rights.

32. **A representative of Mongolia** said that the Constitution provided a legal framework for the independence of prosecutors, and the Law on Prosecutors stated that the prosecution service was to be free of party interference and political pressure. Unless otherwise specified

by law, a prosecutor's dismissal or transfer without his or her consent was prohibited. The Law on Prosecutors provided that prosecutors were to submit proposals to the court based on the evidence presented, guided by their inner conviction. The Law also included a provision on the Prosecutor's Ethics Council, to which complaints were submitted about any violations by prosecutors of ethical rules. Prosecutors who were subject to sanctions by the Council were entitled to appeal the decisions to the administrative court.

33. Between 2021 and 2024, 358 complaints against journalists had been investigated, 250 of which had been dismissed for lack of evidence. Following those investigations, 17 journalists had been charged and sent for trial. To date, seven journalists had been found criminally liable for spreading false information.

34. With regard to the two journalists mentioned by Mr. Teraya, Unurtsetseg Naran had been convicted on charges related to the acquisition of documents classified as State secrets. For that reason, the trial had been held behind closed doors. As the other case was ongoing, he was not in a position to discuss the matter.

35. **Mr. Helfer** said that he was concerned to hear the delegation state that the Jehovah's Witnesses could not be registered as a religious organization in part because their doctrine was contrary to the Law on Military Service. He would appreciate further clarification, as the delegation's statement appeared to be inconsistent with the provision of the Law that allowed for exemption from military service for religious reasons.

36. **Ms. Donders** said that, while the Committee acknowledged that the Naadam Festival, including horse racing, was recognized as cultural heritage, such traditions could sometimes come into conflict with human rights. She was pleased to learn that the Government had taken measures to protect child jockeys. However, she was concerned that the provision of insurance suggested that very young children were still exposed to risks. She therefore wondered whether the State Party would consider initiating and facilitating a wide public debate on the matter, with a view to prohibiting the participation of children in the Naadam Festival.

37. While she welcomed the involvement of NGOs in the provision of assistance for victims of trafficking in persons, those organizations sometimes struggled to obtain sufficient funding. She would therefore like to know what the State Party was doing to ensure sustainable support to victims. Lastly, what measures was the State Party taking to ensure that lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender persons had access to the courts and to build up trust in the judicial system?

38. **Mr. Yigezu** said that he wondered whether persons determined to be refugees by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in Mongolia who did not have residence permits were provided with basic services by the State. He wished to know whether the State Party envisaged the introduction of legislation on asylum and refugee status determination procedures. He would also appreciate information on the time frame for the fast-track procedure for restoring Mongolian citizenship to stateless persons.

39. **Mr. Quezada Cabrera** said that he wished to know whether, under the bill on freedom of assembly, the requirement of 48 hours' notice before the date of a public meeting meant that organizers had to obtain a permit from the police or simply give notification of the intention to hold such a meeting. He recalled the Committee's general comment No. 37 (2020), which stated that having to apply for permission from the authorities undermined the idea that peaceful assembly was a basic right.

40. **Mr. Teraya** said that he wished to know how the proposed offence of spreading false information was defined in the revised bill on freedom of the press. In view of the trial of Unurtsetseg Naran behind closed doors, he wished to know, too, how the Government reconciled the imperatives to protect both freedom of the press and the legitimate interests of the State, and what steps it took to ensure that its efforts to that end did not create the impression of undue limitations on press freedom.

41. **A representative of Mongolia** said that, when the bill on freedom of assembly became law, notice of intent to organize a demonstration would have to be given 48 hours in advance. That advance notice was required in large part to give the police time to divert

traffic and secure the thoroughfares demonstrators intended to occupy. Assemblies that represented a threat to the security of the country were prohibited.

42. Self-governance was the core concept of the revised bill on freedom of the press. In other words, the revised bill would require journalists and other members of the media to establish a self-governing association that would develop, without outside interference, an industry code of conduct. The parties to criminal proceedings conducted behind closed doors – for reasons of State secrecy, for example – enjoyed the rights enshrined in article 14 of the Covenant. Unurtsetseg Naran, for instance, had enjoyed the right to a fair trial both at first instance and on appeal and could yet appeal her conviction to the Supreme Court.

43. **A representative of Mongolia** said that all Mongolian men had a constitutional obligation to perform military service. As Jehovah's Witnesses refused to fulfil that obligation, their status as a religious organization had been revoked. Their freedom to manifest their religion or beliefs was, in accordance with article 18 (3) of the Covenant, subject only to such limitations as were prescribed by law.

44. The budget for efforts to fight crime included funds earmarked for activities to prevent trafficking in persons, including activities organized by NGOs. Provision was made for legal aid and other forms of support for child victims of trafficking in the Law on Child Protection. Efforts to strengthen the legal framework for the protection of victims of trafficking in persons were under way.

45. Steps had been taken to increase the confidence of the LGBTQI+ community in the justice system. Relevant training for prosecutors, for instance, had been organized jointly by the NGO LGBT Centre and the State General Prosecutor's Office.

46. **A representative of Mongolia** said that her country's people were deeply attached to their traditions, horseback riding in particular, and would make every effort to protect them. Moving to a model of horse racing similar to that of other countries, where jockeys were adult professionals, was a possibility, but it would be an unprecedented change.

47. **A representative of Mongolia** said that his country was not a Party to the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees. In 2007, however, it had signed a memorandum of understanding with UNHCR, after which it had become a State member of the International Organization for Migration. As a result, Mongolia was obliged to respect the principle of non-refoulement and issue residence permits to migrants and refugees.

48. The consideration of requests to restore one's Mongolian citizenship was, in accordance with the Constitution, a presidential prerogative. Since the development of a simplified procedure, however, such requests had been forwarded to the Office of the President more expeditiously.

49. **A representative of Mongolia** said that his country already had a law on migration under which persons seeking international protection could apply for asylum or residence permits. The Government therefore saw no need for a separate law on asylum and refugee status determination procedures.

50. Children had already been prohibited from horse racing during the school year. Only in summer, in the run-up to and during Naadam, were they allowed to race.

51. **Mr. Teraya** said that he wished to know over what time period the 358 complaints against journalists or media organizations mentioned by the delegation had been investigated and, in view of the dismissal of 250 of those cases, what determined whether a report of spreading false information led to a prosecution and trial.

52. **A representative of Mongolia** said that the State General Prosecutor's Office could authorize the release of a record of trial proceedings conducted behind closed doors as long as the release of that information did not reveal State secrets.

53. **A representative of Mongolia** said that the 358 complaints had been investigated over the period 2021–2024. Parties to criminal proceedings had the same rights regardless of how – in public or in camera – the proceedings were conducted.

54. **A representative of Mongolia** said that he and his delegation had appreciated the frankness of the constructive dialogue.



55. **The Chair**, thanking those who had made the dialogue possible, said that a wide range of topics related to the implementation of the Covenant had been touched on. Both progress and challenges had been highlighted. The delegation's engagement with the Committee would help the Committee prepare its concluding observations, which would, in turn, help the State Party to fulfil its obligations under the Covenant.

*The meeting rose at 12.55 p.m.*