

CERD, A/57/18 (2002), Chapter X

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CHAPTER X. THEMATIC DISCUSSION ON DESCENT-BASED DISCRIMINATION

508. In examining the periodic reports of States parties, the Committee has found that some forms of discrimination within the terms of article 1 of the Convention are common to several States and can usefully be examined from a more general perspective. In August 2000, the Committee had organized a thematic debate on the issue of discrimination against Roma, one example of descent-based discrimination. As a result, at its sixtieth session the Committee decided to hold at its August 2002 session a thematic discussion on that issue with a view to possible further action. In this connection, it requested information from States parties concerning persons belonging to groups distinguished on the ground of descent residing in their respective territories, their economic and social situation, and policies for eliminating racial discrimination against them.

509. This second thematic discussion to be organized by the Committee, was held during its 1531st meeting, on 9 August 2002; it was preceded by an informal meeting with concerned NGOs, Governments and other United Nations human rights mechanisms.

510. The Committee was able to draw upon extensive information from its own activities, including that contained in periodic reports submitted by States parties and its dialogues with State delegations. In addition, a number of States replied to the invitation extended by the Committee in May 2002 to submit additional information. Furthermore, the Committee had relevant information from other United Nations human rights mechanisms, including other treaty bodies and the Sub-Commission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights. NGOs representing the victims of descent-based discrimination and global human rights organizations also submitted information.

511. During the informal meeting, NGOs raised many issues of concern. In response to the invitation addressed to Governments and to the Sub-Commission, some government representatives and members of the Sub-Commission addressed the gathering.

512. A majority of the Committee members addressed the issues in the general debate which took place in the morning of 9 August 2002 (see CERD/C/SR.1531). The working group convened by Mr. Thornberry met twice for the elaboration of a draft general recommendation.

513. Based on the information submitted and collected for the thematic discussion, on the outcome of the general debate and on the draft prepared by the working group, the Committee, following extensive debate adopted, at its 1547th meeting, its general recommendation XXIX on descent-based discrimination (see chap. XI, sect. D).