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on civil and
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Held at the Palais Wilson, Geneva,
on Tuesday, 19 October 2004, at 3 p.m.

Chairperson: Mr. AMOR

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

CONSIDERATION OF REPORTS SUBMITTED BY STATES PARTIES UNDER
ARTICLE 40 OF THE COVENANT (agenda item 6) (continued)

Initial report of Albania (CCPR/C/ALB/2004/1; CCPR/C/82/L/ALB)

1. At the invitation of the Chairperson, the members of the delegation of Albania took places at the Committee table.
2. Mr. HAJDARAGA (Albania), introducing his country's initial report (CCPR/C/ALB/2004/1), said that since its ratification of the Covenant in 1991 many legislative changes had been made in Albania in order to ensure respect for all the rights enshrined in the Covenant. The ratification had coincided with the end of the communist regime. While much progress had been made in legislative terms since then, his Government recognized that human rights violations were still taking place even though the democratic process was continuing. International events had highlighted the need to revise previous interpretations of rights and freedoms and to bring them into line with the current complex reality. New procedures and policies were therefore needed. Nonetheless, recently enacted legislation, much of it prepared with assistance from the international community, had significantly improved the enjoyment of human rights in Albania. More than 60 political parties and over 80 trade unions were currently active, and journalists had been allowed to work unhindered for over seven years.
3. Minority groups and individuals enjoyed full equality before the law and exercised all the rights and freedoms enjoyed by other citizens. Protection of the rights of minority groups was guaranteed by the Covenant, together with the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, and the Council of Europe's Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, which formed an integral part of domestic legislation.
4. The State Committee on Minorities had been established by the Council of Ministers in 2004 in order to improve the representation of minorities in public life. That Committee had made proposals for the economic, social and educational development of minorities, which had been incorporated into government policy on minority demands, formulated by the Office for Minorities within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The objective of the policy was to create a comprehensive programme for all bodies currently dealing with minority issues. Several steps had been taken to improve educational opportunities for minority groups, including specialized courses for children, relevant qualifications for teachers and summer schools. Despite the low numbers of children in classes for minorities, the Government had insisted that the classes should be maintained.
5. In 2003, a national strategy had been implemented to improve living conditions for the Roma, and it was being carefully monitored. It focused on education, the arts, culture, the media, participation in civic life, employment, housing, social issues, health, justice, and the economy. The relevant ministries had specific targets and structures were in place to meet them.

6. The Government enjoyed a constructive partnership with national human rights organizations, such as the Office of the People's Advocate, and NGOs. Those bodies had made significant contributions to the improved enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms. While it did not always share the views of NGOs, the Government sought to foster dialogue with all sectors of civil society. Cooperation between government departments, particularly the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and human rights NGOs had been productive.

7. His Government had not submitted its initial report to the Committee earlier owing to the protracted transition to democracy, a lack of capacity and experience in reporting, and the need to enact adequate legislation. Its commitment to promoting and protecting human rights both nationally and internationally was, however, indisputable. Albania had worked with international partners to secure peace and stability and to promote human rights and democracy in Bosnia, Georgia, Afghanistan and Iraq. His Government would welcome the Committee's suggestions and recommendations.

8. The CHAIRPERSON invited the delegation to respond to questions 1 to 13 of the list of issues (CCPR/C/82/L/ALB).

9. Mr. NINA (Albania), replying to question 1, said that almost 45 years of totalitarian government had left most sectors of Albanian society ignorant of the very concept of human rights. When the Covenant had been ratified, it had been necessary to raise public awareness of human rights and fundamental freedoms. The Covenant had been implemented through the enactment of legislation, including the Constitution, which reflected democratic values and the rule of law.

10. The Covenant had been directly invoked before the courts in several instances, including a case which the Socialist and Social Democrat parliamentary groups had brought before the Constitutional Court in 1995. The Court had rejected the claim that domestic provisions did not conform to articles 15 and 25 of the Covenant in decision No. 1 of 31 January 1996. Decisions Nos. 3 and 25, of 11 February 2004 and 30 July 2004 respectively, had also involved direct invocation of the Covenant before the courts.

11. In response to question 2, he drew attention to the delegation's written replies, which contained a detailed explanation of the activities of the People's Advocate.

12. Mr. PAPANDILE (Albania), replying to question 3, said that Albania had been committed to fighting terrorism and all related activities for several years. His Government had established dialogues and mechanisms with the international institutions and States at the forefront of efforts to prevent and combat terrorism, even prior to 11 September 2001. Those measures had resulted in the detection and elimination of a number of terrorist cells. Further steps were being taken to train staff at all levels in terrorism prevention, and to consolidate internal protection and effective reaction capacity in the event of a terrorist attack.

13. The Government had ratified a number of relevant international conventions, including the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism and the European Convention on the Suppression of Terrorism. The Bill on Preventing and Combating Terrorism had been prepared in accordance with the provisions of those instruments, with assistance from

international experts. It had focused on measures to combat the financing of terrorism and the conditions, procedures and control of the implementation of those measures. The law was designed to implement the relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions in order to combat terrorists, terrorist organizations and those who financed terrorism by blocking and sequestering their funds and assets. It was also in line with the recommendations of the Financial Action Task Force on Money-Laundering.

14. Draft legislation on measures against financing terrorism allowed for the prosecution of persons declared as terrorists or financiers of terrorism, regardless of the time and place of commission of a terrorist act. It also provided administrative jurisdiction for blocking and sequestering the assets of declared persons. While the Council of Ministers was responsible for including someone on the list of declared persons, the Ministry of Finance would be responsible for further measures against those persons. The Ministry already had structures in place to combat money-laundering, and much of its work in that area required procedures and skills similar to those used to combat terrorism. It was expected that the legislation would substantially improve the effectiveness of Albania's efforts to prevent and eliminate the sources of financing of terrorist groups. He drew the Committee's attention to the definitions of terms used in the draft legislation given in the written replies.

15. Ms. HAJNAJ (Albania), further responding to question 3, said that the State police in general and the anti-terror unit in particular were taking specific action to implement the National Plan of Action against Terrorism and the Bill on Preventing and Combating Terrorism, and the issue remained a priority for her Government. Preventive measures included: fully evaluating and monitoring the situation throughout the country, focusing on criminal organizations with a nationalist, ideological or religious background; identifying foreigners and organizations suspected of inciting inter-religious conflict and linked with international criminal organizations; checking the procedures and assets of those organizations; identifying persons suspected of having links with terrorist organizations; strengthening border controls to identify wanted terrorists or persons with terrorist links; and taking appropriate measures to prevent bombings. Since the creation of an anti-terror unit within the Ministry of Public Order, there had been no reported crime classified as a terrorist act within the national borders.

16. Ms. EMINI (Albania), replying to question 4 on derogation, said that, according to the Venice Commission of the Council of Europe, the new Albanian Constitution fully conformed to European democratic standards. In the light of article 175 of the Constitution, articles 9 (4) and 10 (1) of the Covenant were subject to derogation during the state of emergency, in conformity with article 4 of the Covenant, which provided for non-derogation only from articles 6, 7, 8 (1) and (2), 11, 15, 16 and 18.

17. Responding to question 5, she said that the Kanun constituted unwritten customary law, and while it was not accepted under current Albanian legislation, practices connected with the Kanun continued in the northern part of the country - for example, the blood feud phenomenon, and the restriction of the right of inheritance to male children. As a result of male self-imprisonment due to blood feuds, girls and women were responsible for supporting the household. In all those cases women and girls were discriminated against, but, as the rules were unwritten, it was not possible to undertake official research or compile statistics on discrimination against them.

18. Domestic violence was still a serious problem. The spread of print and electronic media had made the phenomenon more visible: it was no longer a private problem but a social problem. The Committee for Equal Opportunities (CEO) had carried out a study on the economic and legal rights of rural women in which it mentioned the phenomenon of violence within the rural family. In many cases violence in rural areas was linked to the low level of education of the spouses, the influence of the social environment and the prevalence of a patriarchal mentality. Domestic violence often went unreported. The absence of support structures was a serious challenge for women who wanted to escape abusive families. The Magistrates' School, in collaboration with a USAID project, had developed a programme for training judges and prosecutors on domestic violence issues. In 2002, the NGO Network against Gender Violence had been established to provide legal assistance, shelters and counselling to abused women.

19. Mr. PAPANDILE (Albania), replying to question 6 on women's access to the judiciary and legal services, said that in the majority of cases women were hindered by the fact that they had grown up believing that they did not inherit assets in the same way as men or that they did not have the same rights. Economic difficulties were also a factor, although legal representatives charging low fees were available, and in any case representation by a lawyer was not obligatory. It was worth highlighting the fact that the majority of legal proceedings for dissolution of marriage were initiated by women.

20. Despite the fact that a number of awareness campaigns and training sessions had been organized in conjunction with NGOs, international organizations and donors, one of the major challenges facing the CEO, in addition to the lack of financial resources, was the low level of information on legal rights for women and girls. Various NGOs, including the Women's Advocacy Centre, offered free legal assistance to disadvantaged women.

21. In order to increase government and public awareness of gender issues and the necessity of women's participation in the decision-making process and public life, seminars had been organized throughout the country. Various projects had been carried out within the framework of the Stability Pact for South-Eastern Europe, such as training women to stand as candidates in elections. However, according to a recent CEO study, the representation of women in the decision-making process and in public and political life was very low. Public representation was significantly higher than political representation.

22. The principal objectives of the CEO were the implementation of the Equal Opportunities Platform and the principles of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women by the Government. The CEO also aimed to improve the coordination of activities between NGOs, the Government and international partners, and prepare realistic and open studies.

23. Mr. HAJDARAGA (Albania) drew the Committee's attention to the statistics relating to question 7 contained in the written replies.

24. Mr. PAPANDILE (Albania), responding to question 8, said that the last execution had been carried out in Albania in 1992. From that time on, although the sentence was provided for in the Criminal Code, the use of capital punishment had been suspended. Capital punishment

had been abolished in 1999 through a decision of the Constitutional Court, which repealed the relevant articles of the Criminal Code. Following the ratification in 2000 of the Sixth Optional Protocol to the European Convention on Human Rights, the death penalty had been definitively replaced by life imprisonment. The Ministry of Justice had prepared a bill approving Protocol No. 13 to the European Convention, which provided for the abolition of capital punishment in all circumstances. In his Government's view, the provisions contained in both domestic and international legislation provided the necessary legal means of permanently banning the death penalty.

25. Mr. NINA (Albania), replying to question 9, said that in its attempt to combat the problem of blood feuds, the Government had taken a number of legal measures, including amendments to the Criminal Code in 2001, whereby criminal acts committed as part of a blood feud carried prison sentences. A study had been carried out on the possibility of legal amendments to expedite the system of investigating and judging criminal acts committed in connection with blood feuds, with a view to their prevention. The creation of a committee to combat blood feuds, under the auspices of the Office of the President of the Republic, was also under discussion. The establishment of the General Prosecutor's Office and the Serious Crimes Court in 2004 was also expected to play an important role in reducing the number of criminal acts linked with blood feuds.

26. Ministry of Justice statistics revealed that crime linked with blood feuds had decreased significantly since 2001. In 2003, the number of people tried for blood feud crimes had fallen to 55. One of the major challenges in combating blood feuds was ensuring the full enforcement of the law by the State police and the relevant legal institutions. For the current year, 92 killings had so far been reported, 8 of which had been linked to revenge motives. Additional statistics were contained in the written replies.

27. Throughout the country a total of 104 children were in a situation of self-imprisonment at home as a result of blood feuds, out of a total of approximately 500,000 children enrolled in the nine-year compulsory education system. The Ministry of Education and Science had issued by-laws under which all children subject to a blood feud threat were identified and registered, their dwellings were grouped for the purposes of better coverage by teachers, special curricula had been adopted which were more appropriate for that target-group, and teachers had been trained and assigned to travel to the children's homes. The diplomas awarded were equivalent to those granted in the mainstream system.

28. Mr. PAPANDILE (Albania), referring to questions 10 and 11, said that no statistics were available for the period 1999-2002. However, in 2003, 190 police officers had been the subject of legal proceedings; two had been convicted and given prison sentences. Their criminal offences had included abuse of authority, bribery, violation of arrest procedures, arbitrary actions, burglary and unnecessary use of force. For the current year, 265 claims had so far been made against 250 police officers, 40 of whom had been arrested. A comprehensive list of the criminal offences involved was contained in the written replies.

29. Ms. EMINI (Albania), responding to question 12, said that tackling the problem of trafficking in general, and trafficking in women and girls in particular, was one of her Government's main priorities. Special emphasis had been placed on improving legislation

in that area. In 2001, for example, an article had been added to the Criminal Code providing that trafficking in women was punishable by 7-15 years' imprisonment. If the offence was accompanied by the physical or mental abuse of a woman, it was punishable by a 15-year sentence, and where it caused her death the penalty was life imprisonment.

30. The CHAIRPERSON invited members of the Committee to put questions to the delegation on the replies to questions 1 to 12.

31. Mr. KÄLIN said that although he agreed with the delegation that Albania would not have been able to submit a report to the Committee a year after having ratified the Covenant as was generally recommended, the submission of the initial report had been considerably delayed. The report provided a considerable amount of information on the Albanian legal system and domestic legislation, but further information should be given on the challenges faced by the authorities when implementing the provisions of the Covenant and on government measures to address such problems.

32. The Committee commended the use of the Covenant by courts in Albania, and would welcome further information on how it had been invoked and in what circumstances. Although the ratification of the two relevant protocols to the European Convention on Human Rights demonstrated that fundamental rights were protected in Albania, the ratification of the Second Optional Protocol to the Covenant on the abolition of the death penalty would send an important message to the international community, and would contribute to the worldwide eradication of capital punishment. He therefore urged the Government to reconsider its position.

33. He asked how blood feud crimes were classified in criminal legislation, and whether they were considered more serious than other types of murder or manslaughter. Although the delegation had given statistics showing a relatively low number of blood feud cases that had come before the courts, further information should be provided on the actual number of such crimes committed. Statistics showed a decrease in the number of murder cases tried in Albania, but that did not necessarily mean that the number of murders had fallen. Clarification of that situation would be welcome. He also requested clarification of the number of isolated children, since the statistics presented by the State party had been unclear and at variance with information received from international NGOs.

34. The delegation's explanation that poor nutrition was the cause of the high infant mortality rate gave cause for concern. Statistics showed an increase in infant mortality over recent years, which called into question the State party's efforts to guarantee all children the right to life. He asked whether the Government had taken any measures to ensure adequate nutrition for babies and children. The report showed that between 20 and 25 per cent of pregnancies in Albania were aborted, and he asked how the Government was addressing that issue. According to the Government's statistics, there was an abnormal imbalance in the ratio of male to female live births. He wondered whether abortions were carried out on the basis of the sex of the unborn child, a practice which would be contradictory to the non-discriminatory nature of the right to life.

35. Mr. WIERUSZEWSKI said that although he commended the Government for having involved national NGOs in the drafting of its initial report, he had been disappointed that the Committee had not received any alternative information from such organizations. He hoped that a greater national NGO presence would be felt when the State party's next periodic report was submitted.

36. He asked how the Office of the People's Advocate ensured that its recommendations were carried out, whether it had the authority and capacity to follow up its recommendations, how it ensured that it could cover remote areas of the country in carrying out investigations, and how it ensured that people from such areas were able to file complaints. He asked how effective the Government considered the work of the People's Advocate to be.

37. He enquired whether there was a system of protection in place for victims and witnesses of trafficking in persons, and whether they were exempt from punishment. He wondered whether there were any specific comprehensive and effective protection measures for rural women, who were often the most vulnerable to gangs of traffickers. What international, regional and bilateral measures did the Government intend to take in order to combat trafficking in persons? The Committee had been informed that the Albanian police were often directly involved in trafficking crimes, and he wondered how the Government was addressing that problem. Efforts must be made to ensure that the police had the financial and human resources necessary to enforce the law; otherwise human rights protection could not be guaranteed to the public.

38. Mr. SCHEININ noted with dissatisfaction the late submission of Albania's initial report since real progress in the implementation of the Covenant and the effective protection of human rights could only be made through dialogue between State parties and the Committee. He asked what stage discussions had reached on the draft legislation to prevent and combat terrorism. All criminal law provisions relating to action to combat terrorism must comply with article 15 of the Covenant, which encompassed the principles of nullum crimen and nulla poena. In the draft legislation on measures against financing terrorism the word "terrorist" was defined in relation to "terrorist acts". He asked whether that understanding of the term "terrorist acts" was the same as that defined in article 230 of the Criminal Code, or whether it related to a broader concept.

39. He expressed concern that Albania's report to the United Nations Counter-Terrorism Committee on measures taken pursuant to Security Council resolution 1373 (2001) did not provide specific information on any provisions to prevent refolement when there was a threat of torture or use of the death penalty in the country of origin. The Committee took the view that when a country abolished capital punishment, it should extend that principle to cover non-refolement. He asked whether that was done in Albania.

40. The delegation had not provided a satisfactory answer to question 4 of the list of issues, and further information would be welcome. Articles 9 (4) and 10 (1) of the Covenant, although not listed in the non-derogable provisions quoted in article 4 (2), were non-derogable by default due to their inherent link with the articles in that list. Although the Albanian Constitution allowed derogation from the provisions of articles 9 (4) and 10 (1), it also stated that international treaties took precedence over domestic legislation in situations of conflict. He therefore wished to know whether, during a state of emergency, the international status of the Covenant was taken into consideration and the derogation of articles 9 (4) and 10 (1) prohibited.

41. The Committee had been informed by international human rights NGOs about the widespread and inappropriate use of violence by the Albanian police, which often resulted in the torture or death of suspects. Information had also been received about police involvement in trafficking in persons. Such crimes by law enforcement officials appeared to go unpunished. Although the delegation had listed offences that had been committed by police officers and investigated by the authorities, neither torture nor trafficking in persons had been mentioned. He wished to know whether torture was prohibited in Albania, how the word “torture” was defined in domestic legislation, and whether the cases mentioned by NGOs had not been investigated owing to a culture of impunity. He asked whether the Government intended to take further measures to address the issue of crimes committed by police personnel.

42. Mr. ANDO, thanking the delegation for the State party’s voluminous report and detailed written replies, said he shared Mr. Scheinin’s concern that the people of Albania had been deprived for nine years of the opportunity to benefit from the results of a constructive dialogue with the Committee.

43. Referring to question 5 of the list of issues concerning customary law, known as the Kanun, which was still observed in some rural areas, he noted that only men enjoyed inheritance rights in respect of immovable property and that women were only entitled to a dowry from their family. He asked whether, in families where there were no sons, a daughter could inherit property.

44. Turning to question 6, he noted that in most cases legal action for the dissolution of marriage was taken by women, a fact that suggested they were dissatisfied with the unfair conditions governing their marital status. He enquired about the status of a married woman’s income where she was a wage earner, both within marriage and in the event of divorce. Where divorce was by mutual consent, what rules governed the apportionment of property? And where divorce was on the application of one spouse, what were the legal grounds on which either spouse could claim divorce? According to the written replies, women were often unable to afford a good lawyer. He asked whether women in such circumstances had access to legal aid. Were there NGOs that might offer assistance to women in difficulties and, if so, did the Government encourage their activities?

45. According to the delegation, shelters for women faced with domestic violence were difficult to find. He asked what the Government was doing to remedy the situation and whether NGOs were involved in addressing the problem or whether international assistance had been sought. What was the Government doing, administratively and judicially, to help women victims of trafficking?

46. Mr. YALDEN said that while the report was comprehensive, it placed undue emphasis on legislation and contained too little information on practical achievements.

47. The activities of the People’s Advocate, as described in the written replies to the list of issues, related mostly to prisoners. He would have welcomed more statistical material regarding the number of complaints received, disaggregated by type, and how they had been dealt with. What proportion, for example, had been settled or referred to Parliament? He would be interested in seeing a copy of the annual report submitted by the People’s Advocate to Parliament, as referred to in paragraph 142 of the initial report.

48. He was grateful for the detailed statistics on the status of women and their participation in public life and the private sector. Unfortunately the picture was not very encouraging. For example, only 9 out of 131 members of Parliament were women and the ratio had declined in recent years. Their participation in parliamentary committees was also disappointing: no woman chaired a committee; there was no female member of the Foreign Affairs Committee or the Human Rights and Minorities Committee, and only one female member of the Economy, Finance and Privatization Committee. Most surprising of all were the reasons given in paragraph 196 of the report for the low participation of women, namely that it was partly due to their opinion about politics as a complicated business but mainly to the opinion that women were not suitable for decision-making positions. He hoped that the Government would take steps to address those startling opinions, for instance through the introduction of an awareness-raising programme.

49. While the representation of women in the media was a great deal better, he noted there was only one woman at the level of director or editor-in-chief.

50. Sir Nigel RODLEY, referring to questions 10 and 11 of the list of issues, said that article 281 of the Albanian Code of Criminal Procedure required judges and prosecutors to initiate investigations of torture ex officio, in other words even where no complaint was filed. He asked whether any statistics on such initiatives were available. Amnesty International had quoted a practising Albanian lawyer who claimed that in many cases defendants taken to court from police stations to be remanded in custody bore visible marks of ill-treatment. At the court sessions the only witnesses to the injuries were the lawyer, the judge and the prosecutor. The lawyer protested but the others “kept their mouths shut”. He asked whether that was an accurate description of the attitude of some judges or prosecutors to allegations of torture.

51. Referring to the case of Gazment Tahirllari, who had died in January 2003 as a result of torture, he noted that six police officers had eventually been convicted of the crime. The case might never have come to court, however, because the original medical certificate had attributed Mr. Tahirllari’s death to an alcohol-induced coma. It was only when his parents had insisted on an exhumation and a further autopsy that the cause of death had been established as trauma caused by a blow from a blunt instrument. A doctor who had disputed the original finding had apparently been dismissed from the hospital where he was working. He asked what measures had been taken to reinstate that doctor and to punish the doctors who had given false information.

52. There seemed to be no provision under Albanian law for the State to pay compensation when its officials had been responsible for torture. He understood that the only recourse available was to bring criminal or civil proceedings against individual police officers. Clearly, however, a police officer would be unable to pay the kind of compensation that was required under international law. He asked whether there was any provision for payment of compensation by the State for acts of torture for which it was responsible and, if not, what measures were planned to remedy the situation.

53. The CHAIRPERSON said that he would not ask for a response to the questions just raised until the next meeting. In the meantime he invited the delegation to reply to questions 14 to 16 of the list of issues.

54. Mr. NINA (Albania) said, in reply to questions 14 and 15, that of the 645 persons detained in the remand centres run by the General Directorate of Prisons 31 were minors and 39 were women. Conditions in the Tirana remand centre were satisfactory but no investment had been made in the Vlora centre because a new building was planned. It was hoped to remedy the situation shortly. The average stay in a remand centre was 8 to 10 months, which was the time needed for the investigation of serious crimes such as murder and organized crime. In the event of wrongful imprisonment, the injured party was entitled to compensation under the Code of Criminal Procedure for each day of imprisonment.

55. Juveniles on remand were segregated from adults and their living conditions were better. The security personnel were civilians and detainees had access to a library and sports facilities. The staff included teachers, social workers and psychologists, and psychotherapy sessions were provided. Corporal punishment was prohibited. Legal assistance was provided during the judicial proceedings. In the Tirana centre, informal education was provided by a teacher employed by a non-profit organization. Teachers kept in touch with the families of detainees. Schooling, including foreign language tuition, was provided in Vaqarr.

56. A master plan for the remand imprisonment system had been developed to reduce the number of remand prisoners. However, implementation of the plan would take some time because it would require substantial investment. Prosecutors and courts had been urged to avoid lengthy proceedings and as soon as the courts handed down a final decision, detainees were transferred to ordinary prisons. Some prisoners had filed complaints with the Ombudsman. Wherever a violation had been found, disciplinary measures had been taken against the perpetrators.

57. The measures envisaged under the master plan included permanent monitoring of the treatment of inmates of prisons and remand centres; seminars and training courses on the standing rules for the treatment of inmates and arrested persons; punishment of all cases of violation of the standing rules; close cooperation with the Albanian Helsinki Committee in improving the legal infrastructure and the prison system; close cooperation with NGOs in improving rehabilitation programmes; improvement of educational courses for convicted and remand prisoners; renovation of buildings and construction of new facilities.

58. The Ministry of Justice was reviewing the provisions regarding mitigating circumstances in the Code of Criminal Procedure so as to reduce the time spent in remand imprisonment. A specialized institution for juveniles would shortly be opened.

59. Turning to question 16, he said that some citizens were not locally registered because of the scale of internal migration. The Ministry of Local Government and Decentralization was extending the network of civil status offices, alerting internal migrants to the need for registration, updating and improving civil status registers, chiefly through the establishment of an electronic database, and providing special training courses for employees of civil status offices. The only prerequisite for changing one's residence was communication of the factual details to the authorities.

60. The Ministry of Education and Science and its subordinate bodies had taken numerous practical measures to ensure school attendance by unregistered children, such as the appointment of inspectors to collect relevant data, raising the awareness of parental boards, distribution of posters appealing to children to attend school, and encouraging registered pupils to contact their unregistered coevals. The Ministry also cooperated with the Ministry of Local Government and Decentralization, municipalities, communes, city wards and villages in identifying, registering and inviting recent child migrants to attend school.

61. The Ministry of Health had established health-care facilities in almost all parts of the country, giving priority to urban and suburban areas where migrant populations were concentrated. Health care was provided through family physicians and infirmary services. The entire population, including internal migrants, had been covered by a vaccination campaign run in cooperation with the family medical service. Children were immunized in accordance with WHO parameters. Migration was monitored to ensure that people received the necessary health documentation, especially in respect of the mandatory vaccination of different age groups. Pregnant women and newborn infants in migrant populations were screened in cooperation with regional obstetric and gynaecological hospitals and childbirth clinics in suburban and rural areas.

The meeting rose at 6 p.m.