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the Elimination
of all Forms of
Racial Discrimination**

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COMMITTEE ON THE ELIMINATION OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION

Sixty-sixth session

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 1687th MEETING

Held at the Palais Wilson, Geneva,
on Wednesday, 2 March 2005, at 3 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. YUTZIS

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The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

CONSIDERATION OF REPORTS, COMMENTS AND INFORMATION SUBMITTED BY STATES PARTIES UNDER ARTICLE 9 OF THE CONVENTION (agenda item 4) (continued)

Initial and second periodic reports of Ireland (CERD/C/460/Add.1; HRI/CORE/1/Add.15/Rev.1)

1. At the invitation of the Chairman, the members of the delegation of Ireland took places at the Committee table.

2. Mr. FAHEY (Ireland), introducing the initial and second periodic reports of Ireland (CERD/C/460/Add.1), said that the high-level delegation indicated how seriously Ireland viewed its obligations under the Convention; it was looking forward to a constructive and open dialogue with the Committee.

3. In 2000, Ireland had ratified the Convention and had made the declaration under article 14. It had a long history of commitment to human rights, as clearly articulated in the Constitution of 1937. At the heart of the Irish Constitution was a system of fundamental rights that were guaranteed and vindicated by right of action in the Irish courts. It was the duty of the Irish organs of State to uphold those rights and of the Irish courts to require compliance with them by the State, private citizens and organizations. Access to the courts was guaranteed to everyone in law and in fact. There was a comprehensive system of judicial review covering all public administrative acts and guaranteeing redress to anyone affected by the improper use of administrative and legal powers. The Irish courts and legislature had established a system of constitutional jurisprudence and statute law that had developed the establishment and vindication of fundamental rights and freedoms to a very high standard.

4. Ireland had undergone remarkable changes in the past 15 years: it now had one of the fastest-growing economies in the developed world; from a country of high emigration it had become one of net immigration. It now offered real opportunities for life and work to its own people and to foreigners. Forced emigration was a thing of the past and the contribution of foreign workers would be necessary for the continued expansion of the economy. Ireland's own experience of emigration provided insight into the hope and anxiety everyone experienced when seeking a new beginning abroad. Ensuring that immigrants were treated fairly and with dignity was therefore a priority.

5. Migration could often be seized upon to promote extremist views, but in Ireland there had so far been no sign of "immigration politics". The Government believed that reasoned political discourse on issues relating to minorities and their integration would promote mutual understanding with a view to building an integrated society. The participation of minorities in mainstream politics would be of importance in years to come so that they could play their part in shaping the future.

6. In recent years the population had reached its highest level since 1881 and as a result of immigration there were now more than 170 nationalities. Since the enlargement of the European Union (EU) around 50,000 people from new member States had migrated to Ireland. Proud of its economic and social achievements, Ireland fully recognized the part played in them

by the EU, the United States of America - a major investor - and communities from overseas. An example of the contribution of immigrant communities was the interpretation they had provided for athletes and coaches during the Special Olympics hosted by Ireland in 2003. However, economic and social progress had been paralleled by increasing diversity. Ireland was now a multicultural society and had to adapt its policies and legislation accordingly, which presented a considerable challenge. Migration was a phenomenon but the needs of migrants must not be forgotten.

7. The Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform was working on proposals for a new legislative framework in the area of immigration. A comprehensive immigration and residence bill would provide a fair legislative framework for dealing with all aspects of the entry and stay of non-nationals, whether as long-term migrants or temporary visitors. The Minister's Department would shortly publish a discussion paper outlining the matters that needed to be addressed with a view to public debate prior to the drafting of the provisions.

8. The Employment Equality Act, 1998 and the Equal Status Act, 2000 prohibited direct and indirect discrimination in the areas of employment and access to goods and services on nine grounds: gender, marital status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race or membership of the Traveller community. The Equality Authority and the Equality Tribunal ensured effective implementation of that legislation.

9. Further amendments had been made to those Acts by the Equality Act, 2004, which gave effect in domestic law to Ireland's obligations as an EU member State in implementing Council Directives 2000/43/EC, 2000/78/EC and 2002/73/EC. The overall effect of those directives was to require member States to prohibit direct and indirect discrimination and harassment on grounds of gender, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age and sexual orientation with regard to employment, self-employment or occupational and vocational training. Sexual harassment and victimization were also prohibited and the race directive also applied to discrimination in access to and supply of goods and services.

10. The enlargement of the EU on 1 May 2004 had taken place under Ireland's presidency and the event had been marked by a day of welcomes in Dublin. His Government had also taken the opportunity provided by the presidency to highlight developments in combating racism at the European level, inter alia, by hosting a conference on June 2004 entitled "Combating Racism through Building a more Inclusive, Intercultural Europe".

11. It was important that minority groups should be able to go about their daily lives free from the threat of harassment and assault. The Irish police force had a Racial and Intercultural Office and 145 ethnic liaison officers; it had also developed a working definition of a racist crime. There were plans to encourage members of the ethnic communities to join the police as it was crucial that the law enforcement agency should be representative of the new, diverse Ireland in order to ensure professional and effective policing in the future.

12. The Travelling community was the most disadvantaged indigenous minority. The question whether they constituted an ethnic minority was a matter of dispute. What was not in dispute was that Irish Travellers had suffered from extensive exclusion, deprivation and discrimination, and his Government was committed to remedying the situation. He had been instructed by the Prime Minister to coordinate the work of all ministers so as to ensure the

efficiency of Traveller-specific programmes and better outcomes. Although the Government spent more than €100 million each year on the Traveller-specific programmes relating to education, health, housing and other sectors, and the equivalent of €1,000 per Traveller, the outcomes thus far had not been satisfactory.

13. Under the first Traveller accommodation programme covering the period 2000-2004, an additional 1,371 Traveller families had been provided with permanent accommodation by or with the assistance of local authorities and voluntary bodies. The number of families in private rented accommodation with support from the Government's Rental Assistance Scheme had increased, and those on unauthorized sites had halved. A total of €130 million had been spent on those programmes during that period.

14. Those improvements would provide the basis for greater progress during the next Traveller accommodation programmes covering the period 2005-2008, currently being prepared by local authorities. The programmes would include annual targets for the provision of all types of accommodation that would be monitored on a regular basis. The Minister for Housing and Urban Renewal had identified as priorities the need to improve the rate of accommodation provision and to address the very low level of transient accommodation. The Housing (Traveller Accommodation) Act, 1998 had recently been reviewed by the National Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee. The Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government had accepted all of the recommendations and was taking steps towards their implementation.

15. In January 2005, the Government had launched the National Action Plan against Racism to honour commitments undertaken at the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance. The Plan provided strategic direction to combat racism and to promote the development of a more inclusive, intercultural society in Ireland. The Plan had been preceded by a 12-month consultation process involving a wide range of stakeholders, including Government, social partners and civil society. The Government was establishing a strategic monitoring group representative of those stakeholders to oversee implementation of the Plan, which was also in line with the Committee's general recommendation XVIII. It would focus on five key areas for action: protection, inclusion, provision, recognition and participation.

16. Examples of policies and programmes to encourage a more diverse society could be seen in the area of health. The Health Service Executive for the Eastern Area had launched a health strategy for ethnic minorities in September 2004. The strategy, inter alia, identified health and service-related issues requiring attention and made recommendations promoting overall health for persons from ethnic minorities. There was also increasing emphasis on involving ethnic minorities in the development of health programmes. Ethnic minorities had helped to draft the Eastern Area Health Strategy. Two projects funded under the Combat Poverty Agency's "Building healthy communities" pilot programme were training ethnic minorities to voice their health needs. Ireland was phasing in a new primary health-care strategy with strong emphasis on increased community participation.

17. At present, the Department of Education and Science was finalizing its draft five-year strategy on Traveller education. It addressed all aspects of Traveller education from pre-school to adult and continuing education, and also the needs of Traveller parents, who were vital to the

success of any education programme. After Easter 2005, the Department of Education and Science planned to launch intercultural guidelines for primary schools, which would be distributed to all primary school teachers. Similar guidelines for other levels of education were expected to be available before the end of the year. The Department had recently published the second edition of an information booklet entitled “Schools and the Equal Status Acts”, which outlined how the inclusive school could prevent and combat discrimination.

18. As for follow-up to the current dialogue with the Committee, he welcomed the appointment of a follow-up coordinator. His Government stood ready to support the coordinator, Mr. Kjaerum, in his work relating to Ireland. The National Action Plan against Racism made a specific commitment to benchmark progress in addressing racism through the preparation of national reports to the Committee; the follow-up coordinator could have a role to play there.

19. The CHAIRMAN thanked the delegation for its statement. In particular he welcomed the comments about recent developments in the Committee’s work - the appointment of a follow-up coordinator - and the emphasis laid on the World Conference against Racism.

20. Mr. HERNDL (Country Rapporteur) welcomed the delegation. He noted that the report attributed Ireland’s late ratification of the Convention to the country’s dualist system, which had necessitated a thorough legislative review before ratification. However, Ireland’s ratification record was a good one. He agreed that ratifying the Convention and making the declaration pursuant to article 14 sent an important signal both nationally and internationally regarding Ireland’s determination to tackle racism (para. 3). Although the Government’s recognition of the individual complaints mechanism provided for under article 14 of the Convention was laudable, he wished to know what had been done to publicize it. Since the report indicated that it was not on the Government’s current agenda to ratify the Migrant Workers Convention (para. 429), he wished to know whether it hoped to do so in the future.

21. He commended the delegation for the quality of the report, which contained a wealth of detail and 32 annexes with the full texts of relevant legislation and reports by national institutions. He welcomed the involvement of NGOs in the drafting process (paras. 373-390) and noted that considerable information had also been received from other sources. He had found the inclusion of background information to be helpful, and hoped that such information would not be omitted from future reports.

22. Five specialized bodies had been established to safeguard human rights and help prevent discrimination: the Human Rights Commission; the Equality Authority; the Director of Equality Investigations; the Gardaí Racial and Intercultural Office; and the National Consultative Committee on Racism and Interculturalism. He asked for clarification of the link between the Good Friday Agreement and the establishment of the Human Rights Commission, and suggested that that body should receive more resources to enable it to fulfil its mandate. Since the Gardaí Racial and Intercultural Office was advisory in nature, he asked how incidents of police racism were dealt with. He also asked what function was served by the Gardaí Human Rights Unit (para. 154). He wondered whether there was not any overlap or duplication between the work of the Human Rights Commission and that of the Ombudsman.

23. He took note of recent developments in terms of national legislation and international legal instruments, and asked to be updated on the Review of the Prohibition of Incitement to Hatred Act (para. 123) in relation to the possible ratification of the Cybercrime Convention on combating racism and xenophobia through computer systems and its protocol.
24. He wished to know the delegation's thoughts on what could be done to make the content of the Convention directly applicable within the framework of domestic law: what mattered was that an individual should be able to invoke the provisions of the Convention before a court or administrative authority. The attitude of the national judiciary was more important in that regard than whether the country had a dualistic or monistic system. He suggested that the European Convention on Human Rights Act, 2003 might serve as a useful precedent.
25. With respect to article 2 of the Convention, he recommended that the Government consider expanding the scope of the Equal Status Act so that it covered other kinds of State activities. In connection with articles 3 and 4, he noted that the All-Party Committee on the Constitution would take the requirements of article 4 into account. He also noted that a Press Council was envisaged, and enquired about the timetable for revision of the Incitement to Hatred Act. He wished to know whether racial hatred as a motive was considered to be an aggravating circumstance in criminal cases.
26. In relation to article 5, he asked about the Refugee Appeals Tribunal provided for under the Refugee Act, 1996 as no such tribunal was mentioned in the report. He also asked whether an analogous institution existed for immigrants. He wished to know more about the State party's experience of the dispersal system. The changes to the law on nationality, which had taken effect in January 2005, should alleviate Ireland's dilemma with regard to foreign parents of Irish-born children, as citizenship would no longer be granted automatically to every child born on Irish soil. However, he appealed to the State party to apply the principle of family unification, not family separation, when considering individual cases, in particular with regard to the parents of children born before the new law had come into effect.
27. He expressed concern about the rules that allowed employment to be refused on religious grounds where it was reasonable to do so in order to maintain the religious ethos of the institution concerned. He asked what the State might do to promote multi-denominational schools, of which there were very few. Given the acknowledged increase in racist incidents and Islamophobia (paras. 267-272), he asked what was being done to combat racism.
28. Appendix 1 to the report contained information on initiatives taken to combat discrimination against Irish Travellers. In that appendix, the Government admitted that implementation of the recommendations of the Task Force on the Travelling Community had been deficient, as had monitoring of the impact of the programmes that had been introduced. He called on the Government to reconsider its decision not to recognize Irish Travellers as an ethnic group, which he believed would be of benefit to that community, even if the acknowledgement were of no domestic legal significance. He stressed the importance of involving Travellers in the drawing-up and execution of national strategies. He questioned whether it had been advisable to remove discrimination cases involving licensed premises from the Equality Tribunal to the District Court (appendix 1, para. 53), which would not have the same expertise and experience in such cases. He wished to know whether the judiciary was receiving training on anti-discrimination policy formation. He suggested that the amendment of public order

legislation through the Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 2002 should be revoked. He noted with concern the high rate of unemployment among the Traveller community, which indicated that much remained to be done to make Ireland a better place for Travellers. In conclusion, he said that Ireland seemed to be winning the hearts and minds of the people so that they would be receptive to the goals of the legislation put in place.

29. Mr. BOYD asked whether there was any explicit legal prohibition of the use of racial profiling by law enforcement agencies or any guidelines issued on the use of such profiling. What mechanisms were in place to allow individuals who suffered discrimination by the police to seek redress and to hold law enforcement officers to account for taking action on the basis of negative racial stereotypes? He emphasized that allowing race to influence action taken was acceptable only in cases where particular information had been received about a specific case. He asked whether Ireland was sensitive to the perceived increase in discrimination by public actors and private citizens, and what sense of urgency the Government felt in that connection. He would appreciate further explanation of Ireland's reluctance to accord Travellers the status of an ethnic group, and wished to know what definitions the Government used to assess race or ethnicity. Given that Catholic schools were allowed, when making admission decisions, to give preference to Catholic pupils, he wished to know what options were open to non-Catholic pupils if places were scarce in multi-denominational schools.

30. Mr. AVTONOMOV said that he had been particularly impressed by the inclusion of the views of NGOs in the periodic report.

31. On the question of education, the universality of basic minimum education was a positive fact, but he wondered if children from a particular ethnic group had the possibility of studying in their own language, in addition to English and Irish.

32. He would welcome further clarification of the issue of Irish citizenship and how the situation had changed. According to the report, non-national parents of Irish-born children did not enjoy an automatic entitlement to reside in the State, which raised issues of family separation.

33. Regarding the activities of the Ombudsman to protect against discrimination on grounds of race or ethnic origin, he would be interested to hear how many complaints had been dealt with, what issues had been involved, how many recommendations had been complied with by government bodies and what anomalies the Ombudsman had detected in existing legislation.

34. As to the plans to combat exclusion and poverty, he wondered to what extent they affected Travellers, foreigners and other minority groups. Referring to the appendix on Irish Travellers, he had been impressed by the number of measures taken by the Government to improve their status. However, according to media and other sources, there were programmes to settle the Travellers, for example by closing caravan halting sites in Dublin. He would be interested to hear how the Travellers were consulted on plans to improve their condition.

35. Mr. THORNBERRY said that ethnicity disputes could be difficult for the Committee as there was no general definition of an ethnic minority in United Nations treaties. However, there was an international understanding of the concept. The Committee's general recommendation VIII highlighted the importance of the notion of self-identification, and general

recommendation XXIV alerted Governments to the difficulties that arose when they decided to grant ethnic group status at their own discretion. If the matter of deciding whether a group was an ethnic group was accepted by the Committee, that would impair the functioning of the human rights treaty system. The case of the Irish Travellers could serve as a test case for a society which was attracting an ever wider range of groups onto its territory. The determination of status issue might be of high importance, as since the 1990s minority groups had been an important repository of specific rights which the Committee continued to recognize. He agreed with colleagues in questioning the reasons for not agreeing with the self-identification expressed by Travellers' organizations, particularly when it appeared to be compounded by attitudes in the wider society, which did perceive the group as different. Was it a matter of intellectual or decisional uncertainty, or were there consequences for self-identification which the Government was not prepared to contemplate? The information provided in the report on the Traveller community suggested that such a group would be protected by the Convention, not as a matter of extension of Convention rights to Travellers by the Government, but as a matter of intrinsic right. He would welcome further comment on that situation.

36. On the question of freedom of speech, he wondered whether the reservation to article 4 was necessary in view of the phrase "with due regard to the principles embodied in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the rights expressly set forth in article 5 of this Convention", which was used in that article. He would welcome further clarification of the reasons for the reservation.

37. More emphasis needed to be placed on the implications of article 3 on segregation and apartheid. He drew the delegation's attention to the Committee's general recommendation XIX, which stated that although that was not a matter of government policy, a condition of partial segregation might arise as an unintended by-product of the actions of private persons.

38. The transition from a country of emigration to one of immigration posed a number of major challenges, including the question of the nature of Irish identity. But it also offered opportunities in terms of enhanced cultural diversity in an ever more vibrant society.

39. Mr. VALENCIA RODRÍGUEZ said that the Government's administrative framework to promote equality and guarantee the observance of legislation was relatively extensive and complex, and it was to be hoped that it would yield positive results. The necessary coordination should be established between all bodies in that area in order to avoid duplication of effort and to ensure the best use of resources. He would be interested to learn more about the 18 cases that had been initiated under the Prohibition of Incitement to Hatred Act, 7 of which had resulted in convictions. What sentences had been imposed, and what had happened in the cases where there had been no conviction?

40. He would welcome additional information on social policy measures to combat poverty and promote gender equality. The situation of women merited special attention, particularly as one third of all asylum-seekers had been women.

41. It was important that Travellers were considered a minority group, irrespective of the debate on ethnicity; various measures benefiting them had been adopted in the areas of health, housing, employment and education. The State party should continue to provide information relating to Travellers, particularly on results achieved in overcoming the inequalities affecting them.
42. The fact that special criminal courts could be established in accordance with the Constitution was a matter for concern, as it involved removing certain matters from the competence of the ordinary courts, which could have very important consequences for respect for human rights. He would be interested to hear what laws the special courts applied.
43. He would welcome clarification on whether the Convention had been incorporated into domestic law, could be invoked in the courts and applied directly.
44. As legislation was in place prohibiting incitement to hatred and banned organizations which promoted and incited racial hatred and discrimination, the Government should consider the possibility of withdrawing its reservation to article 4 of the Convention. He would welcome information on cases where that provision had been applied.
45. Referring to the establishment of the Reception and Integration Agency, he would be interested to hear what the Government understood by “integration”, and the scope of its policy in that area.
46. The human rights and anti-discrimination training provided to law enforcement officers should be developed and extended to judicial officers, with special emphasis on the Convention and the work of the Committee.
47. There had been an increase in the number of cases of racial discrimination initiated in relation to the Employment Equality Act; the State party should provide information in its next report on the groups most affected, the measures taken and the results achieved.
48. He wondered if illegal immigrants had access to health services in emergencies and, if so, in what conditions.
49. Mr. KJAERUM commended the State party for its vibrant civil society and its Human Rights Commission, which within a short time had established itself as one of the most prominent in Europe. He hoped that the Government would provide it with the necessary support, including financial resources. It was necessary to create greater public awareness of the redress mechanisms available to persons confronted with discrimination.
50. He would welcome an explanation why ICERD, unlike the European Convention on Human Rights, had not been incorporated in domestic law.
51. With regard to article 5 (e) of the Convention, it was worrying that the Travelling community experienced significantly worse health than the majority population, including lower life expectancy and high levels of infant and maternal mortality. Asylum-seekers also had problems in accessing health care, particularly in the more remote areas, partly owing to language and financial barriers. A 2004 newspaper report had criticized the Mosney accommodation centre, which housed 800 people, for having insufficient funding and staff to

provide the necessary health services. In particular, there were problems with the antenatal care of pregnant female asylum-seekers. As women were particularly vulnerable in that regard, he drew the State party's attention to the Committee's general recommendation XXV, which dealt with the issue of double discrimination. Were there any initiatives in place to address that issue? He would welcome elaboration on the issue of women refugees.

52. He would also be interested to hear more on unsuccessful asylum-seekers detained pending deportation. Where were they detained and for how long? And had any other alternatives to detention been considered? What measures had been taken to separate those awaiting deportation from detainees convicted or accused of crimes? He drew the State party's attention to general recommendation XXX on non-citizens, which dealt with the issue of detention.

53. Referring to the census pilot project, the question on ethnic background should be refined, as the proposed categories - white (which included Irish and Irish Traveller) and black (which included African or any other black descent) - were too broad.

54. According to a recent newspaper report, there was increasing exploitation of illegal immigrants in the Irish labour market, and there were too few inspectors to deal with the situation. The Government needed to address that dangerous development.

55. Finally, he agreed that the Travellers should be recognized as an ethnic minority.

56. Mr. de GOUTTES said that perhaps Irish legislation in that field could be supplemented by including a definition of racist offences and introducing an aggravating circumstance for racially motivated acts.

57. He would be interested to hear an explanation why it had taken Ireland 32 years to ratify the Convention. Could it all be attributed to the dualist system? Regarding the Travellers, he would be interested to hear how an ethnic group was defined. The European Commission against Racism and Intolerance had also raised that issue.

58. In connection with article 4, it seemed that the State party had reconciled freedom of speech and the criminalization of the distribution of racist material, and therefore the reservation could be lifted. What initiatives had been taken in the area of freedom of speech to prevent incitement to hatred in the media by journalists and politicians? He would be interested to hear the effects of the Anti-Racism Protocol for Political Parties.

59. Mr. de GOUTTES said that Ireland's next periodic report should include detailed statistics on the number of racial discrimination complaints that had been brought before the Office of the Ombudsman, the courts and other competent bodies. He wondered how the Government reconciled the increasing numbers of non-Catholic immigrant children in Ireland with the large number of Catholic schools.

60. Mr. LINDGREN ALVES requested further information on the content of the Good Friday Agreement, and asked whether the establishment of the national Human Rights Commission had been dependent on the conclusion of that Agreement. He wished to know how the Government guaranteed the right to education when such a large number of schools in Ireland were not State-run. He also wished to know whether the initiatives to provide housing for Travellers compelled them to abandon their traditional way of life, and thus repressed their fundamental cultural characteristics. The Committee would be interested to know how the rights of persons leading a transitory lifestyle were guaranteed.

61. Mr. SICILIANOS commended the adoption of the National Action Plan against Racism and the importance it attached to ethnic diversity. Further information should be provided on the provisions that the Action Plan made for Travellers. He asked what were the mandate and working methods of the national Human Rights Commission. According to the State party report, the provisions of article 4 of the Convention were implemented through domestic legislation, despite the fact that a reservation had been entered concerning that article. He wished to know how those provisions were implemented and why the reservation had not been withdrawn. He asked what legislative measures had been taken to transpose EU Directive 2000/43 into domestic legislation, and whether the principle of shared burden of proof was applied only in employment-related cases, or could also be used in cases relating to other issues, such as housing.

62. Mr. TANG Chengyuan asked what special procedures were required for the Convention to be invoked in Ireland, since it had not been automatically incorporated into domestic law. According to the State party report, the Irish Constitution provided that freedom of expression could not be used to undermine public order or morality or the authority of the State. He asked whether a potential violation of article 4 of the Convention would be considered to be a violation of that provision of the Constitution. He wished to know whether there had been cases of the dissemination of racist propaganda and incitement to racial hatred that had not been punished.

63. Ms. DAH said that Ireland should be commended for having ratified the amendment to article 8 of the Convention and having submitted a declaration under article 14. She urged the Government to withdraw its reservation to article 4. She wondered whether Ireland had only felt it necessary to ratify the Convention owing to the pressures of recent events. The Committee welcomed the involvement of NGOs in the drafting of the State party report.

64. The Committee was concerned that Travellers in Ireland fell outside the legal definition of an ethnic minority, and wished to know what measures were being taken to promote their integration. She asked how many complaints about the police had been received by the Garda Síochána Complaints Board, how such complaints were treated and how many fell within the remit of the Convention.

65. Mr. CALITZAY asked whether the housing that had been provided for Travellers was still surrounded by high walls, as it had been in the past, and if so, how the Government planned to address the issue of segregation.

66. Mr. AMIR wished to know what measures were being taken to prevent Islamophobia. The Committee had been informed that Muslims and Arabs travelling through Dublin airport from other EU member States were required to go through extra security procedures that were not applied to other EU passengers. Although they were not prevented from travelling, they were treated differently from other passengers on grounds of their ethnicity and religion, which was tantamount to racial discrimination.

67. Mr. FAHEY (Ireland) said that racism had only become a widespread issue in Ireland over recent years, owing to the change in migration patterns from emigration to immigration. That was one of the main reasons why Ireland had ratified the Convention only quite recently. He thanked the members of the Committee for their questions, which his delegation would endeavour to answer as thoroughly as possible at the following meeting.

The meeting rose at 6 p.m.