

RWANDA

CCPR A/37/40 (1982)

214. The Committee considered the initial report of Rwanda (CCPR/C/1/Add.54) at its 345th, 346th and 348th meetings held on 30 and 31 March 1982 (CCPR/C/SR.345, 346 and 348).

215. The report was briefly introduced by the representative of the State party who explained the principle of separation of powers as laid down in the Constitution of his country, the categories of courts responsible for protecting public rights and freedoms and the provisions governing the appointment and removal of judges. He indicated that there were no lower administrative courts in Rwanda other than the Council of State, owing to a shortage of qualified judges and legal personnel.

216. Members of the Committee noted with appreciation that Rwanda had been one of the first 35 countries to ratify the Covenant, thus bringing it into force in 1976. However, they regretted the fact that, although submitted much later than the date on which it was due, its report was too brief to provide specific information under each article of the Covenant. Moreover, the report was lacking in information on the national upheavals that Rwanda had experienced in 1978 and their impact on the enjoyment of the rights provided for in the Covenant, as well as on the National Revolutionary Movement for Development which seemed to be the foundation of all political life in Rwanda and to have direct involvement in the Government of the country, on its statutes, structure and operation, and on its role in protecting human rights in the country.

217. It was pointed out that it was for the courts and the administrative authorities, including the police, to give effect to the provisions of the Covenant on behalf of the State and it was asked whether the Covenant had been published in French and the other languages used in the country; whether information on the Covenant was given to law enforcement personnel as part of their training; whether copies of the Covenant were made available to the bar and law schools in the country; what percentage of the population was illiterate and to what extent the population was acquainted with the concepts embodied in the Covenant, and how, and to what extent, the understanding and implementation of human rights were influenced by the culture and traditions of the Rwandese people.

218. With respect to article 2 of the Covenant, it was noted that, according to the Constitution, treaties affecting the rights of sovereignty could be executed only after approval by law and it was asked what the status of the Covenant was under the Constitution; whether the Covenant required approval in the form of an ad hoc law in Rwanda and, if so, whether such a law had been enacted, whether when drafting the new Constitution in 1978, the Government had specifically taken into account the obligations it had assumed internationally for the protection and promotion of human rights in its territory. Noting that, according to the Constitution, the judicial branch would ensure respect for the “peoples rights and freedoms”, members asked whether someone whose rights had been violated by the Government could invoke the Covenant before Rwandese courts or whether he had to invoke corresponding international legislation; whether the courts had a role in the interpretation and application of human rights; whether the Constitutional Court was already in operation; whether a law could be declared incompatible with the Covenant or unconstitutional and,

if so, what judicial measures were available to citizens in that regard. Information was requested on the access which ordinary people had to the courts, how expensive that procedure was and what role the courts played in the day-to-day life of society, particularly in view of the shortage of legal personnel to give effect to, or to monitor observance of, the rights provided for in the Covenant, and on the steps taken by the Government to ensure that people would be trained for the legal profession in sufficient numbers not only for government service but also to advise and assist citizens in the defence of their rights.

219. Regarding article 3 of the Covenant, information was sought on the present status of women in Rwanda and on their role in practice and, particularly, on the percentage of women who had acquired economic independence and were involved in the political life of the country or held positions in legislative, judicial and other State organs; on the extent to which they participated in the educational, medical and other professions of particular importance to society; whether the law discriminated between men and women in such matters as adultery, and on the extent to which traditions had helped or obstructed the implementation of the equal rights of men and women to the enjoyment of their rights under the Covenant.

220. In relation to article 4 of the Covenant, it was asked whether there had been an emergency situation in Rwanda in recent years and, if so, whether normal procedures and provisions of the Covenant were derogated from.

221. As regards article 6 of the Covenant, it was pointed out that ensuring equal enjoyment of the right to life included affirmative action by State parties to protect human life against criminal offences, epidemics and infant mortality and it was asked what steps had been taken or were envisaged to ensure the enjoyment of the right to life. Noting that although the Covenant did not prohibit the death penalty, it provided that the death penalty should be imposed only for serious crimes, members asked what crimes were punishable by death in Rwanda, whether the State Security Council could pass the death sentence; how many death sentences had been pronounced and by which courts since the coming into force of the Covenant on 23 March 1976 and how many of them had been carried out.

222. With reference to articles 7 and 10 of the Covenant, members pointed out that it was not enough to enact legislation providing for the punishment of anyone who committed torture but that the Government had to exercise control over its own agents in order to prevent torture, punish those responsible for it and provide compensation to the victims, and it was asked how many individuals were confined in prisons or detailed elsewhere in recent years; whether any allegations of ill-treatment or torture while in detention had been made by detainees and, if so, what measures were taken in that respect; how many prisoners had died in detention and what the cause of death had been in such cases; how many prisons existed in Rwanda and what kind of control the authorities exercised to ensure that torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment was not inflicted on persons in custody and to punish those responsible for such acts when they occurred; for how long and under what conditions solitary confinement could be applied in Rwanda; what steps were taken to ensure that persons deprived of their liberty were treated with respect and that they were visited by legal representatives and members of their family.

223. In connection with article 8 of the Covenant, information was requested on the circumstances

in which forced or compulsory labour might be imposed.

224. As regards article 9 of the Covenant, reference was made to a statement in the report that ministerial directives prescribed for the conditions governing arrest and preventive detention and it was pointed out that, according to the Covenant and the Constitution of Rwanda, persons could only be detained in accordance with procedures established by law and that the report gave no indication of what the applicable law was. Information was requested on the cases provided for by law where measures of security could be applied for reasons of public order or State security referred to in the Constitution. It was asked what procedures governed detention before a suspect was charged with an offence, what guarantees applied during the period of such detention, whether the courts had any control over the kind and duration of detention before formal charges were brought and whether any procedure similar to habeas corpus existed in Rwanda, what the average length of time was between the date on which charges were brought and the date of trial and whether, in the event of conviction, the time spent in detention pending trial was taken into account in sentencing. Reference was made to “convictions of a political nature” mentioned in the report and it was asked how many political prisoners there were and what the scope of such “convictions” was.

225. In connection with article 12 of the Covenant, it was noted that the Constitution stipulated that the right to circulate freely might be restricted in certain circumstances and it was asked how such restrictions were implemented and whether there were aliens within the territory of Rwanda who were not permitted to move freely and, if so, what the applicable laws were.

226. With regard to article 14 of the Covenant, reference was made to a provision in the Constitution that in criminal matters members of the Central Committee of the National Revolutionary Movement for Development could be tried only in the Court of Cassation and it was asked how this restriction could be reconciled with the principle of equality before the law. Reference was also made to a provision in the Constitution which listed courts of common jurisdiction but made no mention of the State Security Council. Information was requested on this Council, including the reasons for its establishment and on the nature of its competence and operations and on the safeguards designed to ensure the independence of the judiciary against the possible abuse of the executive power. It was also asked how many judges there were and how and where they were educated and what percentage of those judges were women. A detailed account was requested of the minimum guarantees of due process and fair trial provided for in the Covenant to persons charged with criminal offences and of how they were implemented in Rwanda.

227. With reference to articles 18, 19, 21 and 22 of the Covenant, it was stressed that the extent to which a State exercised its right under the Covenant to limit various fundamental freedoms not only by law but also in practice, was a reflection of the true scope of those freedoms in a society. Noting that the National Revolutionary Movement for Development had a monopoly of political activity in the country, members asked what freedoms were allowed under this Movement, whether everyone had the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion, and the right to hold opinions without interference; what kinds of acts could lead to an individual being convicted for sedition and whether criticism of public figures could be construed as defamation. Information was requested on the number and distribution of newspapers, on the extent of the Government’s authority over editors, and on the reasons for the exclusion, under recent legislation, of agricultural workers from some of

the benefits conferred under the Labour Code.

228. Commenting on articles 23 and 24 of the Covenant, members asked whether the State took effective measures to ensure equality of rights and responsibilities of spouses, in marriage as well as at the time of divorce, and whether there were provisions protecting the children in cases of divorce.

229. As regards article 25 of the Covenant, information was requested regarding the institution and State organs in Rwanda which conducted public affairs, particularly with regard to composition, election, competence, powers and the terms for access to public service. Specific information was also requested on the law governing elections and the number of representatives chosen to serve on the National Development Council and on whether citizens had a choice of candidates. Reference was made to cases in which, according to the Constitution, persons could be denied the right to vote or to be elected to certain bodies, and it was asked what guarantees there were against the use of political factors to justify such restrictions. Information was sought on the reasons for the mandatory dissolution of the National Development Council if the President ceased to exercise his functions, whatever the reasons, as provided for in the Constitution.

230. In relation to article 27 of the Covenant, members requested information on ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities existing in the country, particularly the Tutsi; on the extent to which their rights to practise their own culture, language or religion were protected and ensured and on how the existence of these minorities affected the concept of national unity referred to in the Constitution.

231. One member expressed the view that consideration of reports from developing countries, especially countries in Africa, need not take place in the abstract, with little heed being paid to the actual conditions prevailing in those countries; that to discuss a country's theoretical compliance with the Covenant in isolation from its circumstances was to turn the consideration of reports into an academic exercise which was not the purpose of the Committee, and that the Committee had to appreciate the nature of the problems facing the developing States parties, which adhered to the Covenant in good faith, and to seek solutions through a genuine direct dialogue and by devising a new formula for co-operation and assistance.

232. Replying to questions raised by members of the Committee, the representative of Rwanda stated that the factors responsible for the delay in the submission of his country's report, which also explained the brevity of the report, included Rwanda's status as a developing country, a certain bureaucratic time-lag and inexperience in submitting the kind of report required. He informed the Committee about the National Revolutionary Movement for Development, its structure and operation and indicated that no individual or group could escape the social control of the Movement which was seeking a better life for all, and he promised to make available to the Committee a complete text of the Statutes of the Movement as recently revised. He stressed that the Movement was not a "state within a state"; that the organs of State were separate from the Movement, and that the Secretary-General of the Movement was designated by the Constitution to replace the President of the Republic, if the President could not perform his functions, because no Vice-President was appointed for fear of collusion between the President and the Vice-President.

233. As regards questions raised concerning the dissemination of information about the Covenant,

he stated that the text of the Covenant had been published in the Official Gazette by a decree law of 12 February 1975 and was to be translated into Kinyarwanda. In this connection, he informed the Committee that the percentage of illiteracy in Rwanda was about 50 per cent.

234. Replying to questions raised under article 2 of the Covenant, the representative stated that any instrument concluded between Rwanda and another country or an international organization took precedence over domestic law, whether ordinary or organic, provided that it was not contrary to Rwandese public order or public law; that all members of the judiciary and citizens could invoke its provisions in the same way as domestic law; that if a law was incompatible with the Covenant, the Constitutional Court would refer the law back to the National Development Council for amendment; that if the Parliament - the Development Council - had voted a law, its President was required to submit that law to the Constitutional Court; that a law which had been formally declared to be constitutional and sanctioned by the Head of State and promulgated by him could not be reviewed for constitutionality by a private citizen or another authority, and that only the President of the Republic and the President of the Development Council could bring matters before the Constitutional Court. As to the question of training for the legal profession, he pointed out that this profession in Rwanda would be in a better position if judges and lawyers had solid legal training, but that his country had limited resources. If the Committee could help in that regard it would be performing a great service and laying the ground for better implementation of the Covenant. In this connection, he pointed out that there was only one woman judge and that the entire Rwandese legal system had to be modernized and traditional law had to be adapted to contemporary legal procedure.

235. Regarding article 3 of the Covenant, the representative informed the Committee of the current level achieved by women in the educational, economic, social and political fields and stated that in the more traditional Rwandese society, men and women were equal but that his country had made a good start in the direction of achieving equality between both sexes all over the country and in the various walks of life.

236. In relation to article 4 of the Covenant, he stated that no state of siege had been declared in the country since its accession to independence; that under a state of siege, the judicial system was administered by the military courts, which according to the Code of Criminal Procedure had to apply penal procedure exactly as it was applied by the ordinary courts under normal circumstances and recalled that the penal procedure prevented hasty verdicts and ensured that the defendant's rights were upheld.

237. In connection with questions raised under article 6 of the Covenant, he stated that his country was making as much of an effort to protect human life and improve the health system as many other countries. He informed the Committee that so far only two death sentences had been passed by the Court of State Security but that they had not been carried out because there was still a possibility of appeal; that since the stabilization of the situation in his country, following the upheavals of 1974, when the country had undergone a spate of organized attacks, all death sentences had been commuted to life imprisonment.

238. Commenting on articles 7 and 10 of the Covenant, the representative assured the Committee that there was no torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading punishment of prisoners in his country; that there was a law which provided that a member of the parquet or a criminal police

officer could be imprisoned if found guilty of inflicting torture on a prisoner; that, recently, two members of the parquet had been convicted of that crime and that they were now in prison. He did not know the total number of people currently in prison but informed the Committee that there were 12 prisons in the entire country; that two of them were model prisons where a new, more modern concept of incarceration was being experimented with; that the prison system was administered by the Ministry of Justice through a prison Board and prison inspection divisions and offices; that he believed prisoners were lodged in good conditions; and that a directive of the Ministry of Justice allowed prisoners' families to visit and even bring food to them.

239. In response to a question under article 8, he stated that under the monarchy, peasants had had to work free of charge for their masters and that it was largely that system that the revolutionary movement had opposed; that the Constitution expressly banned forced labour but that, however, all Rwandese were expected to offer their help so that their country's projects could bear fruit and that, accordingly, once a week everybody volunteered to work in the fields or on the roads for the benefit of the State.

240. Replying to questions under article 9 of the Covenant, the representative pointed out that temporary arrests and custody pending trial were measures strictly limited by the law; that the criminal police had to bring the accused before the competent judicial authority within 24 hours of the arrest; that the judge could authorize a warrant for temporary arrest not to exceed five days, that during that time the detainee had to be brought before the court of the first instance, where he could defend himself and ask to appeal his arrest and that, if he did so, a court of appeal had to rule on his request. He also informed the Committee that every week all presiding judges and members of the parquet in the courts of the first instance had to check the dossiers of all those in custody; that any prison director who did not release a prisoner in custody upon expiration of the 30-day limit was himself liable to imprisonment for the offense of arbitrary detention; that the duration of detention before trial depended on the backlog before the courts but that if the accused was not considered dangerous, he could be granted provisional release from custody; and that individuals in custody pending trial could be visited by their legal counsel and their family, but that the visits by the latter were strictly limited.

241. In connection with questions raised under article 12 of the Covenant, he pointed out that with the possible exception of quarantine for persons who had not been vaccinated, there were no restrictions on the free movement of foreigners in Rwanda.

242. In relation to article 14 of the Covenant, the representative pointed out that the stipulation in the Constitution that members of the Central Committee of the Movement could be tried only in the Court of Cassation was a legal privilege made available to the distinguished personalities who comprised the Central Committee; that although the Court of State Security had not been provided for in the Constitution, the latter, however, provided that courts could be created by law; that the Security Council had actually been set up to facilitate punishment of human rights violations committed by high government officials, that it was formed primarily of career lawyers and judges who were not afraid of convicting influential politicians and that there were no politicians or officers of the Ministère Publique in it. He also stated that separation of powers, independence of the judiciary, accessibility of the courts and equality before the law were at the basis of the organization of the judicial branch, that this principle was impossible to apply with regard to the removability of

judges because the country's judicial system had only recently been set up, but that the consent of the Supreme Council of Justice was, however, required for the removal of a judge, even for disciplinary reasons. He explained that the concept of the independence of the judiciary as provided for in the Constitution was to be understood as referring specifically to the administration of justice, without any outside interference, but that this did not mean that a judge was immune to any kind of administrative action. He informed the Committee that in principle all accused persons could be defended by a lawyer of their choice, but that there were few lawyers in the country and no bar whatsoever; that the law, however, provided that any person, whether a lawyer or not, could represent another person in a civil or military court; that trials could be held *in camera* if the competent judge decided that public order was at risk; that, however, all judgements must be given in public; and that once the Court of First Instance considered appeals against decisions of the district courts, litigants could appeal to the court of appeal and finally to the Court of Cassation.

243. In connection with questions raised under articles 18, 19, 21 and 22 of the Covenant, the representative stated that all could express their views without fear within the National Revolutionary Movement for Development, for there was a single goal, namely, to achieve the development of Rwanda; that the Statutes of the Movement stipulated that there should be freedom of discipline "within the Movement", and that confusion of ideas could not be permitted in a country which was striving to escape from poverty. He informed the Committee that free organs of the press outnumbered government organs and that, although there was no censorship, extensive collaboration existed between the private and official press. As regards the question concerning the exclusion of agricultural workers from some of the benefits of the Labour Code, he stated that such workers would be covered by a special law which was yet to be promulgated and that, in Rwanda, there were hardly any agricultural workers in the sense of persons working for others, since approximately 95 per cent of the population consisted of farmers working for their own account.

244. Replying to questions raised under articles 23 and 24 of the Covenant, he stated that only monogamous marriages were recognized in his country; that in traditional Rwandese society, even if all family property belonged to the man, husband and wife were in practice equal in the management of the estate; that both of them contributed to the education of their children; that divorces were permitted and that, after divorce, a woman was no longer subject to her husband's authority and could support herself by her own efforts without a man's protection.

245. Regarding questions raised under article 25 of the Covenant, he pointed out that the electoral law provided that certain rights, such as voting rights, were limited by consideration of compatibility or eligibility. Thus a person who had served more than 12 months in prison, or was in preventive detention, or was insane, could not seek electoral office. The Constitution provided that the legislative mandate of the National Council for Development was for five years; that deputies of the first such Council had taken the oath in January 1982; that the reason for the dissolution of the Council, if the President whose mandate also ran for five years ceased to exercise his function, was so that the President of the Republic and the deputies would serve the new term concurrently. All Rwandese were eligible for employment in the civil service, but they were required to demonstrate their capacity for such employment and provided that they did not hold more than one office at a time.

246. Replying to questions raised under article 27 of the Covenant, the representative informed the

Committee about the ethnic and religious composition of the population, indicating that the Tutsi formed 14 per cent of the population whereas 86 per cent belonged to the Hutu; that 50 per cent of the population were Catholics while a minority were faithful to Islam. At the time of independence, parties had been founded, seemingly based on ethnic consideration, with each differing from the other regarding mainly the type of régime which the country should have in the future; that there had been an attempt to eliminate the current president and other influential people on the pretext that they belonged to a particular ethnic group; and that the National Revolutionary Movement had accordingly been created in order to overcome ethnic difficulties. He stressed that historically those races had lived together in harmony and spoke the same Kinyarwanda language and had the same customs, that members of the different ethnic groups intermarried; that Catholics and Moslems all lived together harmoniously and that their representatives were among the leaders of the Movement; that ethnic groups retained their identities but, within the Movement, each was judged according to the goodwill which it displayed in co-operating for peace and progress.

247. Members of the Committee expressed their appreciation to the representative of Rwanda for his co-operation and his attempt to answer at such short notice many of the questions put to him. They reiterated their position, according to their mandate, that they were interested not only in gaining understanding of a given country's legal structure, but also in knowing how successfully that system operated in practice, in the hope of gaining indications as to how human rights were exercised and protected in any given State party. The Committee was aware of the different situations and difficulties State parties faced. If it were to take those difficulties into account, however, it must be officially notified to that effect by the State party concerned.

248. The Chairman pointed out that he believed that the Committee would have to discuss the suggestion on how to conduct such discussions of reports from States parties in future, and that it must also take up the novel suggestion of the representative of Rwanda for assistance in training lawyers and judges.

CCPR A/43/40 (1988)

200. The Committee considered the second periodic report of Rwanda (CCPR/C/46/Add.1) at its 782nd to 785th meetings, held on 11 and 12 November 1987 (CCPR/C/SR.782-SR.785).

201. The report was introduced by the representative of the State party who expressed his country's desire to do everything that was possible to ensure the protection of human rights. Rwanda's ambition to become a State that was genuinely subject to the rule of law and its constant concern to promote justice in the service of all citizens had been reaffirmed by the Head of State. His Government had also been concerned at all times to strengthen the country's judicial institutions. In its efforts to ensure respect for human rights, Rwanda was prepared to continue its sincere co-operation with the Committee and hoped, in turn, to receive the Committee's co-operation and understanding.

Constitutional and legal framework within which the Covenant is implemented

202. With reference to that issue, members of the Committee wished to know what significant changes relevant to the implementation of the Covenant had taken place since the consideration of Rwanda's initial report in 1982, what role the judiciary played in the adoption of legal texts under the third Five-year Development Plan and what the relationship was between the judicial and legislative authorities. They also asked how the provisions of the Covenant related to domestic laws, whether legislation had been enacted to implement all the rights guaranteed under the Covenant, what factors and difficulties had been encountered, if any, in the implementation of the Covenant and what efforts had been made to disseminate information about it.

203. Members also wished to know what steps would be taken if a conflict arose between the Constitution and international treaties and what court was empowered to take decisions in such a case. They asked how the procedure for popular consultation, provided for under article 10 of the Constitution, was carried out, how often it had been resorted to and how it related to the work of the National Development Council. It was also asked what provision had been made to ensure a speedy decision on cases handled under the extraordinary recourse procedure and for the immediate release of persons who had been detained unlawfully, whether the relatives of victims of judicial error were entitled to moral as well as material compensation, whether an alleged violation of a right set out in the Covenant could be brought up before any Rwandese court and whether the provisions of the Covenant were actually cited by judges in their decisions. Members also inquired how the bar was organized, how many lawyers there were in Rwanda and what arrangements had been made to provide legal assistance to persons without the means to hire a lawyer, what procedure was used by the Constitutional Court when declaring a decree-law that had already been promulgated unconstitutional and who had the power to decide whether a legislative proposal or amendment might have the effect of reducing public resources, in the sense of articles 65 and 66 of the Constitution.

204. Additional information was also requested concerning the competence of the State Security Court, its rules of procedure, the division of authority between that court and ordinary courts and the nature of the cases brought before that court, and it was asked whether there was a higher court before which appeals against State Security Court decisions could be brought. One member noted

that apparently no defence counsel had been available since 1981 in cases brought before the State Security Court and that no counsel had been present at the trials in criminal courts of persons who were currently under sentence of death, and recalled that under article 14 of the Constitution legal defence was an absolute right in all types of judicial proceedings. The member accordingly expressed the hope that Rwanda would find a way to give priority to the establishment of a bar and the encouragement of legal education.

205. In his reply to questions raised by members of the Committee, the representative of the State party said that a number of relevant laws had been adopted since 1982 or were currently under consideration. They included an Act, adopted in 1987, which established procedures for the monitoring of the Government's activities by Parliament (the National Development Council), a 1985 Act increasing the time-limit for appeal against criminal convictions from 10 to 30 days and reducing the period for decisions on appeals from four to two months and another 1985 Act, relating to transport costs, which was designed to facilitate travel by the court to outlying areas to hear civil or commercial cases, such as those concerning land disputes. Among the draft bills submitted by the Government and currently under consideration by the legislature were: a draft code on the individual and family, which was designed to strengthen child protection and improve the status of women, particularly in the home; a press bill, prohibiting prior censorship and enhancing the enjoyment of freedom of opinion; and a bill to reorganize the higher courts to improve their operation. A bill relating to the bar was also about to be submitted to the National Development Council.

206. Except for some legislative drafting within the Ministry of Justice and responsibility for applying laws enacted by the legislature, the judicial authorities had no direct relationship with the legislative authorities in view of the principle of separation of powers. The Constitutional Court was made up of an equal number of magistrates from the Court of Cassation and the Council of State. International Conventions to which Rwanda was a party were integrated into domestic legislation, with the rules of the relevant conventions prevailing in cases of conflict. Thus, in order to conform to article 11 of the Covenant, the provisions allowing for imprisonment for debt had been deleted from the Civil Code. The Constitutional Court had as yet had no occasion to rule on any possible incompatibility between the Constitution and the provisions of international treaties. All of the rights covered by the Covenant were guaranteed, either by the Constitution or by legislation adopted specifically to ensure their implementation. Although the provisions of the Covenant as such were not disseminated to the population, there were regular radio programmes informing citizens of their rights.

207. Many difficulties affecting the implementation of the Covenant had been encountered, most of them resulting from a lack of material resources. For example, the scarcity of material resources made it difficult to provide adequate health care to the entire population. In the investigation of criminal cases, means of transport needed for gathering evidence and statements from witnesses at the scene of a crime were not always available. Adequately trained senior staff were lacking both in the administrative services and the judiciary. The situation had improved somewhat over time, through the country's own educational efforts and through grants for study abroad, but such problems were far from resolved.

208. In the event of conflict between the Constitution and the Covenant, the provisions of the latter

would prevail. Presumably, the constitutional provision would then be regarded as a dead letter and ultimately removed when the Constitution was revised. Article 10 of the Constitution simply referred to the fact that the country's electoral régime, whether presidential or legislative, was determined by law. In cases of judicial error, the erroneous decision was annulled and a new decision of acquittal was issued. Compensation was accorded for both material and moral damage, if proved, in such cases. The Covenant could be invoked in the courts although, in practice, the corresponding provisions of Rwandese legislation were usually invoked. Similarly, judges usually referred to legislation but there was nothing to prevent a judge from citing the Covenant since it had also been incorporated in Rwandese law. Allegations of incompatibility between international instruments and the Constitution could be made before an ordinary court. The President of the National Development Council, or, in case of emergency, the President of the Republic, was empowered to ask the Constitutional Court for a ruling on the constitutionality of a decree-law. The constitutionality of a law had to be decided before its enactment and there was no recourse on grounds of unconstitutionality once a law had been promulgated. In accordance with articles 65 and 66 of the Constitution, Deputies who proposed bills or amendments having financial implications were required to submit accompanying proposals to cover such financial implications.

209. There was currently no bar association in Rwanda and only a few lawyers in the administration, the private sector and the courts. There were also some legal counsellors practising out in the country, not all of whom had completed their legal studies, but they were called "general agents" and not lawyers. The Government was well aware of the need to establish a bar as soon as possible. A bar association bill was currently under consideration and would be transmitted to the Government. The need to encourage legal studies at the National University was also recognized and it was hoped that in due course there would be a larger number of trained lawyers in Rwanda, including lawyers who could act as defence counsel. While the President of the Court was empowered, under the Code of Criminal Procedure, to appoint a defence lawyer on behalf of those who could not afford a legal defence, that was not done very often because of a lack of public funds. The bar association bill would provide for free legal aid in case of need. The State Security Court had competence solely in matters relating to State security. Its rules of procedure were the same as those of ordinary courts. Decisions of the State Security Court were appealable only before the Court of Cassation, subject to the possibility of an appeal for review in last resort.

Non-discrimination and equality of the sexes

210. With reference to that issue, members of the Committee wished to know what practical measures had been taken to ensure non-discrimination, particularly on grounds of political opinion, ethnic origin and sex, whether there had been any prosecutions and convictions of individuals or groups under article 393 of the Penal Code, whether the requirement for authorization of a married woman's change of residence by her husband or a legal judgement was compatible with article 2, paragraph 1, articles 3 and 23 of the Covenant and whether the rights of aliens were restricted, as compared with those of citizens.

211. Members also asked whether both married and unmarried women had the right to join occupational organizations, whether it was compatible with article 26 of the Covenant to subject certain governmental, legislative and party leaders to the jurisdiction of the Court of Cassation acting as a court of first and last instance, whether in addition to their political rights the civil rights

of aliens could also be restricted under article 95 of the Constitution, whether Rwandese citizens had the right to express, without risk of discrimination, ideas or opinions other than those of the National Revolutionary Movement and, if so, how individuals could exercise their right to freedom of opinion, and what legislation existed in Rwanda relating to a state of emergency. Clarification was also requested of the events of 1986, in which a large number of persons who had refused to perform national service because of their religious beliefs had been deprived of their right to freedom of conscience and to express their political opinion.

212. In his reply, the representative of the State party said that all ethnic groups were represented in the various sectors of national life. Tutsis held important posts in the civil service, the senior judiciary and the armed forces, and were also prominent in commerce and industry. The admission of the Twa, who constituted only 1 per cent of the population and were of inferior social status, to secondary and higher education was especially facilitated. Women were also well represented in all sectors: 12 of the 70 members of the National Development Council and 4 of the 20 members of the Central Committee of the National Revolutionary Movement were women. Women also held senior posts in the civil service and the judiciary and played an increasingly prominent role in business. There had been no prosecutions under article 393 of the Penal Code and there had been a healthy atmosphere of racial harmony since the start of the second Republic in 1973. The provisions relating to the requirement for the husband's consent to a change in the residence of a married woman was necessary to ensure family stability. Such a change of residence was subject to judicial decision in cases of divorce. Restrictions on the rights of aliens were those also normally obtaining in other countries, namely, that aliens were not entitled to hold posts in the civil service or to stand for public office.

213. Responding to other questions, the representative explained that both married and unmarried women were eligible to join occupational organizations. The specific reference to married women in the relevant provision of the Labour Code merely reflected the legislature's intention to ensure that the activity of married women was not restricted to their family obligations. Subjecting certain persons to trial by the Court of Cassation was not a question of granting favourable treatment but of ensuring that justice was done without indulgence or undue severity and without pressure on the judges. Any exceptions to the equality of treatment of aliens authorized under article 95 of the Constitution related only to political rights and not to civil rights.

214. Rwanda's single political movement had been created in 1973, after centuries of ethnic strife, in order to ensure cohesion between all ethnic groups. The objectives of the National Revolutionary Movement for Development were not incompatible with the exercise of the right to freedom of expression. Every citizen, within the Movement, could express opinions and criticism, including opposition to the ideas of the authorities, and no one was prosecuted for dissidence. Rwandese public opinion considered that maintaining national peace and understanding was more important than the multi-party principle. Article 147 of the Code of Criminal Procedure provided that a state of siege could be declared only in the event of imminent danger resulting from foreign war or domestic armed uprising. The proclamation of a state of siege made it possible to modify the competence of the courts, in particular by expanding that of the military courts. Members of certain religious sects who had been brought before the State Security Court in 1986 had not only opposed community work but had incited the population to disobey the law and to desist from seeking medical treatment and from working. Ultimately, the persons were pardoned by the President and

released.

Right to life

215. With reference to that issue, members of the Committee wished to know how many death sentences had been pronounced during the past five years and for what crimes, and how many such sentences had actually been carried out and for what crimes, how many persons were currently under sentence of death and why some of them had been kept in prison for years and how the large number of death sentences could be explained, given the substantially improved situation in Rwanda with respect to public order. Members also asked what regulations governed the use of firearms by the police, whether there had been any loss of life as a result of excessive use of force by the police, the military forces or other law enforcement agencies and, if so, whether investigations had been carried out and those responsible punished. It was also asked whether the term “any other form of violence”, used in paragraph 43 (b) of the report, covered only violence against persons or also violence against property, whether the death penalty would actually be imposed for attempted poisoning, and what the infant mortality rate was in Rwanda and what measures had been taken to reduce it. Additional information was also requested on article 6 of the Covenant in accordance with the Committee’s general comments Nos. 6 (16) and 14 (23).

216. In his reply to questions raised by members of the Committee, the representative of the State party said that between 500 and 600 persons had been sentenced to death in Rwanda and that the last execution had taken place in 1982. The death penalty was pronounced only in cases involving homicide. The high number of death penalties could be explained largely by the fact that, unfortunately, a high number of murders had been committed. Data concerning the number of persons who had been sentenced to death since the most recent presidential pardon was not available. Persons under sentence of death often had to spend several years in prison, since the process for appeals and applications for cassation and for pardon was lengthy. The use of firearms by law enforcement officials was regulated, but improper use of force by the army, police or other security forces did sometimes occur. In three recent cases of that kind, the persons responsible - a soldier and two policemen - had been tried and convicted. The term “any other form of violence” must be placed in the context of article 164 of the Penal Code and meant any violence, other than terrorism or armed force, directed at the human person. While the Rwandese Code provided that attempted offences were punishable in the same manner as the offences themselves, special circumstances which made it possible to reduce the sentence could be taken into consideration. Measures being taken or envisaged to reduce infant mortality included vaccination campaigns, the medical examination of infants and the counselling of mothers at nutrition centres or by means of regular radio broadcasts.

217. Responding to the Committee’s request for additional information on article 6 of the Covenant, the representative pointed out that article 155 of the Penal Code prohibited the establishment of relations with a foreign Government or foreign institution, or with their agents, with the intention of causing or inciting a war, an armed uprising or acts of violence against the country. In Rwanda there had never been any disappearances in circumstances indicative of a violation of the right to life. Rwanda did not yet envisage abolishing the death penalty, but the application of that penalty was very strictly limited. Penal procedure was scrupulously respected, in order to enable judges to hand down equitable decisions free of all pressure. When a person was sentenced to death, the

Public Prosecutor's Office automatically lodged an appeal. Presidential pardon was granted very often. In the past five years, there had been three general measures commuting death sentences to life imprisonment: in January 1984, July 1985, and July 1987.

Liberty and security of person

218. With reference to that issue, members of the Committee wished to know under what circumstances persons might be held in preventive detention without being charged with a criminal offence and for how long, whether a person could be detained in institutions other than prisons, what the maximum period of pre-trial detention was, how soon after arrest a person could contact a lawyer and how quickly families were notified of an arrest. They also asked what the arrangements were for the supervision of prisons and other places of detention and for receiving and investigating complaints, whether grouping prisoners by social and cultural level was in conformity with article 10 of the Covenant, what controls had been instituted to ensure that detainees were not subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment, what sanctions were provided for punishing such treatment and how often such sanctions had been applied in the last five years, and what criteria were used to determine that the work to which prisoners might be assigned outside prison was "in the public interest".

219. Members also wished to know whether pre-trial detention, although subject to periodic review, could in fact be extended indefinitely, whether the case of an individual who had reportedly been held incommunicado for 14 months without being charged or having his family notified reflected a general practice, whether the dungeons (cachots noirs), where prisoners were sometimes held for up to 30 days, were used during an investigation in order to extract information and whether the existence of such dungeons was compatible with the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners. One member also wondered whether the conditions of detention could not be improved, despite resource limitations, by such measures as placing lamps in the cachots.

220. Responding to questions raised by members of the Committee, the representative of the State party explained that committal without charge could not exceed 48 hours and was only resorted to pending a decision whether or not to issue a detention order. Thereafter, a provisional arrest order had to be issued, which was valid for five days, during which time the prosecution had to present the case in court. Where the court determined that pre-trial detention was necessary, a 30-day detention order was issued and that order was renewable from month to month if the court felt that continued detention was required for the investigation or for reasons of public order. The period of pre-trial detention could not exceed the duration of the impossible penalty for the offence. A detainee could contact his defence counsel immediately after being arrested, since the right to defence was guaranteed at all stages of the proceedings, including the investigation stage. The detainee's family was notified promptly but the prison services were often forestalled by the public grape-vine since news travelled very quickly. Prisons were supervised by the Directorate-General of Prison Services, by the Public Prosecutor's Office and by a physician-in-charge. Detainees were afforded an opportunity to voice complaints during inspections. It was sometimes necessary to assign certain detainees to separate quarters for reasons of security. Members of the Public Prosecutor's staff took turns in monitoring the conditions of pre-trial detention and ensuring that no one was subjected to torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment. If a case of torture was reported, the offender was prosecuted for causing bodily injury. That had happened recently in a

case involving a gendarme. The criteria used to determine whether prison work was in the general interest varied, but the usefulness of certain jobs, such as cleaning public highways, was obvious. Other typical tasks involved carpentry or farming, which enabled prisoners to acquire vocational training.

221. Turning to other questions, the representative stated that, except in very serious cases, individuals were usually released pending trial. Continuing detention was ordered only where the court considered that it was essential for the purposes of the investigation, which was rare, or in the general interest and for reasons of public order. He was not familiar with the circumstances relating to the lengthy pre-trial detention of the person to which reference had been made by a member of the Committee, but had no doubt that regrettable abuses could sometimes occur despite every precaution. It was up to the competent authorities to prevent or to punish such abuses. The existence of the cachots noirs, which dated from colonial times, was a constant source of concern to the authorities of Rwanda. Although a few modern prisons had been built, the State was unfortunately obliged, owing to the lack of adequate resources, to continue to use the old prisons including the cachots when a prisoner had to be isolated or punished. The judicial authorities were determined that the situation in that regard should be gradually improved. The suggestion for placing lamps in the cachots might be considered by the authorities in their efforts to improve prison conditions.

Right to a fair trial

222. With reference to that issue, members of the Committee wished to receive additional information on the organization of the judiciary pursuant to the judicial reform of 1982 and the impact of that reform on the independence of the judiciary, any cases that had been brought before the State Security Court since the consideration of the initial report, article 14, in accordance with the Committee's general comment No. 13 (21), and the system for training and recruiting lawyers, prosecutors and judges and the authorities competent to appoint, dismiss and promote prosecutors and judges. Members also asked whether the national bar had become operational, whether there was a free legal aid and advisory scheme in Rwanda and, if not, how compliance with article 14, paragraph 3 (d), of the Covenant was ensured, how long an average trial lasted, how many political prisoners were currently in custody, what the term "total amnesty", used in paragraph 54 of the report meant and whether provisions or practices relating to forced labour or community work were consistent with the Covenant.

223. In his reply, the representative explained that the judicial reform of 1982 had introduced two major changes: bringing both the members of the Office of the Public Prosecutor and judges under a single legal régime, which had strengthened the unity of the judiciary and led to improvements in the administration of justice, and creating separate Prosecutor's Offices at the various judicial levels (i.e., court of first instance, court of appeal and the Court of Cassation), which had helped to protect the interests of defendants better, particularly in the course of the appeals process. The new Code of Judicial Organization and Competence also placed great emphasis on judicial independence, which was now more firmly established. In addition to the case involving members of religious sects discussed earlier, two main cases had been brought before the State Security Court: one of the cases involved persons abroad who had engaged in activities likely to jeopardize State security and the other concerned a former departmental head of the National Police who had been prosecuted for

plotting to murder several political prisoners in 1975 and 1976. Young lawyers were trained either at the National University's Law Faculty or through a system of rapid tuition consisting of two short (8 to 9 months) courses. The appointment, dismissal and promotion of judges came within the competence of the President of the Republic. Judges could be dismissed only with the agreement of the Higher Council of the Judiciary, which was itself composed of judges.

224. Responding to other questions, the representative explained that since the Fourth National Development Plan was still being finalized the national bar had not yet been organized. However, the relevant bill was about to be presented to the Council of Ministers. Legal assistance was envisaged under arrangements for the bar once it became operational. For the time being, presiding judges could, in serious cases, appoint a defence counsel provided sufficient public funds were available to meet defence costs. Since there were relatively few judges in Rwanda and the country's courts were encumbered with 5,000 to 6,000 lawsuits, delays in bringing cases to trial were inevitable. On average, the courts heard from 60 to 100 civil cases per month, a rate that could be regarded as satisfactory given the paucity of judges and the complexity of land disputes. On average, criminal trials lasted about two days. Complex civil actions often took considerably longer. Articles 199 and 200 of the Code of Judicial Organizations and Competence provided for public trials and publicly delivered judgements. Under the Code of Criminal Procedure the burden of proof in criminal cases rested with the Office of the Public Prosecutor and judges were under an obligation to consider all the evidence, both for and against the accused. Persons accused of an offence were given a minimum of eight days for preparing their defence and a verdict had to be given within eight days of the conclusion of the hearing. No one was detained in Rwanda unless charged or sentenced for offences under the Penal Code. Only three or four persons whose offences had been politically motivated were currently in detention, most others having already been amnestied. The term "total amnesty", used in paragraph 54 of the report, was in respect of convictions pronounced by court martial on 29 June 1974. Article 4 of the Rwandese Labour Code clearly prohibited forced labour. Community work for development purposes, to which most citizens were perfectly willing to devote one day a week, was regarded as part of a citizen's civic duties and was clearly compatible with the relevant provisions of the Covenant.

Freedom of movement and expulsion of aliens

225. With reference to that issue, members of the Committee wished to know whether the required formalities relating to changes of residence were compatible with article 12, paragraph 3, of the Covenant, and on what basis passports could be refused or withdrawn. They also asked what circumstances could lead to the assignment of an undesirable alien to a prescribed residence rather than expulsion, which authority was responsible for determining that a person was "undesirable" and according to what criteria and whether aliens could be prevented from leaving Rwanda and, if so, for what reasons.

226. Members also asked whether a person who was refused permission to change residence could appeal against that decision and, if so, whether such procedure provided an adequate remedy, what the reason was for requiring persons to report a change of residence to the authorities within such a short period as three days and why certain provisions of domestic law restricted fundamental rights without being clearly justified on grounds of public order or security. Noting with some concern the restrictions placed on the freedom of movement of women, members also wished to know what

opportunities were provided to women to exercise their rights that did not require the consent of their husbands or of the State. It was also asked whether desertion on the part of the wife was considered to be a more serious offence than on the part of the husband.

227. In his reply, the representative of the State party explained that the regulations governing changes of residence were needed mainly to ensure that a person's needs in a new location would be met adequately and imposed no real restriction on freedom of movement. The main concern of the legislature had been to ensure that no one could leave a commune without having somewhere else to live, in view of the fact that the country's agricultural land was limited. Persons who were refused authorization to change their residence could lodge an appeal with the prefecture or could bring the matter before the Council of State for adjudication. Passports could be refused to persons who were at liberty but awaiting trial or whose freedom of movement had been restricted by court order. The Minister of the Interior could withdraw the passport of a person whose movement was under legal restriction when there was reason to believe that the person intended to leave the country. The Minister of the Interior could decide to impose restrictions on an alien's residence, rather than to order his expulsion, in cases where the possible threat was likely to be only temporary. An alien might be prevented from leaving the country for the same reasons applicable to a national, namely that legal restrictions had been imposed on his freedom of movement. The requirement that a residence permit be obtained within three days of arrival at a new locality was intended to prevent vagrancy and delinquency in urban areas. The law on immigration and the conditions of entry and residence of aliens was perfectly in accordance with article 21 of the Constitution, which authorized the imposition of restrictions on freedom of movement on grounds of threats to public order or State security. There were no special conditions restricting the freedom of women as compared to that of men. The provision of law requiring the consent of the husband to the change of residence of his spouse was not designed to prevent any normal movement, but merely to require the husband's consent to any prolonged absence of his wife, such consent being notified to the authorities. Wives were free to join a variety of organizations in Rwanda without the consent of their husbands and within which they were able to participate in the national development effort. Article 380 of the Penal Code laid down equal penalties for men and women who deserted their family, and there was thus no discrimination against women in that regard. The Code on the Individual and the Family was designed to place men and women on an equal footing.

Right to privacy

228. With reference to that issue, members of the Committee wished to know what laws had been adopted restricting the right to confidentiality of correspondence and communication and the inviolability of the home.

229. In his reply, the representative stated that under article 344 of the Penal Code, the Government Attorney's Office could order the seizure of correspondence if that action was deemed essential to an investigation. Article 32 of the Penal Code authorized entry and search of the home in cases where evidence of offences might be found. Entry could take place only between 5 a.m. and 7 p.m. unless it was suspected that evidence of a crime might disappear. Except in the case of flagrant offences, searches were subject to authorization by the relevant Ministry and householders could require proof of identity of the officers seeking to conduct a search.

Freedom of religion

230. With reference to that issue, members of the Committee wished to know whether there were different religions in Rwanda, how many members each of them had and whether such religions could be practised freely, whether a fine or 100 to 1,000 francs was an effective punishment for offences against the free exercise of religion and whether such punishment was provided for under the Penal Code or another law relating specifically to religious activities. Members of the Committee also requested additional information regarding the trial, in 1986, of a large number of persons belonging to four different religious sects, including Jehovah's Witnesses, and asked in particular for assurances that the charges brought against such persons were, in fact, exclusively concerned with violations of Rwandese law and were not related to their religious beliefs.

231. In his reply, the representative of the State party said that there were several religious denominations in Rwanda - the main ones being Catholic, Protestant and Muslim - and all of these religions could be practised freely. Any breach of religious freedom was punishable under article 243 of the Penal Code by a term of imprisonment ranging from eight days to three months. Any offence committed by members of religious denominations was punishable in the same way as one committed by any other member of the community and no penalties were imposed on account of membership of a particular sect. While the trial in 1986 of members of certain religious sects had touched upon the refusal of the accused to participate in the activities of the National Revolutionary Movement for Development, the offence of which such persons had been convicted was that of incitement to breach of the law. Members of the religious group in question had sought to incite the public to disruptive behaviour and the Government had been obliged to protect the general public interest. The Government did not interfere in the activities of any religious group as long as its members practised their faith without prejudice to public order. All those convicted at the 1986 trial had received presidential pardons even before recourse procedures envisaged under the law could be set in motion.

Freedom of the press, assembly and association

232. With reference to those issues, members of the Committee wished to know what controls were placed on freedom of the press and on the mass media, whether any person had been arrested, detained or convicted for offences of a political character or involving the expression of opinion, whether there were currently any political prisoners in Rwanda, whether the existence of a single party restricted the exercise of the rights set forth in articles 19, 20 and 21 of the Covenant and what legislative restrictions were placed on the exercise of trade-union rights. Members also wished to know what specific provisions had been made for the expression of a multiplicity of views within the single-party system of Rwanda, what specific means were available to individuals to seek, receive and disseminate information, whether new press legislation that had been under consideration had actually been enacted and, if so, what its main provisions were, whether foreign newspapers and periodicals were available in Rwanda and whether there were any special restrictions applicable to the activities of foreign correspondents. They also asked what some of the religious practices conforming to "local custom" were that required no prior authorization, whether article 186 of the Labour Code, which stipulated that agricultural workers did not have the right to form trade unions and which seemed to be incompatible with both articles 19 and 31 of the Constitution and ILO Convention No. 87, had been repealed in accordance with the Government's

promise, whether persons in different professions, unmarried women and minors had the right to join trade unions and whether the term “political activity”, as used in article 7 of the Constitution, concerned activities directly related to gaining political power or to the expression of political views.

233. In his reply to questions raised by members of the Committee, the representative of the State party said that, while article 18 of the Constitution guaranteed freedom of the press, the authorities were permitted to place restrictions on the exercise of that right when necessary for the preservation of public order. The Government was currently studying a press bill that would prohibit prior censorship and would authorize sanctions only if violations, such as libel or slander, had actually been committed during the exercise of freedom of expression. Foreign newspapers and journals were available in Rwanda and the public could and often did procure them freely. Foreign correspondence visited the country frequently and were free to collect any information they wished. The gatherings referred to in paragraph 118 of the report that required no prior authorization included such activities as weddings and carnivals.

234. As earlier indicated in discussing the State security trial involving members of some religious sects in 1986, no one had been arrested, detained or convicted for offences involving the expression of opinion nor were there any “political” prisoners in Rwanda currently, but only three or four persons whose actions might have been politically motivated but who had been sentenced for criminal acts. The National Revolutionary Movement for Development was in no way hostile to the rights set out in the Covenant. The Movement was not a political party consisting of a group of like-minded people and excluding other sections of the population, it encompassed all citizens in an effort to ensure national cohesion and unity as well as an adequate response to Rwanda’s problems. Within the Movement there was complete freedom of expression and every effort was made to ensure that decisions were taken on the basis of consensus and true dialogue.

235. There was no restrictions on trade-union rights, subject to the prevention and punishment of offences committed in connection with the exercise of such rights. Trade unions were usually formed by the same profession, but different unions were not prohibited from joining together in a confederation. The specific mention of the right of married women to join trade unions was a progressive factor, since in some countries married women were excluded from enjoyment of that right. Minors could also join trade unions unless their parents had serious grounds for objecting to it - a situation that was hardly ever encountered. Civil servants and officers of the armed forces were free to form trade unions but had no right to strike. It was possible that agricultural workers were excluded from trade-union rights because such work was usually of a seasonal nature. The term “political activity” as used in article 7 of the Constitution should be interpreted narrowly as meaning access to political functions, and did not apply to the expression of opinion.

Right to participate in public affairs

236. With reference to that issue, members of the Committee wished to know what circumstances were envisaged under article 8 of the Constitution for the exercise of indirect rather than direct suffrage and what legislation and practice existed with regard to access to public office. Information was also requested on the relative proportion of Hutus and Tutsis in the legislature, the Cabinet and the judiciary, as well as in education and senior government positions.

237. In his reply, the representative of the State party explained that the electoral law stipulated that presidential, legislative and local elections had to be conducted by direct suffrage. The conditions of recruitment to the civil service were governed by the applicable statutes relating to public servants, the judiciary and commissioned and non-commissioned officers. Recruitment was based on the submission of candidatures and took post vacancies into account. Overall statistics relating to the relative proportion of Hutus and Tutsis in the various public affairs sectors were not compiled, but the Tutsis, who were in a minority, were in fact represented in parliament, the Government, the legal sector, the teaching profession, including at the university level, and in senior positions in the Ministries and public institutions.

General observations

238. Members of the Committee expressed appreciation for the clear and candid explanations that had been provided by the representative of the State party in response to the questions that had been posed and complimented Rwanda for having submitted its report exactly on time. The report and the clarifications that had been provided showed that, despite the constraints imposed by tradition and the consequences of Rwanda's recent unsettled history and its economic difficulties, considerable progress had been achieved in recent years in the field of human rights. At the same time, certain aspects of the situation in Rwanda continued to give rise to concern, such as the restrictions on the freedom of movement of married women, problems relating to the rights of agricultural workers and prison conditions. Several members referred to problems associated with the obligations arising from the Covenant in a single-party system. Members of the Committee expressed the hope that the Rwandese authorities would take the Committee's concerns into account and that the State party's third periodic report would reflect further progress.

239. The representative of the State party expressed his delegation's gratitude for the understanding that had been shown by members of the Committee and reaffirmed his country's determination to do its utmost to protect human rights. He assured the Committee that Rwanda would endeavour to do all that was necessary to achieve progress in the fields where members of the Committee had expressed concern.

240. In concluding the consideration of the second periodic report of Rwanda, the Chairman also thanked the delegation for being so well prepared and for having engaged in a genuine dialogue with the Committee.