



International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination

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Summary record of the 3147th meeting*

Held at the Palais Wilson, Geneva, on Monday, 28 April 2025, at 3 p.m.

Chair: Mr. Balcerzak

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* No summary records were issued for the 3143rd to 3146th meetings.

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The meeting was called to order at 3 p.m.

Consideration of reports, comments and information submitted by States parties under article 9 of the Convention (*continued*)

Combined twenty-fourth and twenty-fifth periodic reports of Mauritius
([CERD/C/MUS/24-25](#); [CERD/C/MUS/Q/24-25](#))

1. **The Chair**, welcoming the delegation and the Permanent Representative of Mauritius to the meeting, explained that the other members of the delegation would be participating via video link.
2. **A representative of Mauritius**, introducing his country's combined twenty-fourth and twenty-fifth periodic reports ([CERD/C/MUS/24-25](#)), said that, since the submission of the reports in July 2021, new laws had been adopted, institutions had been reformed and significant political and social changes had taken place. Before outlining those changes, the delegation wished to acknowledge that paragraphs 4 and 5 of the report, which announced the Government's intention not to implement some of the recommendations made by the Committee in its concluding observations on the country's previous periodic reports ([CERD/C/MUS/CO/20-23](#)), represented a failure to engage meaningfully with the Committee's concerns. The Government had since committed itself to being more open and accountable in its dealings with the Committee.
3. In November 2024, a new Government had been elected with a broad mandate to restore public trust in institutions, reinforce the rule of law, improve access to justice and embark upon a constitutional reform process that went beyond inherited colonial structures in order to move towards a more inclusive and egalitarian society. During the course of the dialogue, however, the delegation would seek neither to disown the past nor to engage in a political blame game. It would acknowledge the Government's shortcomings and explain the challenges that it faced in good faith.
4. Some of the questions that the Committee had raised – particularly the issues of disaggregated data, ethnic identification and racial disparities – were deeply complex and sensitive matters in Mauritius. Mauritius was a proudly diverse society but was shaped by a painful history of division. For decades, successive generations had worked to forge a shared national identity, and national anti-discrimination movements had long taken the view that the State should recognize only citizens rather than communities.
5. Against that backdrop, classifying individuals along ethnic lines remained politically sensitive and socially divisive. Even voluntary self-identification, or the collection of data disaggregated by ethnicity, risked creating tensions in a country where, even before independence, the perceived demographic make-up of the country had informally influenced political participation, coalition-building and the allocation of resources. However, the Government accepted that it was difficult to fight what it could not see. If it was to combat inequality effectively, it must find ways of identifying, understanding and measuring it, even if indirectly. One possible approach might be to use alternative indicators relating to geography, language use and socioeconomic stratification.
6. In order to mark the sixtieth anniversary of the Convention, the Government would be translating its text into Kreol Morisien for public dissemination. In accordance with the Government Programme 2025–2029, a constitutional review commission would be set up to make recommendations on constitutional and electoral reforms. Although the Constitution had been amended several times since 1968, its core architecture was largely inherited from the pre-independence era. The intended reform initiative would seek to align the country's constitutional framework with the democratic aspirations of a modern, independent Mauritius and to incorporate a new generation of rights and safeguards for all citizens. The constitutional review commission, which was expected to begin its work shortly, would address several issues of direct relevance to the Committee, including the future of the “best loser” electoral system, which was intended to correct imbalances in ethnic representation that might arise from direct elections, the use of Kreol Morisien as a parliamentary language and broader questions of equality and representation in public institutions.

7. Since the submission of the combined reports in 2021, the Government had adopted the Private Recruitment Agencies Act of 2023, which strengthened protection for Mauritian and migrant workers; the Combating of Trafficking in Persons (Amendment) Act of 2023, which consolidated mechanisms for prosecuting and punishing perpetrators of trafficking and for supporting victims; and the Immigration Act of 2022, which strengthened and modernized the legal framework governing the admission and stay of non-citizens in Mauritius. In addition, the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act of 2024 gave domestic effect to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and promoted the employment of such persons by offering fiscal incentives to employers. In the area of gender equality, steps were being taken to draft a bill on the establishment of an independent body that would investigate complaints of gender-based discrimination and promote the equitable resolution of disputes.

8. The “best loser” system continued to be applied in national elections. A constitutional amendment adopted in 2014 that had temporarily lifted the requirement for elected officials to identify as a member of one of four communities had not been renewed for the 2024 elections. Following those elections, the National Assembly consisted of 36 members from the Hindu community, 9 from the Muslim community, 2 from the Sino-Mauritian community, 19 from the general population, along with the Attorney General, who was a non-elected member. The current Cabinet of Ministers consisted of 15 ministers from the Hindu community, 5 from the general population, 4 from the Muslim community and 1 from the Sino-Mauritian community. A legal amendment was to be adopted that would do away with the requirement for elected officials to self-identify as a member of a community, following which the electoral system as a whole would be scrutinized by the constitutional review commission.

9. In 2012, the Human Rights Committee had recommended that Mauritius should update the 1972 census form with regard to community affiliation and reconsider whether the community-based electoral system was still necessary (CCPR/C/105/D/1744/2007, para. 17). Within Mauritius, arguments for and against the system had been put forward by different parties. Navigating a path through those opposing views – ensuring both the fair representation of all communities and the strengthening of national unity – would be one of the challenges that the constitutional review commission would be required to address.

10. The Government remained strongly committed to implementing a resettlement plan in the Chagos Archipelago and supported the aspirations of Chagossians, as Mauritian citizens, to resettle in the Archipelago if they so wished. In that regard, 50 million rupees (MUR) had been earmarked in the budget for visits to be undertaken to the Archipelago in preparation for proper resettlement.

11. Kreol Morisien was the language routinely spoken by the majority of the population and was therefore not the preserve of any one ethnic group or minority. The Speaker of the National Assembly had set up consultative meetings with a view to considering the practical hurdles that would need to be cleared before that form of Creole could be officially used as a language of the National Assembly. The matter would also be considered by the constitutional review commission, since the Constitution currently provided that the languages of the parliament were English and French.

12. A new public website would shortly be launched to provide access to updated legislation and all the international treaties that Mauritius had ratified, including the Convention. The Government continued to combat human trafficking by implementing the National Action Plan on Trafficking in Persons 2022–2026 and the Combating of Trafficking in Persons Act of 2023, under which a victim-centred approach had been adopted.

13. Migrant workers living in Mauritius, who numbered around 48,450, benefited from the same rights as domestic workers under the country’s labour laws. However, the Government was committed to doing more to eliminate lingering instances of discrimination against them. In that regard, it had adopted the Private Recruitment Agencies Act of 2023 and established bilateral agreements with source countries to ensure fair recruitment practices and to combat discrimination.

14. The Truth and Justice Commission, established in 2009, had submitted its final report in 2011, while the Land Research and Monitoring Unit, set up in 2019, continued to

investigate claims of historical land dispossession and to facilitate mediated settlements. With regard to asylum-seekers and refugees, the Government upheld the principle of non-refoulement and cooperated closely with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and Caritas Mauritius to ensure that refugees and asylum-seekers benefited from humanitarian protection. No cases of statelessness had been reported.

15. Hate speech and incitement to racial or religious hatred were prohibited under national law. The number of cases involving those offences remained low. Incidents of theft from places of worship continued to be monitored closely, with 49 cases under investigation in 2024. The National Human Rights Commission conducted workshops and collaborated with civil society to promote equality, including for persons with disabilities and the LGBTQIA+ community. Campaigns to raise awareness of human rights were aimed at young people and the general public, and a Kreol Morisien version of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights had been published and disseminated.

16. **Ms. Boker-Wilson** (Country Rapporteur) said that the Committee recognized that the State Party was of the view that the collection of data disaggregated by ethnicity ran counter to its aim of placing priority on national unity and on fostering a rainbow nation. However, the failure or refusal to provide such information could itself undermine the national unity that the State Party sought to promote, since a lack of disaggregated data impeded the assessment of the equal enjoyment of human rights by the various groups making up the population. In the light of reports of, for example, the existence of hierarchical structures organized along ethnic and caste lines, the Committee encouraged the State Party to adopt a human rights-based approach to data collection, with disaggregation by key characteristics identified in international human rights law, and to move away from traditional methods based on national averages, which risked masking underlying disparities affecting disadvantaged populations.

17. Meanwhile, she would be grateful for any information derived by inference as to the enjoyment of Convention rights by the various ethnic groups, including the Creoles, the Chagossians and the Ilois, and a description of the steps taken to collect and evaluate socioeconomic indicators across ethnic minorities in order to develop evidence-based policies. The Committee would also appreciate receiving statistics on non-nationals – including migrants, refugees, asylum-seekers and stateless persons – disaggregated by residence status, sex or gender and age.

18. She would be interested to know whether the State Party had taken any steps to enact comprehensive legislation on discrimination and provide victims with appropriate remedies. She was also keen to learn what action it had taken to provide training or awareness-raising on discrimination to magistrates, judges, prosecutors and police as a means of furthering the application of the Convention by the domestic courts. Could the delegation give examples of cases in which the Convention had been directly invoked by the courts?

19. She would like to know whether the State Party had carried out countrywide consultations on the classification of population groups, as requested by the Committee in its previous concluding observations ([CERD/C/MUS/CO/20-23](#), para. 13), and whether it intended to take due account of the principle of self-identification.

20. The Committee would appreciate information on any awareness-raising campaigns or educational programmes aimed at showcasing the contribution of each ethnic group to the development of society in the State Party.

21. It would be useful to hear about the progress made in preparing a human rights action plan for 2024–2030 and any measures taken or envisaged to implement a comprehensive strategy and national action plan to combat racism, racial discrimination and intolerance and manifestations of perceived racial or caste-based superiority.

22. She would be interested to hear about the implementation and impact of the Equal Opportunities Act and about any claims filed under its provisions. She wondered whether any steps had been taken to implement the Committee's recommendations that the Equal Opportunities Commission should be empowered to investigate complaints against civil servants and that penalties should be commensurate with the gravity of the offences

concerned. The Committee encouraged the State Party to consider revising the Act to include language as a prohibited ground of discrimination. Considering the correlation between ethnicity and language in the State Party's population, there was a risk of indirect racial discrimination in setting language as a criterion for access to certain jobs, as it could disadvantage those with a different mother tongue. The Committee also advocated the introduction of a legal provision on special measures to accelerate full and equal enjoyment of rights by disadvantaged groups.

23. With regard to land ownership, she would be interested to know how the Land Division of the Supreme Court dealt with land dispossession and ownership claims. How were such claims dealt with in the Sale of Immovable Property Act and the Affidavits of Prescription Act?

24. She would like to know what impact recent changes in the Combating of Trafficking in Persons Act, which gave the police added powers of investigation and increased support for victims, had had on efforts to combat trafficking.

25. She would appreciate an update on any awareness and sensitization campaigns on racial discrimination carried out by the Crime Prevention Unit since 2021.

26. Information would be appreciated on the efforts made pursuant to the Criminal Code and other relevant legislation to punish persons who employed racist hate speech and organizations that promoted and incited racial discrimination. In the light of the amendments to the provisions of the Code on outrage against public and religious morality and on stirring up racial hatred, she would like to receive updated statistics and details on any investigations, prosecutions and convictions pursued in respect of complaints of acts of racial discrimination, racist speech and racist hate crimes, including over the Internet and through other media.

27. She commended the State Party for having opened the Intercontinental Slavery Museum. She would appreciate information on the implementation of other recommendations by the Truth and Justice Commission relating to land dispossession and ownership claims with a view to fostering reconciliation and achieving transitional justice. It would also be useful to hear about any steps taken to create a well-resourced body, comprising representatives of the Government, equality and human rights bodies, civil society and the concerned communities, to implement those recommendations. She would like to learn about any action the Commission had taken to investigate and respond to the lingering effects of colonialism and the slave trade in the State Party. What other measures was the State Party planning to take in order to address racial disparities and the legacies of colonialism and the slave trade generally?

28. **A representative of Mauritius** said that the Equal Opportunities Commission needed to be overhauled. A number of recommendations to that effect, made a decade previously, had never been implemented. Serious consideration would be given to the recommendation to make language a prohibited ground of discrimination. Despite the fact that education was free and compulsory in Mauritius and that everyone was taught English and French regardless of their community membership, ethnicity or economic and social background, such an amendment might help to preclude the few cases of discrimination associated with language requirements that might otherwise occur.

29. Statistics Mauritius, the national statistical office, collected data for the island of Mauritius, the island of Rodrigues and the Agalega Islands, although the data for the latter were not compiled or reported as the population (330) was so much smaller. While community-disaggregated statistics had not been produced since 1972, other indicators collected by Statistics Mauritius included religion, language used by forefathers and language usually spoken at home.

30. The population census of 2022 had shown that, of a total population of 1,233,427, persons holding Mauritian nationality numbered 1,191,242. Non-Mauritians had numbered 41,855 at the time, but that figure had increased owing to an influx of migrant workers. Around 48 per cent had reported their religion as Hindu and related faiths, 32 per cent as Christian and related faiths, and 18 per cent as Muslim and related faiths, with the remainder reporting another religion or no religion or declining to state their religion. For the country as a whole, 79 per cent spoke Creole only at home.

31. Data on the prison population were very difficult to evaluate because of the frequent movements of detainees entering and leaving prison but, as of 22 April 2025, there were 2,858 detainees, including two juveniles. Data on ethnic origin were not collected. Roman Catholics accounted for 60 per cent of the prison population, Hindus 20 per cent, Muslims 15.5 per cent, Tamils 3.9 per cent and other Christian denominations less than 1 per cent. Foreign nationals accounted for 9.7 per cent of detainees, numbering 279 and hailing from 46 different countries; 178 were men and 101 women. The highest number of foreign nationals were from Madagascar, with 23 men and 27 women. The relatively high number of women reflected the fact that women were often used as “mules” by drug traffickers.

32. There were currently 48,450 migrant workers with valid work permits, 5,474 of whom were women. They worked in a wide range of sectors covering the whole spectrum of economic activity. Bangladeshis accounted for nearly 25 per cent of that group. There were approximately 17,000 Indians, 10,000 Nepalese and 8,000 Malagasy; others came from countries such as Sri Lanka, Kenya, China, France and South Africa.

33. The total number of persons holding refugee certificates issued by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) was 97, including 21 women. There were no recorded or reported cases of stateless persons.

34. Statistics Mauritius examined indicators compiled from census results in order to monitor trends in economic and social phenomena. An enormous amount of data had been gathered, and those statistics would be provided to the Committee.

35. **Ms. Boker-Wilson** said that she would like to know what was meant by the “movements of detainees” referred to by the representative of Mauritius.

36. She wondered whether the State Party planned to repeal the Vagrancy Act of 1867, which had historically been used to control the movement of Indian labourers, in particular, and was thus closely tied to the State Party’s colonial history. She would also like to know whether the State Party had considered the possibility that the Immigration Act might be at odds with the Constitution of Mauritius and the Convention. The morality clause in article 6 of the Act, for example, appeared to reflect colonial-era mentalities and could have a discriminatory impact on minorities, while article 5, barring entry to persons with infectious, contagious or communicable diseases, could be a source of indirect racial discrimination since certain marginalized groups were disproportionately affected by HIV/AIDS.

37. **Ms. Shepherd** said that, even if the State Party did not compile statistics disaggregated by ethnic group, it was a fact that the population of Indian descent outnumbered the population of African descent and that that situation had been a source of tension in the past. She would like to know whether those tensions had dissipated. What factors might have contributed to more harmonious inter-ethnic relations?

38. **Ms. McDougall** said that it would be useful for the Committee to have an indication, even an unofficial one, of the percentage of the population that was made up of descendants of slaves.

39. **Mr. Diaby** said that he would be interested to know what progress had been made in revising the Equal Opportunities Act to take account of economic, social and cultural rights, particularly those of Creole speakers, in line with the Committee’s previous concluding observations. He also wondered what recommendations had emerged following the creation of the Supreme Court’s Land Division. Lastly, he would welcome the delegation’s assurances that the legislation on nationality would not inadvertently render a person stateless in the event that Mauritian nationality was revoked.

40. **Mr. Amir**, noting that the State Party was still waiting to be liberated from a British presence associated with its colonial past, said that he believed that Mauritius carried a standard of hope for Africa and that it had the resources to help the continent emerge from its long colonial night of slavery.

41. The Government was committed to completing the decolonization process with regard to the Chagos Archipelago. Following the country’s declaration of independence, persons who had reached the age of 21 prior to 1995 had been required to choose between Mauritian, British and French citizenship – and were still required to request Mauritian citizenship if

they had not completed that procedure – while persons reaching that age after 1995 had been granted Mauritian citizenship automatically. The Government recognized the need for legal reform in order for citizenship to be granted on an equal footing. While prosecutions were no longer brought under the Vagrancy Act of 1867, that law had not yet been repealed, and prosecution was still possible under other laws for the offences of being a “rogue and vagabond” and of being “idle and disorderly”. It would be necessary to review the discrepancies in the Immigration Act and in laws relating to HIV and AIDS, and there were plans to abrogate legislation that allowed the Prime Minister to withdraw, without due process, Mauritian citizenship from persons who had acquired it. Although care was required not to stir up latent tensions in Mauritian society, there were moments of national unity, such as the electorate’s overwhelming rejection of the previous Administration at the last general election.

The meeting was suspended at 4.35 p.m. and resumed at 4.50 p.m.

42. **Mr. Sibande** (Country Task Force) said that he would welcome further information on the Government’s earlier decision not to implement some of the Committee’s previous recommendations and on any action nevertheless taken in those areas. Specifically, he wished to know what steps had been taken towards the ratification of the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families and the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance, what measures had been adopted to assist persons of African descent, what happened when victims of human rights violations exhausted domestic legal remedies and what progress had been made towards recognizing the Committee’s competence to receive and consider individual communications.

43. It would be useful to have information on the human rights issues raised in the three legal cases against the State brought by activists from the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex community, on the Government’s position in those cases and on its efforts to prevent discrimination against activists from that community. The Committee wished to have information on any plans to establish legislative and policy frameworks to afford legal protection to refugees, and to ensure their full enjoyment of human rights. Had any steps been taken with a view to ratifying the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, the Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees and other related international instruments? He would like to know how the State party addressed statelessness and whether it compiled data on stateless persons. He would welcome an update on birth registration and citizenship laws and an explanation of how their provisions took statelessness into account.

44. He wished to know whether the State Party provided citizens with information concerning the preferential treatment given to certain ethnic groups, how it addressed complaints relating to such treatment and what legislative, policy and other measures had been adopted to ensure that all ethnic groups were treated equally. In particular, he would appreciate information on the legislative, policy and enforcement action taken to address wage discrimination against Creole communities and Muslims of Indian origin. He also wished to know what the State Party was doing to rectify the underpayment of overtime in the textile and apparel industries, particularly in the informal sector. It would be helpful to know whether the State Party had reviewed the procedures used by employment agencies to recruit migrant workers and how it had addressed the concerns of migrant workers and especially of the Bangladeshi workers who formed a significant proportion of the workforce in the garment sector. He wished to know how the State Party minimized the challenges faced by migrant workers and ensured that all International Labour Organization (ILO) conventions and recommendations relating to them were respected and enforced; it would be particularly useful to know when the State Party planned to sign and ratify the ILO Protocol of 2014 to the Forced Labour Convention, 1930; the Employment Policy Convention, 1964 (No. 122); and the Labour Inspection (Agriculture) Convention, 1969 (No. 129).

45. **A representative of Mauritius** said that the three cases brought by members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex community had been decided by the Supreme Court in 2023. The complainants had contended that the section of the Criminal Code that dealt with the offence of sodomy was unconstitutional because it violated a range of human rights, including the rights to liberty, privacy, freedom of expression and non-discrimination. In its decisions, the Court had ruled that the provisions of the Criminal Code on consensual

sex between adult men was unconstitutional because it was discriminatory on the basis of sexual orientation.

46. Around one third of the population was descended from slaves. There were plans to consider the ratification of the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and the Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees as part of a constitutional reform process. Although the law did not differentiate between Mauritian and migrant workers, some employers violated labour regulations, and there had been instances of migrants being lured to the country only to be subjected to conditions that verged on slavery. The Government had responded forcefully, and the migrant workers involved in a recent case had been dealt with as victims and witnesses, even though they lacked work permits, and their abusers had been brought to justice. The country's large textile factories strictly adhered to all labour regulations. Although restrictions had been placed on the flow of migrant workers from Bangladesh to Mauritius, an interministerial committee had been established to develop a rules-based process for their admission to the country.

47. A total of 316 complaints of exploitation and abuse had been lodged by migrant workers in 2024. The missing migrants sought by the tracking team set up by the Passport and Immigration Office had lost their status as legally registered immigrants in Mauritius after absconding from their designated places of residence or employment or because their work permits had not been renewed, often as a consequence of unscrupulous employers who refused to pay the renewal fee. In the past four years, 355 tracking operations had been carried out. Mauritius was firmly committed to enforcing its immigration laws while ensuring that the rights of migrants were upheld and that they were dealt with as victims in cases of exploitation and abuse.

48. The delegation would provide a written reply to the questions concerning the measures taken at the local, national, regional and international levels to acknowledge and address the legacy of the slave trade, colonialism and successive racially discriminatory policies.

49. **Mr. Sibande** said that data on domestic workers were needed in order for the Government of Mauritius to be able to monitor their equal treatment, but no such data had been supplied by the State party in its reports.

50. It was his understanding that the Government continued to apply restrictions on the entry, stay and residence of non-nationals on the grounds of their HIV status. However, the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) had declared such restrictions to be discriminatory and unjustifiable on public health grounds. There was also evidence that non-nationals were unable to access treatment on an equal footing with nationals. Was HIV testing required for the issuance of resident permits exceeding 90 days and were applicants ever rejected on the basis of their HIV status? He wished to know what the Government was doing in order to prevent human rights violations on the grounds of HIV status.

51. When it had amended the HIV and AIDS Act in 2023, it appeared that the Government had maintained the practice of mandatory HIV testing for immigrants despite the fact that mandatory testing was prohibited in the case of Mauritian nationals. He therefore wished to know how the Government planned to reform the HIV and Aids Act and the immigration laws in Mauritius in the light of the Committee's general recommendation No. 37.

52. Recent reports indicated that the Government of Mauritius had made increasing efforts to combat human trafficking, yet no suspected cases had been prosecuted under anti-trafficking laws for the second year in a row. It had also been reported that potential trafficking cases were routinely investigated as crimes involving a less stringent burden of proof or lesser penalties, which weakened the law's deterrent effect. The Committee would therefore appreciate up-to-date information on the concrete measures being taken to combat human trafficking.

53. According to reports received by the Committee, the amount of time that it took to process human trafficking cases remained prohibitively long, which discouraged victims from seeking legal redress. He wished to know how the Government was seeking to ensure that the courts dealt with the backlog of cases and what programmes were in place to encourage citizens to report cases of human trafficking.

54. **Mr. Diaby** said that he would like to know more about the progress made by the Land Division of the Supreme Court in dealing with land dispossession cases. There appeared to have been a decline in the presence of civil society organizations since the Committee's review of the State Party's previous reports, and he therefore wished to know whether those organizations had been subject to any restrictions or forms of intimidation. He also wished to hear the delegation's comments on the fact that the members of the National Human Rights Commission were appointed by the President of Mauritius and its views on how that arrangement might affect the Commission's independence.

55. **A representative of Mauritius** said that 41 cases of human trafficking had been reported from June 2021 to March 2025 but only 6 cases had been prosecuted, and convictions had been secured in only half of those cases. In earlier cases, the majority had led to a conviction. The Government and the Attorney General were committed to addressing the courts' backlog, which was a systemic problem in the criminal justice system. A police and criminal justice bill was being prepared to allow investigative agencies and the prosecutor's office to work together in order to bring suspects to trial as quickly as possible.

56. All migrant workers had to obtain provisional medical clearances in order to enter the country. They were also tested for HIV/AIDS in Mauritius and would have to leave the country if they tested positive. Migrant workers who contracted the disease after having obtained a clearance and testing negative once they had arrived would be treated exactly the same as nationals. Sixty foreign workers were currently receiving treatment for HIV/AIDS in Mauritius. The testing requirement was intended to minimize the risk of disease transmission and safeguard public health and national security. It was applied uniformly and without discrimination on the grounds of nationality or race. Mauritius had a small population and must be very cautious when it came to safeguarding public health.

57. The Land Division of the Supreme Court had significantly reduced the case backlog in recent years, and more than half of all its cases had been satisfactorily settled.

58. With regard to the doubts raised by Mr. Diaby regarding civil society action, the *Wakashio* oil spill provided an example of a large-scale mobilization on the part of civil society. That incident had brought together diverse communities, races and socioeconomic groups that believed that the Government was the root cause of the problems that had arisen in the aftermath of that spill. The new Government was deeply committed to democratic action and placed no restrictions on civil society organizations so long as they abided by the law.

59. **Mr. Sibande** said that he wished to hear more about the situation of domestic workers and about efforts made by the Government to enable civil society organizations to participate in the Committee's review of the State Party.

60. **Ms. Stavrinaki** said that mandatory HIV testing was not in compliance with the Convention, was entirely ineffective as a public health measure and stigmatized migrant workers. She also wished to know why the State party had not yet accepted the individual complaints procedure.

61. **Ms. Boker-Wilson** asked the delegation to explain what measures were in place to guarantee the enjoyment of their Convention rights by the various ethnic groups in Mauritius, including Creoles and the Chagossians.

62. **Mr. Diaby** said that he wished to know whether civil society organizations had been consulted as part of the preparations for the interactive dialogue and, if so, how many meetings had been held and how their views had been taken into consideration by the State party.

63. **A representative of Mauritius** said that he would advocate for a review of the mandatory HIV testing policy.

64. Domestic workers were subject to the same procedures for obtaining residence and work permits as other migrant workers. Not long before the recent elections, responsibility for the relevant admissions procedures had been withdrawn from the Ministry of Labour and Industrial Relations and brought under the remit of the Prime Minister's Office, and an

interministerial committee had been established to draft regulations and ensure a rules-based approach to the processing of all applications.

65. Since assuming his position as the Attorney General of Mauritius in November, he had held various consultations with civil society organizations. While the degree of consultation depended on how each specific office functioned and how it worked with different civil society organizations, he could assure the Committee that he stood ready to listen and to take on board everything that they had to say.

66. The Chair and two Vice-Chairs of the National Human Rights Commission were appointed by the President of Mauritius on the recommendation of the Prime Minister. Although that arrangement, which was laid down in the Constitution, did not perhaps lend itself to an ideal degree of objectivity and independence, the work of the National Human Rights Commission had nonetheless had quite positive results. The appointment procedure would no doubt be considered by the constitutional review commission once it began its work.

The meeting rose at 5.57 p.m.