



**International Convention on  
the Elimination of All Forms  
of Racial Discrimination**

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**Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination**  
**Seventy-seventh session**

**Summary record of the 2032nd meeting**

Held at the Palais Wilson, Geneva, on Monday, 16 August 2010, at 3 p.m.

*Chairperson:* Mr. Kemal

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*The meeting was called to order at 3.15 p.m.*

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

*Seventeenth and eighteenth periodic reports of Morocco* (CERD/C/MAR/17-18; CERD/C/MAR/Q/17-18)

1. **Mr. Hilale** (Morocco) said that the seventeenth and eighteenth periodic reports of Morocco were the result of consultation and coordination between various ministerial departments and other stakeholders active in the promotion and protection of human rights in the Kingdom, and that non-governmental organizations and other civil society actors had been involved in their preparation.
2. The Kingdom of Morocco had embarked on a strategic and irreversible process aimed at consolidating the rule of law, strengthening democracy and expanding basic civil liberties. In 2006, Morocco had initiated a process to withdraw its reservations to various international human rights instruments and on 26 October 2006 it had made the declaration provided for in article 14 of the Convention.
3. Human rights were at the heart of the mechanisms and programmes implemented by his Government, as was demonstrated by the completion of the work of Justice and Reconciliation Commission; the launch of the National Human Development Initiative, which was an effective strategy for equitable socio-economic development and combating social exclusion and disparities between regions; the reorganization, in accordance with the Paris Principles, of the Advisory Council on Human Rights, which had become a key mechanism for the many institutions involved in promoting and protecting human rights in Morocco; the strengthening of the resources of the Royal Institute for Amazigh Culture; and lastly the establishment of a department within the prison and rehabilitation service with a view to upgrading prisons and helping to rehabilitate inmates by improving their professional qualifications and, thereby, combating any discrimination they might encounter. Other reforms had been launched in 2009 in the areas of regionalization and justice. The King had established four cardinal principles: attachment to the sacred and constant values of the nation, solidarity between regions, the pursuit of harmonization and the balance of skills and resources and a commitment to broad decentralization. By establishing a special relationship between citizens and their region, decentralization would encourage the economic, social and human development of all. Furthermore, it would apply to the whole territory and in particular to the southern provinces, which would be its main beneficiaries.
4. The Moroccan Government, aware of the key role of the justice system in the construction, functioning and consolidation of any democratic society, was currently giving priority to reform of that sector. The reform focused on six main areas: strengthening guarantees for the independence of the judiciary, modernizing the prescriptive framework, upgrading the system's structures, strengthening human resources, improving judicial efficiency and improving the accountability of the justice system.
5. As a nation State, a melting pot of several civilizations, a country situated at the crossroads of Africa, Europe and the Arab world and a place where different communities, cultures and religions lived together, Morocco had, over the centuries, developed its own national culture and a strong identity, which had been enriched and reinforced by diverse contributions. The unity and indivisibility of the Moroccan nation were thus historical facts and a reality of daily life. Thus, in a historic speech delivered on 17 October 2001 announcing the establishment of the Royal Institute for Amazigh Culture, the King declared that "Amazighté, whose roots go deep into the history of the Moroccan people, belongs to all Moroccans, without exception." Nine years later, the Institute could boast a proven good

record in promoting Amazigh language and culture, reflected in the establishment of partnerships and cooperation agreements with private sector actors, the public sector and civil society in various fields, in particular education and the media.

6. Significant progress had been made in education and the preservation of Amazigh culture as a precious shared heritage and object of national pride. Likewise, awareness-raising activities on the vital role of Amazigh culture in the construction of a Morocco that was modern, democratic and open to the world had been undertaken in order to consolidate the influence of Amazighté as a key element of national culture. Recent progress in the area of the promotion of Amazigh culture included the launch, on 1 March 2010, of an Amazigh television channel. Furthermore, steps had been taken to overcome the difficulties encountered in implementing some legislation concerning the registration of first names for civil status purposes.

7. Combating all forms of discrimination was a priority for Morocco. In that regard, one achievement was the inclusion in the Criminal Code (Dahir of 11 November 2003) of a special section on discrimination, which adopted the definition of discrimination contained in article 1 of the Convention. Article 431-1 of the Criminal Code currently stated that “discrimination shall be taken to mean any distinction between natural persons on grounds of national or social origin, colour [...] or on account of the person’s actual or alleged membership or non-membership of a particular ethnic group, nation, race or religion”. The same article stated that any distinction applied to a legal entity on those grounds or to its members or some of its members also constituted discrimination. Discrimination on such grounds was punishable with imprisonment for a term of between 1 month and 2 years and with a fine of between 1,200 and 50,000 Moroccan dirhams when it resulted in the withholding of a benefit or service, impeding the normal pursuit of any economic activity, denial of employment, punishment of a person or dismissal of a person from employment.

8. A broad range of institutions were actively involved in combating discrimination in order to ensure equality of treatment in many areas of daily life, in the workplace and also other fields such as education, health and access to goods or services. Those institutions included the Advisory Council on Human Rights, the Diwan Al Madhalim or Ombudsman’s Office and the Council for the Moroccan Community Abroad.

9. The regional development agencies were contributing effectively to the realization of the economic, social and cultural rights of all Moroccans and were working to gradually eliminate regional imbalances.

10. Alongside legislative and institutional reforms, Morocco had launched a number of initiatives and introduced supportive measures to combat racial discrimination through a participatory approach based, inter alia, on raising the awareness of the general public and law enforcement officials of the universal values of tolerance and human rights. In that context, Morocco had paid particular attention to human rights education and training at the national, regional and international levels.

11. At the national level, such efforts had resulted in a national human rights education programme, a citizens’ platform for the promotion of a human rights culture and a national action plan for democracy and human rights. At the regional level, Morocco had launched in 2009 an Arab action plan for the promotion of human rights, which had been approved unanimously by the member States of the League of Arab States and implemented in early 2010. Lastly, at the international level, Morocco’s efforts had led to a joint initiative with Switzerland aimed at adopting a draft United Nations declaration on human rights education and training.

12. **Mr. Ouzgane** (Morocco) said that the choice of first names and their acceptance by civil registrars complied with a number of criteria defined in Act No. 37-99 on civil status, which had been enacted in 2002 and came into effect in 2003. Article 21 of the Act

established that the first name chosen must be Moroccan. He agreed that, under that article, some first names which were not in use in Morocco had been rejected, but that had been the case for Arabic first names from Arab countries in the Middle East as much as Amazigh first names. Contested cases had been referred to the High Commission on Civil Status, responsible for ruling on such matters, which had accepted several of them, including Amazigh first names.

13. The circular of 9 April 2010 on the choice of first names issued by the Ministry of the Interior reaffirmed the need for first names to be Moroccan and instructed civil registrars to accept first names containing the names of Allah, Arabic, Amazigh and Hebrew first names, as well as new first names which were Arabic-sounding or of Muslim origin. In terms of procedure, the Ministry of the Interior indicated that the civil registrar was authorized to decide whether or not a first name was compatible with the law by virtue of his familiarity with the population of the municipality. The circular also established that in the event of a dispute with a parent wishing to give his or her child a first name that did not meet the specified criteria, the civil registrar must seek guidance directly from the Ministry of the Interior within 24 hours. However, out of the 3,600,000 children declared since the new Act on civil status had come into effect, only 454 first names considered contentious had been submitted to the High Commission on Civil Status, of which 95 had been rejected. In addition, he stressed that no list of forbidden first names had been prepared and no dispute had been recorded since the publication of the above-mentioned circular.

14. **Mr. Mokhtar** (Morocco) agreed that the Amazigh language was a key element of Moroccan identity and culture and said that the Royal Institute for Amazigh Culture was taking important measures to promote its use, in particular in public spaces, education programmes and the media. The Institute had, in particular, decided to codify the language by developing an Amazigh alphabet, thereby ensuring that it could be transcribed.

15. There was an ongoing debate about the possibility of constitutionally recognizing the Amazigh language as one of the official languages of Morocco, with input from civil society organizations as well as the Advisory Council on Human Rights and the Royal Institute for Amazigh Culture.

16. **Mr. Najim** (Morocco) said that the Royal Institute for Amazigh Culture had adequate logistical and technical resources to fulfil its mandate. It had a staff of 112, and in addition a number of researchers, consultants and aid personnel. The Moroccan Government had also made equipment and premises available to it.

17. **Ms. Aouab** (Morocco) said that, in accordance with the International Labour Organization (ILO) Convention concerning Discrimination in Respect of Employment and Occupation (No. 111), to which Morocco was party, and the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, article 9 of the Labour Code expressly prohibited all forms of discrimination against employees, including racial discrimination. Morocco had introduced a labour inspection system to oversee implementation of labour legislation, part of which included carrying out monitoring visits to businesses both by day and by night. No case of racial discrimination in the area of employment had been reported.

18. **Mr. Oujour** (Morocco) said that Amazigh had been taught since 2003 in 3,700 schools with a total of 560,000 pupils. The Ministry of Education had 393 Amazigh language inspectors. A programme to extend the teaching of Amazigh had been introduced, which included in particular the development of school textbooks in Amazigh. The State intended to further strengthen its efforts to train more teachers and inspectors who were specialists in Amazigh.

19. **Mr. Ajraoui** (Morocco) said that under article 11 of Act No. 62-06 establishing the Moroccan Nationality Code, Moroccan nationality was granted to a foreign spouse by naturalization. Between 2005 and 2007, 144 foreign men married to Moroccan women had obtained Moroccan nationality by naturalization.

20. **Mr. Jilali Sghir** (Morocco) said that the adoption of Act No. 02-03 on the entry of foreigners into and their residence in Morocco and illegal emigration and immigration had made it possible to reform the whole asylum system. In particular, it had enabled Morocco to improve its compliance with its obligations under the international instruments it had ratified, to improve respect for Morocco's sovereignty with regard to the granting of refugee status and to strengthen cooperation with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). The Act had also made it possible to establish clear and transparent criteria for determining eligibility for refugee status. The Ministry of Justice and the Advisory Council on Human Rights had set up an ad hoc committee tasked with ensuring that greater account was taken of human rights concerns in procedures for granting asylum and refugee status.

21. Morocco had adopted a strategy to combat trafficking in persons targeting three main areas: prevention, combating trafficking networks and protecting victims from exploitation. Victims of trafficking benefited from medical and psychological assistance, as well as reintegration and rehabilitation programmes. In addition, voluntary return to the country of origin was facilitated. In order to tackle the human tragedies resulting from migrants crossing the Mediterranean in flimsy craft, operations were carried out to rescue them at sea.

22. **Mr. Abdenabaoui** (Morocco) said that discrimination in all its forms was punishable in Morocco and that migrants enjoyed the same rights as citizens, regardless of whether they were in a regular or irregular situation. No case of discrimination or violence against migrants in an irregular situation had been recorded. In 2007, only one case of incitement to racial hatred against an African had been referred to the Rabat Administrative Court. The individual who had made the racist remarks had been ordered to pay a fine. Several programmes had been implemented in the country in order to strengthen human rights and democracy education.

23. In accordance with article 10 of the Moroccan Constitution, no one might be arrested, detained or punished except in the cases and in the manner prescribed by law. The right to due process was scrupulously respected and conditions of detention were carefully monitored. Representatives of the public prosecutor's office inspected all places of detention at least once a week. Access to justice was a right guaranteed to all and legal aid was granted to the poorest defendants. In 2008, the Ministry of Justice, in cooperation with UNHCR, had implemented a training programme for prosecutors and the police in order to improve their knowledge of asylum procedures.

24. All foreigners could request a residence permit. In March 2005, the Rabat Administrative Court had found that the conviction of a foreigner could not be interpreted as a threat to public safety and invoked as grounds for refusing a residence permit to a foreigner.

25. **Mr. Mokhtar** (Morocco) said that there were no individuals or groups in Morocco, including the Sahara, who could be described as "displaced" within the meaning of the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement.

26. **Ms. Dah** (Country Rapporteur) regretted that there were only two women in the Moroccan delegation and no representative of the Advisory Council on Human Rights. She noted with appreciation that Morocco had a broad range of institutions dealing with human rights, in particular the Advisory Council on Human Rights, the Ombudsman's Office, the Justice and Reconciliation Commission, the Royal Institute for Amazigh Culture and the

Royal Advisory Council for Saharan Affairs. In 2006–2007, Morocco had revised its Family Code, thereby making it possible to introduce divorce by mutual consent and to make the legal minimum age for marriage equal for girls and boys. However, the Family Code still contained discriminatory provisions with regard to inheritance and did not appear to be consistently implemented by all judges.

27. With respect to the 2007 revision of the Nationality Code, she expressed surprise that a Moroccan woman could transmit her nationality to her children but not to her foreign husband. She asked whether a Moroccan woman lost her nationality when she married a foreigner. She also asked the delegation to confirm reports that preferential treatment was given to nationals of Arab or Muslim countries with respect to naturalization.

28. Morocco had ratified most international human rights instruments with the exception of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance. She asked whether Morocco intended to withdraw its reservations to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. She noted that Morocco had also ratified most ILO Conventions except the Convention concerning Equality of Treatment of Nationals and Non-Nationals in Social Security (No. 118).

29. She drew the delegation's attention to the Committee's general recommendation No. 30 on discrimination against non-citizens. She welcomed the fact that the State party had made the declaration provided for in article 14 of the Convention, but noted that the Committee had received no complaints from individuals. She would like to know whether Morocco had set up a national body to fulfil its obligations under article 14 and to promote the complaint procedure among the general public.

30. She asked what status the Convention had in Morocco's domestic legal system and whether the Convention had been invoked before the courts. She noted that the definition of racial discrimination in Moroccan legislation was not in line with article 1 of the Convention because it referred to the general principle of non-discrimination and not to racial discrimination. She suggested therefore that the State party should adopt a law relating specifically to racial discrimination.

31. She asked for statistics on the ethnic composition of the population and would like to know how censuses were carried out and what questions respondents were asked. She also enquired whether there was a national database which allowed the various public bodies to develop their programmes and whether the State party had sociodemographic indicators on Amazighs, Saharans and the Black population.

32. With respect to the situation of Amazighs, she would like to know whether there were in Morocco people who spoke only the languages of the region where they lived and whether a particular way of life and specific cultures and traditions differentiated them from population groups living in neighbouring localities.

33. She drew the delegation's attention to the fact that, while the Committee had incorporated into its doctrine the concept of indigenous people based on self-identification, it had never considered that the right to self-determination enshrined in article 3 of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples should violate the territorial integrity of a State. Recalling that Morocco had not voted against or abstained from adopting that Declaration and that it had signed the ILO Convention concerning Indigenous and Tribal Peoples in Independent Countries (No. 169), she asked whether the State party adhered to the concept of indigenous peoples per se and was ready to acknowledge that some population groups living in its territory were indigenous peoples.

34. Turning to the implementation of article 3 of the Convention, she noted the particular attention paid by the State party to the effective and balanced development of the

Saharan provinces of Morocco (CERD/C/MAR/17-18, para. 94) through social, economic and cultural programmes and asked what benefits those programmes had brought to Saharans, who had been living in tents for more than 30 years outside the development process.

35. With regard to the requirements set forth in article 4 of the Convention, in particular the obligation of States parties to declare an offence punishable by law all dissemination of ideas based on racial superiority or hatred, incitement to racial discrimination, as well as all acts of violence or incitement to such acts against any race or group of persons of another colour or ethnic origin, she asked why Morocco had not seen fit to revise its Criminal Code in order to bring it into line with article 4 of the Convention. That was all the more important given that Morocco was experiencing an increase in xenophobia because of an influx of immigrants from black Africa. More detailed information about case law on the prohibition of racial hatred and the penalties imposed by the courts would also be welcome.

36. With respect to the right to equal treatment before the tribunals (art. 5), she noted that Morocco, like other countries, had been affected by terrorism and that it had adopted a counter-terrorism act in 2003. However, she considered that the fight against terrorism should not create exceptions with regard to the prohibition of torture and that the national authorities should pay particular attention to the length of the period in custody to ensure that foreigners were not victims of inhuman and degrading treatment. Recalling that the Human Rights Committee had expressed concern about the retroactive nature of the 2003 Act, she indicated that the Committee had already emphasized, in its Statement of 8 March 2002 on racial discrimination and measures to combat terrorism (A/57/18, chap. XI, sect. C), that measures to combat terrorism must be in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and that they were only legitimate if they respected the fundamental principles and the universally recognized standards of international law, in particular, international human rights law and international humanitarian law (para. 3).

37. With regard to the protection of vulnerable persons in the administration of criminal justice, Moroccan judicial and prison authorities should pay particular attention to the Committee's general recommendation No. 31 on the prevention of racial discrimination in the administration and functioning of the criminal justice system (2005). As, according to some reports, vulnerable persons, namely Amazighs, Blacks, Saharans and migrants, whether lawfully resident or not, did not always have access to an interpreter in the context of judicial proceedings, including during court proceedings, it would be interesting to know how the Moroccan authorities intended to rectify that situation if those reports were substantiated.

38. With respect to the right to education and training, she asked the delegation to indicate whether the goals set for the decade 2000–2009, which had been devoted to the reform and reinvigoration of the education and training sectors as one of the country's top priorities (*ibid.*, para. 217), had been achieved. She also wished to know what had been the impact of the policy that had been in place since 2003 to promote teaching in Amazigh as a second language after Arabic.

39. Turning to refugees and asylum-seekers, she said that Morocco had been confronted with an influx of migrants as a result of the conflict in Iraq and conflicts in some sub-Saharan countries, which would explain the large number of Ivorians and Congolese from the Democratic Republic of the Congo present on the territory of the State party. Despite the Act of 2003 regulating the residence of foreigners and illegal immigration (*ibid.*, para. 32), the situation of refugees and asylum-seekers was still an issue in the absence of an asylum law. Moreover, according to some reports received by the Committee, asylum-seekers were in an extremely vulnerable situation since they were often returned under the procedure applicable to illegal immigrants. Morocco would be well advised to take steps to address that gap in the legal system and to work to combat the social stigmatization

suffered by asylum-seekers, which only exacerbated racial hatred and xenophobia against foreigners.

40. With regard to the implementation of article 7 of the Convention, Morocco's commitment to human rights training was proof of its political will in that field, as demonstrated by the provision of lessons on human rights from primary school onwards and training modules for judges, police officers and prison staff. It would seem, however, that there was a strong xenophobic sentiment in Morocco among the general public and young people in particular. Although that situation was fairly common in other countries, it was inadmissible that racist and anti-Semitic discourse was commonplace in universities, which were supposed to train future elites. When the word "Jew" had reportedly become the ultimate insult in Morocco, one had to ask oneself about the future of the country. How had Morocco reached that state of affairs?

41. **Mr. Avtonomov** welcomed the adoption of the Act of 2003 regulating the residence of foreigners in Morocco and illegal immigration, which enshrined the principle of the equality of all foreigners, without discrimination, in terms of the conditions governing their residence in and entry into Moroccan territory, and offered them the possibility of obtaining Moroccan citizenship. However, he wished to know whether a foreign man married to a Moroccan woman could acquire Moroccan nationality by marriage. Referring to paragraph 92 of the periodic report, which gave a non-exhaustive list of Amazigh first names approved by the High Commission on Civil Status such as Amazigh, Amlal, Ous, Idir, Tasnim, Todla, Tifawt, Masinissa and Numidia, he asked why a list of Amazigh first names had to be approved, as that was not necessary in the case of Arabic first names.

42. Welcoming the information contained in paragraph 262 of the report on the role of the Ombudsman's Office, he said he would like to receive further information on the Ombudsman's mandate, in particular whether he could be dismissed from his post, how many complaints his Office had received in previous years and what percentage of those had been upheld.

43. **Mr. Murillo Martínez** regretted the lack of statistics in Morocco's periodic report, in particular demographic data disaggregated by ethnic and linguistic background. He noted that neither the core document (HRI/CORE/1/Add.23/Rev.1) nor the report under consideration provided data on life expectancy, infant mortality and the mortality rate of the various linguistic groups living in the country. He wished to know whether that was a result of State party policy aimed at protecting national unity.

44. Noting that a national plan of action for democracy and human rights had been launched in early 2009, he asked whether the Moroccan authorities were planning to adopt a national plan of action against racism and racial discrimination or whether chapters or sections of the plan launched in 2009 would deal more specifically with those issues. He hoped that the State party would play an active role in the International Year for People of African Descent in 2011.

45. **Mr. Diaconu** said that it was clear that there had been significant developments in the legislative and institutional fields in Morocco and that numerous reforms had been adopted with regard to the rights of women and children and regarding inheritance, but it was difficult to assess the actual impact of all those measures in the absence of disaggregated statistical or demographic data. It would be particularly useful to know how many Amazighs, Arabs or persons of other ethnic or linguistic backgrounds there were in the country. In what parts of the country did those people live and what was their economic, social and cultural situation? Assistance provided to disadvantaged regions was clearly laudable, but how was it possible to assess its actual impact if there was no data on the particular ethnic or linguistic groups living there?



46. Taking note of the creation of the Justice and Reconciliation Commission which had considered the gross human rights violations committed, identified the victims and assessed their eligibility for compensation, he asked the delegation to specify the violations in question, to indicate which population groups had been victims of abuses, who the perpetrators were and whether those persons would be obliged to answer for their actions in the courts.

47. He welcomed the fact that the Amazigh were recognized as a cultural minority, but emphasized that a cultural minority should not be seen as a threat. He asked why Amazigh first names had to be approved by the High Commission on Civil Status. Lastly, he invited the Moroccan delegation to comment on reports that members of Amazigh associations continued to suffer violations of the right to freedom of assembly and association and that Amazigh cultural associations were not recognized.

48. Article 39 bis of the Press Code, which prohibited incitement to racial discrimination but made no mention of the dissemination of ideas based on racial superiority, should be brought into line with the provisions of article 4 of the Convention in order to ensure that it covered all the cases envisaged in the Convention. In that regard, he would like to know whether under the Criminal Code the fact that an offence was based on racism or hostility towards an ethnic minority was considered an aggravating circumstance.

49. **Mr. de Gouttes** noted that, according to some non-governmental organizations, the Royal Institute for Amazigh Culture had failed to live up to the expectations raised when it was created. The rights of Amazigh were reportedly not fully respected, in particular the right to use their language in their dealings with the public administration, the justice and health systems and schools. Furthermore, barriers remained with respect to the registration of Berber first names and Amazigh cultural associations were discriminated against. He asked the delegation to comment on those reports and to provide further details on the content of the report drawn up by the Justice and Reconciliation Commission.

50. While noting the cases referred to in paragraphs 109, 248 and 249 of the report, he pointed out that, in general, the information provided on the implementation of article 4 of the Convention was not detailed or comprehensive enough. Detailed and exhaustive statistics on complaints, prosecutions and convictions relating to racist offences were needed.

51. Noting that the State party recognized the difficult situation faced by illegal immigrants who were in transit through Morocco in the hope of reaching Europe, he asked whether steps had been taken to protect those persons from networks of smugglers who exploited them, to prevent the police from using discriminatory practices against them, in particular racial profiling, to ensure that they were not held in detention for unduly prolonged periods and to prevent xenophobia. He would also like to have information about the current status of the draft review of the Press Code referred to in the report (para. 165).

52. Lastly, he asked the delegation to provide the Committee with more detailed information on the results of the work of the Royal Advisory Council on Saharan Affairs and the agency for the promotion and economic and social development of the southern regions.

53. **Mr. Saidou** expressed regret that the Advisory Council on Human Rights, a body fully in keeping with the Paris Principles, had not been mentioned by the delegation as one of the civil society actors which had participated in the preparation of the report. He hoped that in future that body would be asked to contribute to the drafting of the State party's periodic reports. As Morocco had several transnational corporations that were signatories to the Global Compact, he asked whether, in accordance with the provisions of the Compact, the Moroccan Government had taken steps to ensure that branches of Moroccan transnational corporations conducting business abroad practised no form of discrimination.

54. **Mr. Ewomsan** asked whether black Moroccans spoke only Arabic, whether some of them felt closer to the Amazigh minority than the Arabic-speaking majority and whether any special measures had been taken in their favour.

55. **Mr. Hilale** (Morocco) said that Morocco did not claim to be a model of perfection, but, as demonstrated by the important steps undertaken since 2003, the Moroccan Government was sparing no effort to implement the Convention. In turn, the Committee should try to understand Morocco in all its diversity and complexity. In that regard, he emphasized that there was not one but three Amazigh languages and that, although the Amazigh had a specific culture, they did not necessarily constitute an ethnic minority. They had no separate status, were not marginalized and could not be identified by their features or behaviour. Consequently, allegations that they were the victims of discrimination in hospitals, the public administration or the educational system were false. The right to health, education and security of person was guaranteed under the Constitution to all Moroccan citizens without distinction of any kind. Morocco had a simultaneously single and plural identity. It was characterized by great cultural, but not ethnic, diversity. As a developing country, it was facing considerable difficulties and was therefore obliged to set priorities in the context of the current reform process.

56. Morocco had always been a country of asylum, and undocumented immigrants from sub-Saharan Africa in transit through the country were considered as brothers and were not discriminated against in any way. Moreover, Morocco had been the first country to organize a meeting between European and African States on the issue of illegal immigration, which had been held in Rabat in 2006. Furthermore, 7,000 students from sub-Saharan Africa were enrolled in Moroccan universities, which was clear proof that no discrimination was practised against Blacks in the higher education system. In addition, the Moroccan Government was working with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the International Organization for Migration and Moroccan civil society in order to assist undocumented immigrants who were in transit through the country.

*The meeting rose at 6 p.m.*