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Summary record of the 2844th meeting*

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Chairperson: Ms. Majodina

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* No summary record was issued for the 2843rd meeting.

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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
(continued)

Sixth periodic report of Norway (CCPR/C/NOR/6; CCPR/C/NOR/Q/6 and Add.1)

1. *At the invitation of the Chairperson, the delegation of Norway took places at the Committee table.*
2. **The Chairperson** welcomed the delegation and said she was pleased to note the equal representation of men and women within its ranks.
3. **Ms. Aas-Hansen** (Norway) said that her delegation comprised representatives from five Government ministries: Ministry of Justice and the Police; Ministry of Foreign Affairs; Ministry of Government Administration, Reform and Church Affairs; Ministry of Health and Care Services; and Ministry of Children, Equality and Social Inclusion.
4. The single-handed attacks carried out in Norway on 22 July 2011, apparently fuelled by hatred of a multicultural society and directed at the political forces allowing increased immigration, represented an assault on her country as a democratic society and on its values, which were based on fundamental human rights such as equality and non-discrimination. The Government had established a commission to investigate the attacks and it would report to the Prime Minister in August 2012. The Government remained committed to working for inclusion and against discrimination, intolerance and hate crime.
5. The goal of the Government's integration and inclusion policy was that everyone who settled in Norway should have equal opportunities. The Government had intensified its efforts to combat racial discrimination through its 2009–2012 Action Plan to promote equality and prevent ethnic discrimination. Drafting was under way on a new law that would regulate discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity, and the recommendations made by the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination were being followed up. The Government took seriously the findings of a recent study showing that the Sami suffered from discrimination and had recently developed procedures for democratic participation by the Sami.
6. In December 2010, the Government had launched a plan entitled "Collective security – Shared responsibility" to prevent both right wing and left wing radicalization and violent extremism by combating people's willingness to use violence to further their political or religious goals.
7. The Ministry of Justice and the Police was preparing a "White Paper" on violence in close relationships and a new action plan to prevent domestic violence and support victims. Starting in 2011, a national survey would be conducted on domestic violence and sexual abuse. Norway had also signed the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence.
8. The Government had recently proposed a legislative amendment creating a new criminal sanction to be known as a "juvenile sentence", which was intended to replace physical control with social control and to give young offenders a better understanding of the consequences of their actions. For cases in which prison sentences were necessary, two separate prison units for juveniles were being established. They would have a high staff-to-prisoner ratio and would provide comprehensive, individually-tailored programmes.
9. **Ms. Ryan** (Norway), summarizing her Government's written replies to the list of issues (CCPR/C/NOR/Q/6/Add.1), said that the established procedures for follow-up to the Committee's concluding observations involved the active participation of Government

ministries and civil society. An inter-ministerial group on human rights issues had been established in 2011 to coordinate those efforts.

10. With regard to women's position in the labour market, in November 2010 the Government had submitted to parliament a White Paper on equal pay that included measures such as promoting transparency by making statistics on pay available to employees, strengthening the rights of employees who took parental leave, and promoting equal parenting.

11. A recent study had found no evidence that the police stopped and searched persons solely on the basis of their ethnicity. Several training activities to prevent discrimination had been organized for police officers. Both public and private enterprises were obliged to promote equality and prevent discrimination on the grounds of ethnicity and disability in employment. Employers in the public sector were required to interview at least one qualified applicant with an immigrant background when recruiting. The Government had also substantially increased rental subsidies for immigrants.

12. A recent study had shown that Norway had one of the lowest homicide rates in the world, but the mentally-ill perpetrators in recent murder cases could have received better follow-up from public services. The county health supervisory boards had prioritized the prevention of suicide by patients in mental health care, and the reporting of suicides by mental health services had improved. A committee had submitted a report in June 2011 concluding that coercion had a justifiable place in mental health care, but that its limits should be narrower and more clearly defined. A new national strategy for the reduced and correct use of coercion in mental health care would be ready for implementation in 2012.

13. The Criminal Code had been amended in 2009 to permit the electronic monitoring of perpetrators of domestic violence, but the amendment had not yet entered into force. The number of reported cases of domestic violence had risen sharply in recent years. Victims of crime received compensation from the State and crisis centres had been set up in every county.

14. The new Criminal Code, which was not yet in force, included more severe penalties for female genital mutilation. Action plans to combat forced marriages and female genital mutilation were also in place, and a resource group for combating forced marriages had been established within the police service.

15. Measures to protect children from violence and neglect included: amendments to the Children Act to clarify the fact that corporal punishment was illegal; the establishment of a free hotline for children; the allocation of 240 million kroner to improve child welfare services; and measures in hospitals and schools to detect abuse and violence against children. As of July 2010, the police were required to investigate all cases of sudden and unexpected death of a child. The Norwegian Institute of Public Health, which was not affiliated with the police, offered a death-scene investigation to parents of children under the age of 4 who had died.

16. Norway's practice regarding asylum procedures and the Dublin II Regulation was based on the expectation that other member States complied with their international obligations. Norway did not return individuals to a member State where they would be at risk and had therefore halted all returns to Greece.

17. With regard to the use of restraint in the enforcement of sentences, only one incident of ill-treatment by prison staff had been reported in 2010 and none so far in 2011.

18. Between 2003 and 2009, a total of 18 persons had been convicted of human trafficking, and by 2010 a total of 319 persons identified as trafficking victims had accepted assistance and protection measures. Victims of trafficking could seek compensation under the Compensation for Victims of Violent Crime Act. The municipalities were obliged to

provide trafficking victims with accommodation in a crisis centre, and the Government continued to support the ROSA project providing safe housing and assistance to victims. A new action plan against trafficking launched in 2010 included 35 updated measures.

19. Many of the individuals held in pretrial detention in 2009 and 2010 had now been convicted and the pretrial detention period deducted from their sentences. The Ministry of Justice and the Police was currently evaluating the effect of the three-day time limit for bringing an arrested person before the court. The courts had also imposed stricter requirements for progress in investigations and were legally required to set a date for the main hearing in cases where the accused had been remanded in custody. The increase in solitary pretrial detention in 2010 had been partly due to an increase in cases of organized theft.

20. While Norway would not withdraw its reservation on article 10, paragraphs 2 (b) and 3 of the Covenant, the Government had recently proposed several legislative amendments concerning juveniles in prison, as previously mentioned.

21. Suspects and their defence counsels had the right to see all police documents and information derived from the investigation of their case. Exceptions could be made, however, in order to protect the fundamental rights of another individual or to safeguard an important public interest.

22. Cases in which individuals were eligible for free legal aid without means-testing included appeals against asylum decisions, child welfare cases, legal counselling for victims of violent crime and cases concerning compensation for prosecution. With regard to means-tested legal aid, about one quarter of Norwegian households had an income level that entitled them to free legal aid. Such aid was not normally granted in asylum cases, though persons applying to the Directorate of Immigration for asylum received State-funded assistance from the Norwegian Organization for Asylum-Seekers.

23. Following recent amendments to the Elections Act, candidates had the right to object to being placed on an electoral list and did not have to declare that their own political views differed from those of other persons on the list. The public authorities intended to further examine electoral legislation and practice so as to ensure that they complied with the country's international obligations.

24. There were no current plans to withdraw the reservation concerning article 20 of the Covenant. However, a new provision prohibiting public incitement to commit terrorist offences and recruitment and training for terrorist purposes had been included in the Criminal Code. Policies to combat hate speech included: the establishment of a new post to deal with equality and diversity issues at the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Resource Centre; school visits by Sami students to inform their peers about their people and culture; and the drafting of a report on anti-Semitism focusing on prevention in schools.

25. The main objectives of the amendments to the immigration regulations were to combat forced marriages, reduce the number of unfounded asylum claims, and encourage immigrants to study and take jobs. After careful consideration, the Government had found that the new provisions were consistent with the country's international commitments. However, the Ministry of Justice and the Police would evaluate the consequences of the new Immigration Act.

26. The child welfare services were responsible for all unaccompanied minor asylum-seekers, while the Directorate of Immigration had overall responsibility for reception centres for unaccompanied minors aged 15 to 18. The Immigration Act explicitly stated that the best interests of the child should be a primary consideration in all assessments under the Act, although that consideration was not necessarily decisive.

27. The Government had adopted a 2009–2012 action plan to promote equality and prevent ethnic discrimination, and an action plan for the Roma people. The project entitled “Romani – from child to adult” had been successfully carried out in day-care centres and schools for the past several years, and measures had been taken to address the shortage of teachers and educational materials in the Sami and Kven languages.

28. Lastly, an agreement had been reached with the Sami parliament in May 2011 establishing the Sea Sami people’s right to fish in Sami areas, a quota for fishing vessels in open fisheries, and the appointment of a local fisheries board. The agreement had been adopted by the Sami parliament and would be submitted to the Norwegian parliament for approval.

29. **Mr. O’Flaherty** said that he welcomed the timely submission of the report and the detailed analysis it provided, as well as the impressive turnout by NGOs. Nevertheless, the Committee had received reports from NGOs saying that the State party could do more to engage civil society. He asked the delegation to comment on that matter. He wondered if the Government was taking an indivisible approach to the integration of human rights in the Constitution and how that process was developing. He asked if the Government intended to develop a comprehensive human rights action plan.

30. The International Coordinating Committee of National Institutions for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights (ICC) had suggested that Norway’s national human rights institution might lose its “A status”. That situation was very worrying given the country’s exemplary human rights record, and he wished to know about the latest developments in the process of restoring the institution to full compliance with the Paris Principles.

31. He requested an update on the progress made in the three areas highlighted in the White Paper on equal pay, as outlined in paragraph 8 of the written replies (CCPR/C/NOR/Q/6/Add.1). He commended the State party for the progress achieved in the elimination of discriminatory police checks. He wondered to what extent immigrants and minorities had participated in the drafting of the 2009–2012 Action Plan to promote equality and prevent ethnic discrimination, and how they could hold the Government accountable for its implementation of the plan. He wished to know the findings of the study on ethnic minorities and the rental market conducted by the Norwegian Urban and Regional Research Institute.

32. The State party had highlighted its efforts to tackle discrimination in public sector employment, but he was concerned at the statement in paragraph 22 of the written replies that “The Government has no possibility to decide who should be employed in the municipal or private sector.” He wished to know whether, as the statement implied, the Government was abdicating its responsibility for promoting equality not only in the private sector but also at the municipal level, which was part of government. Treaty obligations applied to all organs and representatives of the State, and the matter needed to be explained.

33. NGOs had reported that the Government did not have sufficient data on the use of coercion in mental health facilities to frame an appropriate policy response and that the true scale of the problem was not appreciated because the lack of legal aid for potential litigants prevented them from filing complaints. He asked whether the report of the committee appointed by the Government to review the provisions in the Mental Health Act regarding detention, restraints and coercive treatment had been published and submitted for public consultation, and whether organizations representing persons with disabilities and other key stakeholders would be given a central role in commenting on its contents.

34. The preparation of a White Paper on violence in close relationships and a new action plan to prevent domestic violence and support victims was a welcome development as it would help coordinate and reinforce all the actions being taken to combat the problem. He

invited the delegation to comment on observations that efforts to combat domestic violence were hampered by the absence of good statistics, and asked what steps would be taken to improve the statistical base. He also enquired whether the Rape Committee had fulfilled its purpose and therefore ceased to function or whether it continued to play a role today.

35. Since the increased penalty for female genital mutilation would not come into force until the new Criminal Code became law, it would be useful to know when that would happen. The Committee would also appreciate learning how the Government worked with the affected communities and their leaders and encouraged victims and witnesses of female genital mutilation to come forward. He was pleased that the proposal to subject girls to compulsory physical examinations had been dropped.

36. With regard to the use of coercive measures and restraints in detention facilities, the Parliamentary Ombudsman for Public Administration had highlighted the insufficient capacity of the regional supervisory boards to pay frequent visits to prisons. He wished to know how the Government was considering responding to the problem.

37. The crime statistics provided in paragraph 73 of the written replies did not indicate whether there had been a racist or discriminatory dimension to any of the reported crimes. He asked whether the State party had a means of assessing whether attacks had involved such a dimension and, if not, whether it would consider revising its information-gathering practices accordingly.

38. **Mr. Bouzid** enquired about the pilot telephone hotline for children that had been operational in 2009–2011. What were the findings of the project and would the service be continued? With regard to the investigation of the death scene in cases in which children had died unexpectedly, he wished to know why parental consent was required for such investigations and why they were only conducted in cases involving children under the age of 4.

39. On the subject of human trafficking, the Committee would like to know whether the National Coordinating Unit for Victims of Trafficking had submitted an annual report and what the main outcomes of its activities had been so far. He asked the delegation to provide trafficking statistics disaggregated by gender, age and country of origin.

40. **Mr. Lallah** said that the return of asylum-seekers whose applications had been denied was, according to the State party's written replies, guided by the expectation that other member States complied with their international obligations. Assumptions could, however, be mistaken. Concerns had been raised about the treatment of asylum-seekers and refugees in Italy as well as in Greece, yet Norway had returned over 500 persons to Italy. Apparently Norway failed to perform medical-legal assessments that would identify cases of post-torture trauma. Allegations of torture and ill-treatment must be investigated systematically, and officials should be properly trained, especially in the procedures set forth in the Manual on Effective Investigation and Documentation of Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (Istanbul Protocol). He asked the delegation to clarify whether legal aid was available to asylum-seekers and to comment on reports that denials of asylum were communicated to the applicant so late that it became impossible to lodge an appeal.

41. **Ms. Motoc** requested more data on the prosecution of rape cases in the State party since, in the universal periodic review process, complaints had been made by NGOs that the prosecution and conviction rate for rape cases had been very low. With regard to the implementation of the Istanbul Protocol, she requested information on the training given to staff in asylum centres and how claims made by asylum-seekers that they had been subjected to torture or ill-treatment were investigated. Specifically, she wished to know whether there was a panel of medical experts who systematically assessed such claims and evaluated both the psychological and physical health of claimants.

42. **Mr. Iwasawa** asked the State party to provide details of cases in which the Covenant had been invoked by the Norwegian courts, as well as specific examples of when the principle that Norwegian law should be interpreted in terms of the country's international obligations had been cited by the Supreme Court. Given that the Covenant had been incorporated into the Human Rights Act and the Constitution took precedence over that Act, he would appreciate confirmation that the Constitution must also be interpreted in the light of the country's international obligations.

43. **Mr. Flinterman** said that the revised Constitution would apparently include a catalogue of rights and freedoms, and he wished to know whether it was directly inspired by the country's international obligations, such as those set forth in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. He asked the delegation to explain the relationship between that catalogue and the Human Rights Act and whether the catalogue would address the issue of remedies for rights violations.

44. With regard to the employment of people with immigrant backgrounds, he commended the State party for the policy adopted and action taken. He would appreciate data on the nationwide percentage of civil servants and police officers who came from immigrant backgrounds, and asked whether targets had been set for public sector employment of workers with such backgrounds.

The meeting was suspended at 4.25 p.m. and resumed at 4.45 p.m.

45. **Ms. Merchant** (Norway) said that all the relevant ministries were responsible for following up the recommendations made by treaty bodies and reporting on the action they had taken. A recently established inter-ministerial working group on human rights issues coordinated reporting to treaty bodies and reporting under the universal periodic review. Dialogue on follow-up also took place between the ministries and NGOs. While it was true that the Government did not have a general human rights action plan, it did have numerous plans on specific issues such as domestic violence, racial discrimination and human trafficking.

46. The Norwegian Centre for Human Rights served as the State party's national human rights institution, and its accreditation status was scheduled for review by ICC in October 2011. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs was conducting its own review of the Centre's operation and compatibility with the Paris Principles. On the basis of the conclusions drawn from those two reviews, the Government would decide whether it was necessary to modify the Centre's mandate and structure.

47. **Ms. Haveland** (Norway) said that the White Paper on equal pay had been submitted to parliament in 2010 and approved in April 2011. The Ministry of Children, Equality and Social Inclusion was currently drafting a bill that would include the measures proposed in the White Paper and would be submitted to parliament for approval in 2012 or 2013.

48. Civil society was closely involved in the drafting of and follow-up to Government action plans in general and the Action Plan to promote equality and prevent ethnic discrimination in particular. The Ministry of Children, Equality and Social Inclusion had met with several organizations working to combat discrimination in order to discuss the Plan, which included both sectoral and cross-sectoral measures.

49. She acknowledged that paragraph 22 of the written replies (CCPR/C/NOR/Q/6/Add.1) could easily be misunderstood, and explained that municipal authorities were under the same obligations as the national Government. As of January 2009, public and private entities at all levels had been required to take measures to prevent discrimination on the grounds of ethnicity and disability.

50. **Ms. Erdis** (Norway) said that the study on ethnic minorities and the rental market had found that certain market mechanisms resulted in unequal conditions for some ethnic groups. A more recent study entitled “Room for everyone” had found that, as a result of selective and discriminatory market mechanisms, only poor accommodation was available to some minority groups, who generally paid higher rent and were more often subjected to rent increases and arbitrary termination of their leases. The Committee’s recommendations on the subject would be followed up in a white paper in 2012.

51. **Mr. Andersen** (Norway) said that the report on coercion in mental health care was available for public consultation until 3 January 2012. The Government gave high priority to improving statistics on coercion in mental health care, as reflected in a new national strategy on the reduced and correct use of coercion. That strategy also focused on improving research on the subject. According to a study published by the Foundation for Scientific and Industrial Research in 2008, the use of coercive means had increased between 2001 and 2007. The frequency of both forced admissions and the use of coercive means varied widely among different hospitals. The Government was of the view that those differences were due in part to different service structures, cultures and professional attitudes, and was making efforts to reduce them. In most cases, individuals who filed complaints regarding coercive treatment were entitled to free legal aid.

52. **Mr. Austad** (Norway) said the Government recognized that the incidence of rape in Norway was unacceptably high and that rapes often went unreported. It was committed to changing that situation. The dramatic increase in formal reports of rape as referred to in the State party’s report (CCPR/C/NOR/6) had levelled out in recent years. The Rape Committee had been dissolved following the submission of its report in 2008. In the light of its recommendations, measures had been taken to strengthen the competency of the police, prosecutors and judges to deal with rape cases. An electronic manual on the subject had been provided to police officers, and the Director-General of Public Prosecutions had issued a directive stating that prosecutors must obtain a second opinion from a colleague before dismissing a rape case for lack of evidence.

53. A special unit had been established within the National Bureau of Crime Investigation to receive and analyse information from the police about rape cases, in order to identify patterns that were not obvious to individual police districts. The police were strengthening efforts to prevent rape and sexual assault and exchanging best practices more effectively than before.

54. In 2010 there had been about 2,500 reported cases of domestic violence, up from 950 in 2007. The Norwegian Centre for Violence and Traumatic Stress Studies had been asked to conduct a survey to determine the scope of domestic violence and sexual abuse. The results of that survey would be available in 2012 at the earliest.

55. **Ms. Fergusson** (Norway) said that each region in Norway had its own prison supervisory council to monitor prisons and probation officers and the treatment of prisoners. The Parliamentary Ombudsman for Public Administration also played an important role and could receive complaints from prisoners once all appeals within the Norwegian Correctional Services (KSF) had been exhausted. The Ombudsman had recently questioned the functioning of the prison supervisory councils, informing KSF that he had decided to investigate the councils and asking it to reply by mid-November 2011 with its comments on various aspects of the councils’ organization. The Government recognized that both fundamental and practical aspects of the supervisory council system needed to be reviewed, and it had initiated that process.

56. The Government was also considering ratification of the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or

Punishment, and an inter-ministerial working group had been set up to make proposals for a national preventive mechanism.

57. **Ms. Haveland** (Norway) said that an evaluation of the children's hotline project had been conducted. A report on the findings had been completed in the summer of 2011 but had not yet been published. She could not confirm whether or not the hotline would continue to operate.

58. **Mr. Austad** (Norway) said that the wording of paragraph 64 of the written replies had probably led to confusion. The death-scene investigation by the Norwegian Institute of Public Health when a child under 4 had died unexpectedly was conducted by qualified medical personnel, not by the police, and was intended to ensure that cases in which foul play was suspected were followed up by the police. The practice had arisen because the police had been criticized in recent years for questioning the parents and suggesting they were to blame in such situations. The child's parents could refuse the medical investigation but could not influence the police investigation.

59. The National Coordinating Unit for Victims of Trafficking had been instructed to improve its data collection methods. Gathering data on victims was problematic, however, due to privacy issues. The number of offenders was small since the level of human trafficking was not high in Norway and police action focused on prevention. A recent report had highlighted some shortcomings in the handling of male and child victims of trafficking and recommended increasing the powers of the police and the prosecution service to tackle the problem. The Council of Europe's Group of Experts on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings would be assessing Norway's efforts to combat human trafficking in 2012.

60. **Mr. Bordvik** (Norway) said that the principle of non-refoulement was paramount in Norway. The authorities assessed each application for asylum on the basis of its merits and the conditions in the country to which a person might be returned under the Dublin II Regulation. Asylum-seekers had access to legal aid. A Norwegian NGO, the Norwegian Organization for Asylum-Seekers, provided assistance during the application process, and the State provided funding for legal representation during appeals. Legal aid for court cases, however, was only available through means-testing. All asylum-seekers whose applications had been denied were notified of the decision long before they had to leave the country. Asylum procedures complied fully with the Istanbul Protocol. The guidelines for staff at reception centres were nevertheless being revised to include clear references to the Protocol and to protect the needs of vulnerable asylum-seekers.

61. **Ms. Ryan** (Norway) said that the catalogue of human rights that was to be incorporated into the Constitution was still under consideration by the corresponding parliamentary committee, which was not due to report to parliament until 2012.

62. **Ms. Haveland** (Norway) said that the Government had 17 goals for social inclusion, each with one or more indicators for measuring long-term progress. The employment of persons with immigrant backgrounds was one of those indicators. The goals had been incorporated into the budget and reporting procedures of each ministry. The proportion of persons with immigrant backgrounds employed by Government ministries had risen from 3.2 per cent in 2008 to 3.6 per cent in 2009 and 3.8 per cent in 2010.

63. **Mr. Lallah** asked why persons who had been granted legal aid in an asylum application would have to undergo means-testing in order to obtain legal aid if they took their case to court. Information provided by NGOs suggested that quite a few pro bono cases were taken to court and a significant number were successful. Hence the concern about access to legal aid in such instances.

64. **Mr. O'Flaherty** welcomed the State party's commitment to ensure that it had a sturdy national human rights institution in accordance with the Paris Principles and invited

it to consider playing a leading role in the region by launching a new national plan of action for human rights. Such a step would underscore the importance of mainstreaming a rights-based approach at the heart of government in all countries, not just developing ones.

65. With regard to the use of coercion in mental health care, he asked what action was being taken to ensure that likely service users would be able to provide their input during the consultation process that followed the publication of the official report on the issue. NGOs had reported a worrying lack of independence, as well as a lack of psychiatric and other relevant expertise, among the supervisory bodies responsible for monitoring conditions in mental health facilities, and he wished to know whether the Government shared those concerns. As to the apparent difficulty that persons with mental disabilities had in filing complaints with the courts because of the lack of legal aid, he referred them to the report submitted to the Committee by the Norwegian NGO-forum for Human Rights on 8 September 2011.

66. Lastly, since Norway was a prominent small arms producer, he wished to know what safeguards it had put in place to ensure that, once exported or even re-exported, the arms it sold were not used to violate the right to life.

67. **Mr. Salvioli** asked what measures had been taken to investigate the ill-treatment or unjustified deprivation of liberty of persons with mental health problems and to prosecute those involved.

68. Amnesty International had reported that, instead of lack of consent, which was the key element in the definition of rape, the Criminal Code stressed the actual or threatened use of violence. He asked the delegation to clarify the matter.

69. **Ms. Motoc** said that according to NGOs, whistleblowers who raised questions about patients' rights in psychiatric institutions were not sufficiently protected and subsequently found themselves in difficult situations. She requested more information on the workings and oversight of psychiatric institutions.

70. **Mr. Flinterman** asked the delegation to clarify the Government's position regarding the review of the Constitution and, if it supported the review, whether the right to seek remedy for rights violations would not only be incorporated but emphasized in the new Constitution.

71. **Ms. Ryan** (Norway), translating a statement by **Ms. Aas-Hansen** (Norway), said that, since the review of the Constitution was now before parliament, the Government had stepped back slightly from the process. It was, however, following the debates with great interest and would participate actively in a seminar that was due to be held on the topic in November 2011. The goal was to complete the review process in time for the Constitution's centenary in 2014.

72. **Mr. Bordvik** (Norway) said that the basic rights of asylum-seekers were guaranteed and fully protected during administrative procedures and legal aid was provided if cases were taken to court. There had been some confusion in the media regarding the success rate of pro bono cases, as in many instances the decisions had been reversed by the immigration authorities themselves through their own appeal procedures.

The meeting rose at 5.55 p.m.