



**Convention against Torture
and Other Cruel, Inhuman
or Degrading Treatment
or Punishment**

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Summary record of the 2124th meeting

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Chair: Mr. Heller

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The meeting was called to order at 3 p.m.

Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under article 19 of the Convention *(continued)*

Initial report of Côte d'Ivoire (CAT/C/CIV/1; CAT/C/CIV/QPR/1) (continued)

1. *At the invitation of the Chair, the delegation of Côte d'Ivoire joined the meeting.*
2. **A representative of Côte d'Ivoire**, responding to questions raised by Committee members at their previous meeting (CAT/C/SR.2121), said that the legal time limits for police custody were effectively observed in Côte d'Ivoire. Any abuse of those time limits should be reported so that corrective measures could be taken. Efforts must therefore be made to strengthen interaction between the Government and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to ensure that NGOs reported any such abuses not only when the Government submitted its reports to human rights treaty bodies, but also as part of their contribution to improving day-to-day life in the country.
3. Under Act No. 2015-493 of 7 July 2015 on the suppression of terrorism, the longer time limit for police custody was justified by the particular circumstances and gravity of the alleged offence of terrorism. In such cases, judicial supervision was exercised by the public prosecutor, who was notified from the outset of custody, which could be extended only with the public prosecutor's written authorization.
4. The right of pretrial detainees to have access to legal counsel was effectively exercised. The argument that such persons were ignorant of legal procedures and guarantees was refuted by the fact that, pursuant to article 133 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, the investigating judge was required, during the first court appearance, to inform an accused person of the right to choose a lawyer. Failure to do so would render the proceedings null and void. In article 168 of the Code, it was stated that the provisions of articles 166 and 167, concerning the time limits for pretrial detention, were applicable until the investigating judge issued an order to terminate the pretrial proceedings. The Investigative Division was nevertheless required to conduct investigations swiftly and diligently, in accordance with articles 252 and 253 of the Code. Investigating judges were also obliged to report monthly on all their current cases, while cases involving pretrial detention of more than six months' duration were subject to additional reporting requirements. Pursuant to article 254 of the Code, the President of the Investigative Division could visit detention facilities as often as he or she considered necessary, and at least once a year, to verify the situation of pretrial detainees. The Government of Côte d'Ivoire took its international obligations seriously in that regard and, in 2022, in accordance with a decision of the Court of Justice of the Economic Community of West African States, had modified the relevant article of the Code to provide for the immediate release of a pretrial detainee where a release order had been issued.
5. With regard to the right of foreign nationals to have their consulates notified of their detention and to communicate with their consular representatives, it should be noted that judges were often directly in contact with the relevant consulates, which were therefore duly informed of the situation of their nationals. With regard to refugees, the fact that the Government requested persons to enter the territory through official entry points could not realistically be interpreted as an attempt to close the country's borders to persons seeking international protection.
6. The implementation of legislation and regulations governing interrogation practices was subject to effective supervision not only by the public prosecutor, who was also the director of the criminal investigation police in his or her jurisdiction, but also by the Ministry of the Interior and Security and the Ministry of Defence, as appropriate. The national preventive mechanism being set up in accordance with the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment would likewise play an important role in that regard. The high command of the gendarmerie and the national police headquarters ensured the effective investigation of any incident occurring in the police stations under their respective command, and the application of any necessary disciplinary measures against the officers involved. Allegations of torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment by the police and security forces were therefore effectively investigated and prosecuted. Examples of cases in which

criminal proceedings had led to convictions and penalties had been provided in the initial report; it could not therefore be asserted that his country lacked independent mechanisms to deal with complaints of torture.

7. Effective access to legal assistance was guaranteed in Côte d'Ivoire. Local legal aid offices were operating in all courts of first instance; awareness-raising on legal procedures was carried out, in particular for women and children and other vulnerable groups; and information sessions on women's rights were held for representatives of women's organizations, with a particular focus on Act No. 2021-894 of 21 December 2021 on measures to protect victims of domestic violence, rape and sexual violence other than domestic violence. Public awareness-raising campaigns were also run in cooperation with various NGOs, including the Association des femmes juristes de Côte d'Ivoire (Association of Women Lawyers of Côte d'Ivoire). Between 2019 and June 2024, almost 800 persons, more than half of them women, had received legal aid, amounting to an annual budget of over 119 million CFA francs (CFAF).

8. Steps were being taken to address the shortage of judicial personnel, including by increasing the recruitment of judges. It was incorrect to say that there was insufficient division and geographic distribution of the justice system and inadequate archiving of court decisions in Côte d'Ivoire. The Government had made every effort to bring justice closer to the people, including by opening new courts in several judicial districts. Training on the archiving of court decisions had been carried out by the relevant directorate of the Ministry of Justice and Human Rights, and a certain number of judicial decisions were published on a regular basis.

9. The bill establishing the national preventive mechanism, which was scheduled to be considered by the Council of Ministers, contained an express provision for the mechanism to make unannounced visits to places of detention. It also defined places of detention as all places under the jurisdiction or supervision of the Government where persons were or might be deprived of their liberty, either by virtue of an order given by a public authority, at its instigation or with its consent or acquiescence. Examples that were listed in the bill included police and gendarmerie stations, pretrial detention centres, prisons, juvenile detention centres, psychiatric institutions, detention centres under military jurisdiction and border transit zones. Measures were therefore being taken to ensure that all places of detention were subject to the supervision of the preventive mechanism. To ensure a participatory process with regard to the mechanism's implementation, a workshop had been held, in 2023, attended by representatives of Ministry of Justice and Human Rights directorates, the National Human Rights Council and relevant NGOs, such as the International Federation of Action by Christians for the Abolition of Torture.

10. Decree No. 2023-239 of 5 April 2023 on prison regulations and detention procedures set out the ways in which visits to prisons were to be carried out by judges, including sentence enforcement judges, investigating judges and juvenile court judges, the public prosecutor, the President of the Investigative Division and other relevant entities. The Directorate of Human Rights and the Directorate for the Judicial Protection of Children and Young People of the Ministry of Justice and Human Rights visited prisons, as could Members of Parliament. Representatives of international organizations, human rights NGOs and humanitarian associations could also conduct prison visits, with the Ministry's prior authorization.

11. The public prosecutor, whether in person or through his or her deputies, could visit the holding cells of the National Surveillance Directorate headquarters, as could the relevant offices of the Ministry of the Interior and Security. It would be useful to have examples of how other countries had facilitated unannounced visits by NGOs to places of detention that were run by the intelligence services.

12. The National Human Rights Council visited places of detention as part of its mandate to prevent acts of torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, and the Government gave particular consideration to its recommendations. The procedure for appointing members of the Council was specified in Implementing Decree No. 2019-119 of 6 February 2019. Members were drawn from relevant sectors, including NGOs, private enterprises, the judiciary and the legal profession, and were selected in an independent manner by their peers or a relevant authority.

13. The Interministerial Committee for Monitoring the Implementation of International Human Rights Instruments was the mechanism responsible for coordinating the drafting of reports to the human rights treaty bodies, including the Committee against Torture, and for ensuring follow-up to the resulting concluding observations. It was composed of representatives of government departments and ministries, among them the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Directorate of Human Rights and the Ministry of Women, the Family and Children. In the fulfilment of its mandate, the Interministerial Committee could request assistance from any State or non-State entity, such as the National Human Rights Council and relevant NGOs, or from experts in the field of human rights.

14. The outcomes of various sectoral policy action plans and a programme to revamp the judicial and prison systems, which had been implemented by the Ministry of Justice and Human Rights, included the rehabilitation of a number of courts around the country, the construction of several new courts and the strengthening of the independence and organization of the judicial system. In addition, to improve conditions of detention and enhance the well-being of persons deprived of their liberty, existing detention and correctional facilities had been renovated, including those that had been damaged during the country's political and military crisis; new places of detention, including a high-security prison, women's prisons and other detention and correctional facilities, had been or were being built; daily food rations had been increased; health and hygiene conditions had been improved; and the promotion and protection of human rights had been strengthened. Moreover, a guide to good practices on respecting the rights of persons deprived of their liberty had been sent to prison governors, a manual for raising awareness among prison staff and prisoners of the human rights of persons deprived of their liberty had been drafted and the Directorate of Human Rights ran regular capacity-building workshops on the human rights of persons deprived of their liberty, including the prohibition of torture, during its visits to places of detention.

15. The country's prisons currently had the capacity to accommodate just over 10,300 prisoners, while the total number of prisoners was in the order of 27,000, resulting in an alarmingly high occupancy rate of more than 260 per cent. The Government was well aware of the issue and wished to be transparent about the scale of the problem. While it was taking robust action to bring the rate down as soon as possible, various factors affecting the occupancy rate needed to be considered, such as population growth and migration flows. In addition to the building of new prisons to increase capacity, significant other efforts were being made. Between 2019 and 2023, presidential pardons had allowed for the release of more than 11,000 persons deprived of their liberty. Data on the use of alternatives to detention, such as conditional release, probation and partial release arrangements, would be provided in writing. While some measures, such as community service, were not yet operational, steps were being taken to ensure that alternatives to detention were used more regularly. A workshop on the issue, jointly organized by the National Human Rights Council and the Ministry of Justice and Human Rights, had been organized for all relevant stakeholders, such as NGOs, public prosecutors and the pertinent directorates of the Ministry.

16. In an effort to control infectious diseases among the prison population, national policies to combat HIV/AIDS and tuberculosis were being implemented in prisons, with the support of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) and other stakeholders. On their arrival to remand prisons, persons deprived of their liberty had a medical check-up, which included screening for tuberculosis and, with their consent, testing for HIV/AIDS. In the event of a positive result, they received appropriate and confidential treatment. To prevent the spread of disease, persons with tuberculosis were assigned to separate sleeping quarters; those with multidrug-resistant tuberculosis were transferred to a hospital in Abidjan for treatment. Awareness-raising activities were carried out in prisons to encourage testing and prevent risky behaviours. It was worth noting that five remand prisons had a doctor on staff, while the remainder either had nursing staff or had medical services provided by a nearby hospital. The juvenile observation centre at Bingerville had a staff nurse; a medical doctor visited on a weekly basis.

17. Measures had been taken to ensure the separation of categories of prisoners. For example, men were separated from women in all prisons. Owing to the lack of available infrastructure, untried and convicted prisoners were sometimes held in the same cells. Minors

were largely kept in separate dedicated facilities, such as juvenile observation centres; occasionally, girls and women deprived of their liberty had to share cells. The ongoing construction of women's prisons would go some way towards addressing that issue. Persons with disabilities served their sentences and were remanded in custody under the same conditions as men and women without disabilities.

18. Under Decree No. 2023-239 of 5 April 2023 on prison regulations and detention procedures, it was no longer permitted for babies and young children to live with their mothers in prison. Detained pregnant women were transferred to a hospital maternity ward towards the latter stages of pregnancy and, after delivery, were returned to the detention facility, once their health allowed. The newborn would be entrusted to the care of a relative or placed in the care of the State, by order of a judge. Moreover, pursuant to the Criminal Code, a convicted pregnant woman would not begin to serve a term of imprisonment until six months after giving birth.

19. Decree No. 2023-239 also contained provisions governing the use of solitary confinement, the maximum duration of which was now limited to 15 days, in accordance with the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (the Nelson Mandela Rules). The use of such a serious punishment could only be ordered by the sentence enforcement judge, on receipt of a report of the prison governor. The prisoner had recourse to appeal against the measure imposed. That decree specified that physical restraints, or chains, could not be used as a disciplinary measure. Their use was strictly limited to precautionary measures, such as to prevent a detainee from escaping during transfer; for medical reasons, by order of a doctor; or where all other measures to control the prisoner had failed, by order of the governor, who was obliged to inform the public prosecutor and the Minister of Justice of the measure. It was explicitly stated in the decree that solitary confinement could not be imposed on minors.

20. The use of force by prison staff against persons deprived of their liberty was prohibited except in cases of self-defence, attempted escape or resistance to orders through physical violence or inertia. Prison staff who breached the rules faced disciplinary sanctions. Under Decree No. 2023-239, persons deprived of their liberty had avenues to complain about any use of violence against them, while Act No. 2018-570, on the protection of witnesses, victims, whistle-blowers, experts and other persons concerned, provided for measures to ensure the safety of complainants. While there were currently no data on the incidence of violence between persons deprived of liberty, investigations of inter-prisoner violence were provided for by law and carried out by the criminal investigation police, under the direction of the public prosecutor, or by an investigating judge. Measures to protect affected prisoners could be taken, including by transferring them to another facility for safety reasons.

21. Minors involved in criminal proceedings, whether as the accused, accomplices, witnesses or victims, benefited from education programmes and other forms of support provided by the Directorate for the Judicial Protection of Children and Young People.

22. The law on amnesty for criminal offences committed during the 2010–2011 post-electoral crisis explicitly excluded military personnel and members of armed groups. There was no impunity for those who had committed serious human rights violations or breached international humanitarian law, since the amnesty law did not apply to international crimes, such as crimes against humanity.

23. The mechanism for the protection of human rights defenders – the Committee for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders – was fully operational and could take necessary measures, when requested. There was, admittedly, a lack of awareness of that protection mechanism among human rights defenders. To remedy the situation, it planned to hold a meeting with human rights defenders. Regarding its membership, there did not seem to be any international legal requirement for representatives of NGOs to be included as members of such a mechanism; nevertheless, the interministerial order pursuant to which the Committee for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders was created provided for the possibility of involving civil society in its work and, indeed, NGO representatives and human rights defenders had been invited to participate in its meetings. It was established under the relevant laws and decrees that the mandate of the National Human Rights Council included contributing to the protection of human rights defenders. In that connection, Act

No. 2015-493 of 7 July 2015 on the suppression of terrorism was targeted at persons who carried out terrorist activities. Fears that it could be applied to human rights defenders were entirely unfounded, especially in view of the fact that Côte d'Ivoire had been the first country in Africa to enact a law specifically to protect human rights defenders.

24. Various measures had been taken to combat gender-based violence. For example, a national strategy to combat gender-based violence, drawn up in cooperation with the Ministry of Women, the Family and Children, had enabled a multi-stakeholder approach to be taken to address such violence, facilitated better coordination of the response system and enhanced data collection. Platforms to combat gender-based violence had been established and were currently being updated. Data concerning cases of gender-based violence, which included sexual violence, female genital mutilation and forced marriage, would be provided in writing. Measures had likewise been taken to provide care and support to victims of domestic violence, including through services that were provided to women victims at the country's various shelters.

25. Lastly, the Government was deliberating on the possibility of accepting the individual complaints procedure provided for under article 22 of the Convention.

26. **Mr. Rouwane** (Country Rapporteur) said that he wished to begin with the definition of torture, as set out in article 1 of the Convention, which the delegation had linked to the issue of redress and compensation. That article in particular, along with articles 2 and 4, provided the basis from which the rest of the provisions of the Convention flowed. He wished to emphasize the need for the State party to ensure that the wording of its legislation was in full conformity with the definition of torture set out in the Convention. Article 4 provided that each State party must ensure that all acts of torture were offences under its criminal law, which was why he had drawn the delegation's attention at the previous meeting to two possible scenarios in relation to the criminalization of torture under the Criminal Code of Côte d'Ivoire, namely acts of torture that were considered misdemeanours when committed by private individuals and crimes with aggravating circumstances when committed by public officials. It should also be noted that the Convention set out obligations for States parties, rather than individuals.

27. Concerning the issue of confessions extracted under torture, it was the role of the judiciary, judges and the prosecutor to determine whether torture had taken place, based on any signs of torture or allegations of torture made by the defendant. If a medical examination were carried out at the start of detention, that would help to prove that torture had taken place. Another issue in that regard was training for the judiciary on the Manual on the Effective Investigation and Documentation of Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (Istanbul Protocol).

28. The statute of limitations was not an issue of redress and compensation, but rather of the criminal nature of acts of torture or ill-treatment. Non-refoulement was an issue that was broader in scope than extradition agreements and practices between States, as it concerned the reception and international protection of refugees and asylum-seekers as well.

29. The statistics provided in the initial report appeared to refer to crimes in general, rather than specifically to torture; more specific statistics would enable the State party to analyse the situation and develop measures to prevent acts of torture.

30. While the information on the law on legal assistance provided was useful, further details of the situation in practice, such as the problems associated with the non-payment of lawyer's fees in advance, which discouraged lawyers from taking on defendants' cases, would be appreciated. His questions concerning independence related to how the independence of the judiciary was ensured. In addition, he wished to know how access to justice at the local community level was ensured throughout the country, given that the current drawing of judicial districts did not provide coverage for all regions.

31. He welcomed the establishment of the Interministerial Committee for Monitoring the Implementation of International Human Rights Instruments and wondered whether there were plans to strengthen that body through further institutionalization and provide it with a mandate and the requisite human and financial resources. His questions about visits to places of detention run by the National Surveillance Directorate concerned places of detention

where persons who had been accused of a crime were held, given that the Directorate, as a form of criminal investigation department, was required to uphold the Code of Criminal Procedure and was involved in arresting and bringing charges against persons. He wished to know whether the National Human Rights Council was able to make unannounced visits to detention facilities of the Directorate.

32. **Mr. Buchwald** (Country Rapporteur) said that he appreciated the information provided by the delegation. It was particularly encouraging that the State party was already taking action on a number of areas addressed by members of the Committee in their questions, and the forthcoming establishment of a national preventive mechanism, with the authority to visit any place of detention, would be a significant step forward.

33. With regard to the question raised at the previous meeting concerning amnesty, it was not clear whether the list of members of the armed forces and members of armed groups excluded from being granted amnesty under Ordonnance No. 2018 of 6 August 2018 had in fact been drawn up or whether the matter had been dealt with in another way.

34. The Committee had received reports of homophobic violence and discrimination against lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons, including claims that victims often failed to report incidents due to a lack of confidence in the police. Given that article 226 of the Criminal Code on the prohibition of discrimination did not include language that prohibited discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation or identity, and heavier penalties were incurred under article 360 for acts of public indecency when they involved persons of the same sex, he would appreciate more details on the legal situation on discrimination against lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons. What measures were in place to ensure that any such acts of discrimination were investigated and prosecuted? The Committee had similarly received reports that persons with albinism were sometimes victimized and that children with albinism were subjected to ritual kidnappings and killings, which were not fully investigated and prosecuted. Further information on the measures taken in law and in practice to tackle discrimination and violence against persons with albinism would therefore be welcome.

35. He wondered whether it was indeed the case that the State party did not intend to transfer the wife of the former president or, in future, any other person served a warrant for arrest to the International Criminal Court, irrespective of the circumstances. He would like to know why the principles of irrelevance of official capacity and superior orders had been excluded from the domestic implementing legislation for the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court. He also wondered whether the State party intended to extend a standing invitation to United Nations special procedures, as recommended during its universal periodic review. He wished to learn the reasons behind the decision to withdraw the State party's declaration of acceptance of the jurisdiction of the African Court on Human and People's Rights to receive complaints from individuals and NGOs, under article 34 (6) of the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the establishment of the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights.

36. He would welcome the delegation's comments on reports that the prison administration relied on a shadow administration run by the prisoners themselves in order to maintain peace in the prisons. It was alleged that the shadow administration led to extensive corruption within prisons, since it operated on a basis of bribes and sexual exploitation. It was also alleged that the formal prison authorities sometimes demanded payment from prisoners for their release from detention that had been granted them by the public prosecutor's office, or payments from visitors to obtain access to detained family members. Details of any measures in place to address those forms of corruption in the prison system would also be appreciated.

The meeting was suspended at 5.05 p.m. and resumed at 5.15 p.m.

37. **A representative of Côte d'Ivoire** said that the law on the prohibition of torture in Côte d'Ivoire effectively covered all persons, including State officials, in keeping with its obligations under international law. With regard to confessions extracted under torture, it was indeed a matter for judges to review statements and determine whether they were the result of an act of torture, and therefore whether they should be excluded from the proceedings. In one example referred to in the report, the Abidjan Court of Appeal had thrown a case out

when the defendant who claimed that his confession had been obtained under duress had shown the judge signs of torture on his back. The law provided for persons deprived of their liberty to be examined by a doctor at their request or the request of their family; in the event that a detainee was too afraid to make such a request to the police, it was possible to make it to the public prosecutor or on arrival at the court.

38. He welcomed the Committee's clarification regarding the statute of limitations and the criminal nature of the crime of torture, on which he was entirely in agreement; the issue of redress had been introduced by the Committee with regard to the consequences for victims of torture if that crime were subject to the statute of limitations.

39. With regard to the question raised about the return of refugees and asylum-seekers to a country where they were likely to be subjected to torture, all aspects of non-refoulement were covered by the law on the status of refugees. For those who were denied refugee status, the principle of non-refoulement was covered by the law on extradition.

40. He agreed with the comments made by the Committee concerning the importance of statistics and it was therefore regrettable that the statistics requested were not available. Nonetheless, efforts were being made to gather statistics regularly, there was a department of planning and statistics at the Ministry of Justice and Human Rights, and some statistics on the justice system were available. The Interministerial Committee for Monitoring the Implementation of International Human Rights Instruments would be provided with details of the information required by the Committee, including the need for statistics on various topics.

41. Concerning the practical issues surrounding legal assistance, lawyers had considered that they were not being paid enough. Negotiations on the lawyer's fee were under way. In the meantime, agreement on a new figure had been reached and the negotiations between the lawyers and the Ministry of Justice and Human Rights would soon be completed. Another agreement had been concluded, and additional resources provided, to ensure that defendants in criminal cases had access to legal assistance, and lawyers were no longer required to cover their costs up front to assist defendants before the military courts. Although it was possible that the problem could occur in other legal proceedings, the effectiveness of legal assistance was a topic of negotiation for the Bar. His Government was working to make access to justice a reality in terms of geography and a number of courts had been set up in new locations. The Interministerial Committee for Monitoring the Implementation of International Human Rights Instruments would be strengthened, with a view to its involvement in following up on all international obligations on human rights.

42. The law established that the National Human Rights Council was able to make unannounced visits and had no need for authorization to visit places of deprivation of liberty, whereas NGOs required prior authorization. The national preventive mechanism, once established, would also be able to make unannounced visits. The bill on the national preventive mechanism had received input from international experts and had been subject to domestic consultations.

43. A list of members of the armed forces and members of armed groups who were excluded from being granted amnesty had indeed been drawn up. The relevant ordinance provided that the perpetrators of offences that were not subject to the statute of limitations – crimes against humanity and war crimes – could not be covered by amnesty.

44. With regard to the LGBTQ community, the list of grounds for protection from discrimination in article 226 of the Criminal Code was not exhaustive and all persons in Côte d'Ivoire were therefore protected from all forms of discrimination. The LGBTQ community did not experience discrimination in terms of access to education, to health care or in any other area. The situation was the same for persons with albinism, who enjoyed the protection of the law. No crime against persons with albinism was tolerated, as evidenced by the cases mentioned in paragraph 330 of the initial report. It was an unacceptable stereotype to claim that the killing of persons with albinism was a practice of his country. Article 360 of the Code did not contain any provision that constituted persecution of a person based on sexual orientation.

45. He could not say whether any future requests to transfer wanted persons to the International Criminal Court would be granted, as no such recent requests had been made. The Rome Statute principle of superior orders was covered by article 143 of the Criminal Code, and a military chief or a person acting in that position was criminally liable for crimes committed by forces under his or her command, including in the event that he or she did not exercise control over those forces. With regard to a standing invitation to United Nations special procedures, he noted that it was the practice of his Government to respond favourably to all visit requests and a number of such visits had successfully taken place in recent months. His Government was a party to the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the establishment of the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights and continued to accept and implement decisions issued by other international courts of human rights. Measures had been taken to address the issue of corruption in the prison system, including to ensure that prisons were kept under the supervision of the prison authorities.

46. **The Chair** said that he welcomed the frank responses of the delegation to the Committee's questions, particularly given the delay in presenting the initial report, against the backdrop of recent crises and efforts for the stabilization of the country, with resulting challenges for respect for human rights. The initial report was just the first step, however, in cooperation between the State party and the Committee.

47. **A representative of Côte d'Ivoire** said that he wished to thank the Committee for the opportunity to present the initial report of his Government and expressed its commitment to making further progress on the implementation of the Convention.

The meeting rose at 6 p.m.