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Summary record of the 4094th meeting

Held at the Palais Wilson, Geneva, on Friday, 15 March 2024, at 10 a.m.

Chair: Ms. Abdo Rocholl

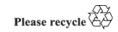
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The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under article 40 of the Covenant (continued)

Fourth periodic report of Serbia (continued) (CCPR/C/SRB/4; CCPR/C/SRB/Q/4; CCPR/C/SRB/RQ/4)

In accordance with rule 108 of the Committee's rules of procedure, Ms. Šurlan withdrew during the consideration of the fourth periodic report of Serbia.

- 1. At the invitation of the Chair, the delegation of Serbia joined the meeting.
- 2. **A representative of Serbia** said that freedom of assembly was guaranteed by the Constitution and the Public Assembly Act. The right to peaceful assembly could nonetheless be curtailed in certain circumstances to protect public health or safety.
- 3. There had been some 14 assemblies held in Belgrade in the aftermath of the 2023 elections, including just one that had been authorized. In some of those assemblies, public order had been disrupted, as food and hard objects had been thrown at government employees and buildings, including the headquarters of the Republican Electoral Commission and the Belgrade municipal administration. Civil servants and police officers had also been subjected to verbal and physical abuse. In one instance, eight police officers and three demonstrators had been injured. In responding to the unrest, the police had used proportionate force, in accordance with the law. As a result of such acts, approximately 40 people had been identified and criminal charges had been brought against approximately half for insurrection, attempts to change the constitutional order and miscellaneous misdemeanours.
- 4. Some 180 unregistered demonstrations involving about 35,000 people, mainly in Belgrade, had been held in July 2020 against measures taken to control the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic. In some incidents, protesters had attempted to enter the parliament building and had thrown hard objects at police officers. Participants in the unrest had been charged with 60 criminal offences and about 250 misdemeanours.
- 5. Efforts had been made to protect the freedom of assembly of members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community, in particular through police cooperation and support for pride events. At the 2022 Pride Parade, there had been some incidents when the police had maintained separation between some 5,000 participants and violent counter-demonstrators; 13 police officers had been injured and a number of persons had been charged with crimes and misdemeanours.
- 6. The Ministry of the Interior had improved respect for human rights and the application of the law among its personnel. The Ministry practised a zero-tolerance policy towards torture and ill-treatment. Material and overall conditions had improved at places of detention. In the past year, there had been 22 cases in which police officers had been deemed to have used undue force or other measures that were inconsistent with the law. Most of the officers in question had faced disciplinary measures or suspension.
- 7. **A representative of Serbia** said that one of the incidents involving a threat to public safety had occurred before the building housing the Republican Electoral Commission in December 2023 and that two persons had been apprehended and faced criminal charges. One had claimed psychiatric issues, and negotiations for a plea agreement had been undertaken. The other faced charges and had undergone psychiatric evaluation to assess for a mental condition.
- 8. Following other events that had taken place later in December 2023, the public prosecution office in Belgrade had filed criminal charges against 24 individuals for violent acts and insurrection. Eleven people had been indicted, and plea agreements had been reached for some of them. Protective measures had been taken for others, including psychiatric assessments and house arrest. Some had not been charged. Regarding police behaviour during protests, reports of ill-treatment had been filed and some officers faced prosecution. Cases related to freedom of assembly during the COVID-19 pandemic had also been addressed by the public prosecution offices.

- 9. A working group had been established to draw up a national strategy to combat corruption for the period 2024 to 2028, with a focus on areas such as education, health, public administration and public procurement. Work was continuing on recommendations for the improvement of repressive action by the police to bring it into line with international recommendations. The Government had taken steps to ensure the independence and resources of the Anti-Corruption Agency and to allow it to work effectively. Detailed statistics on police activities, prosecutions in the aftermath of unrest and high-level corruption cases would be provided in writing.
- 10. **A representative of Serbia** said that the issue of missing persons, especially in the context of the former Yugoslavia, presented complex challenges that transcended borders and administrative boundaries. In the case of Serbia, which was currently searching for approximately 3,000 missing persons of Serbian nationality out of a total of 9,700 missing persons, the need for effective measures was paramount. To improve outcomes in locating missing persons, several operational and practical steps must be implemented.
- 11. First, as missing persons could be dispersed across different regions, including Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo and Metohija, cross-border collaboration was essential. The Serbian services faced blockages from their counterparts in other countries and even a refusal to abide by agreements and to schedule meetings to address the issue of missing persons. Nearly 2,000 grave sites remained undiscovered, and the remains of hundreds of Serbian nationals were kept in other countries, out of bounds of the relevant Serbian services that searched for the missing.
- 12. Efforts must be coordinated between the relevant authorities in the different countries to share information and resources for more effective searching and identification. The legal frameworks related to missing persons investigations could make procedures more streamlined and ensure compliance with agreements and international human rights standards. Laws could be enacted to facilitate reporting, investigation and coordination among agencies involved in handling missing person cases and an effort could be made to provide for better and more efficient data sharing and information exchange between countries and relevant organizations.
- 13. Utilizing technology, including satellite imagery from the archives of the United States of America and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, had improved the effectiveness of search efforts, and further progress could be made by using new terrain excavation and investigation techniques. He hoped that the United Nations Development Programme and other partners could help undertake search efforts in rivers and lakes, which had remained unsearched since the 1990s.
- 14. It was crucial to adopt victim-centred approaches that prioritized the needs and rights of the families of missing persons. Providing support services, counselling and regular updates to families could help alleviate their suffering and maintain their trust in the search process. It was also essential to invest in training programmes for law enforcement professionals and other stakeholders involved in missing person investigations. Building capacity in forensic techniques, data analysis and victim identification could improve the effectiveness and accuracy of search operations.
- 15. The implementation of such measures could do a great deal to address the complex issue of missing persons more effectively.
- 16. **Ms. Kpatcha Tchamdja** said that the Committee would like to receive updated information on legislative measures taken to align the definition of torture with international standards. Noting that the information provided by the delegation focused solely on complaints of torture or ill-treatment by the police, she would like information on the overall number of complaints, including at places of detention and other places of deprivation of liberty.
- 17. The Committee would also like to receive detailed information on the outcomes of the cases involving 32 police officers facing criminal charges, including the sentences handed down and any remedies provided for the victims. In the light of the low rate of prosecution compared with the number of complaints and allegations of physical mistreatment by police, the delegation was requested to provide details on how the State party would ensure prompt,

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independent investigations into all allegations of torture or ill-treatment. She encouraged the Government to consider implementing safeguards such as mandatory audio and video recording of police interrogations, as recommended by the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment following its recent visit to Serbia.

- 18. **Mr. Quezada Cabrera**, noting that the Government had begun working on an action plan focused on women, children and victim protection for 2023–2025 as part of its Strategy for Prevention and Suppression of Trafficking in Human Beings, said that the Committee would like to receive detailed information on the completion, characteristics and objectives of the plan.
- 19. The Protector of Citizens had highlighted the need for a comprehensive law regulating all aspects of human trafficking. The delegation was requested to provide information on whether the executive or legislative branch had considered drafting such legislation. It would also be useful to the Committee to learn about measures taken to proactively identify trafficking victims, especially migrants, sexually exploited individuals, refugees, asylum-seekers and unaccompanied children engaged in begging, and about the allocation of resources to the Centre for the Protection of Victims of Trafficking for victim identification.
- 20. The State party had reported that, after various labour inspections and investigations, a misdemeanour court had levied fines on persons responsible for the exploitation of Vietnamese workers at the Linglong tire factory in Serbia. The Committee would like to hear whether the Government was considering carrying out criminal investigations to determine if human trafficking offences had taken place and whether it was planning measures to prevent such exploitation in the future.
- 21. The delegation was invited to specify what sort of restrictions could be imposed on freedom of association, which authority imposed them and what avenues existed to challenge them. The Committee would like to hear whether such restrictions met the criteria for necessity and proportionality, in line with article 21 of the Covenant. The replies to the list of issues mentioned the requirement to notify public assemblies at least five days in advance of a planned event. He would like to know whether such communications were considered to be mere notifications, or applications for authorization, and what the consequences were if the organizers of an assembly failed to make the notification. The replies also mentioned "spontaneous meetings", which did not require notification. The Committee would like to know the definition of a spontaneous meeting and whether such meetings received effective protection in law and in practice.
- 22. Concerns had been raised by civil society regarding biometric surveillance at public gatherings in Belgrade and other cities. How did the State ensure the right to privacy of persons who took part in public gatherings?
- 23. **Mr. Gómez Martínez** said that he wished to know what the State party was doing to ensure that lawyers were present during police interrogations of their clients and that all detainees received a copy of the document informing them of their rights. He would like to find out whether there was a central registry of detained persons and whether a record was kept of the times at which a person's deprivation of liberty began and a lawyer was contacted, officially designated and arrived at the police station.
- 24. He would like to know whether the High Judicial Council and the High Prosecutorial Council were already in place and taking decisions; why, contrary to international standards, prosecutors did not have a majority of votes on the latter council; what steps the State party was taking to guarantee the independence of prosecutors; whether any investigations were being conducted into allegations of political interference in the work of judges or prosecutors; and whether cases were assigned to judges and prosecutors randomly. It would be helpful to have statistics on the number of people, including stateless persons, who had been granted or denied free legal aid under the Law on Free Legal Aid.
- 25. He wished to know the specific reasons why the applications for registration of four religious organizations had been rejected between 2017 and 2020, which religious organizations those were and what steps the State party was taking to ensure transparency and consistency in the registration process. He wondered whether the State party planned to

make any improvements to the election procedure for the Council of the Regulatory Authority of Electronic Media. He would appreciate comment from the delegation on reports that there was little media pluralism, a lack of transparency in media ownership, inequality in media financing and no oversight of the Council's activities; that significant use was being made of strategic litigation against public participation; and that there were insufficient limitations on campaigning by public officials during election periods.

- 26. He would be grateful for information on: any outcomes already generated by the introduction of the database on offences against journalists; the reported rise in attacks against human rights defenders, activists, opposition leaders and journalists; any steps being taken by the State party to address the public perception of impunity that had resulted from the acquittal of the State security officers tried for the 1999 murder of journalist Slavko Ćuruvija; the role that the prosecutor had played in those proceedings; and the impact of the 2020 request from the Administration for the Prevention of Money-Laundering to commercial banks for information on the accounts of 57 civil society organizations, media outlets and individuals. Further information on the State party's efforts to combat hate speech would also be appreciated.
- 27. **Mr. Santos Pais** said that he would like to know why only 235 of the approximately 4,000 asylum applications lodged between 2008 and 2023 had been approved and how the State party planned to ensure that all persons in need of international protection, including those in airport transit zones, had effective access to asylum procedures. He wondered how it would prevent the ill-treatment and collective expulsion of asylum-seekers and hold accountable anyone who violated the human rights of refugees, asylum-seekers or migrants. He would appreciate comment from the delegation on reports that foreign nationals had been extradited under conditions that constituted refoulement. He wished to learn about the due process safeguards afforded to persons subject to extradition requests.
- 28. He also wondered whether the State party planned to specifically address the rights of persons in transit zones in its legislation, appoint new, properly trained staff to the Asylum Office, ensure that there were judges on the Administrative Court with training in human rights and refugee law, establish an asylum centre system in line with international standards, amend the Law on Asylum and Temporary Protection to introduce quality standards for asylum centres, harmonize legislation on social protection and reception, introduce standards for reception facilities for children and establish procedures for assessing the reception needs of vulnerable persons. He would appreciate information on the age assessment procedure and on any plans to introduce a statelessness determination procedure.
- 29. He wished to learn about the safeguards in place under the State party's surveillance regime and about the bodies that provided oversight. He would appreciate information on any steps taken to bring the bill on internal affairs into line with the Covenant and to consult relevant stakeholders on it. He wondered whether it was true that the authorities had leaked personal data from criminal investigations to tabloids and, if so, whether those acts had resulted in investigations and prosecutions.
- 30. He would be grateful for updates on the complaints filed with the Constitutional Court regarding the most recent elections and on the criminal investigations into allegations of vote-buying and other offences during those elections. He wished to know what steps the State party planned to take to introduce a unique voter register, improve the verification process for electoral lists, ensure the secrecy of the ballot, address concerns regarding family voting and prevent other irregularities. He would like to find out what the objectives of the Law on the Financing of Political Activities and the amendments to the Law on Prevention of Corruption were and whether any campaign financing oversight bodies had been set up. It would be helpful to know how many parliamentary seats had been won by members of national minorities in the 2023 elections and how the State party planned to further increase the participation of national minorities in public affairs.

The meeting was suspended at 11.05 a.m. and resumed at 11.30 a.m.

31. **A representative of Serbia** said that, given the time constraints, the delegation would provide answers to some of the Committee's questions in writing.

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- 32. **A representative of Serbia** said that, in accordance with a methodology put in place for the investigation of allegations of abuse by police officers, public prosecutors were authorized to begin the information-gathering process with respect to such allegations. The Ministry of the Interior had established a committee for the prevention of torture. There were 219 units, with a total capacity of 320 detainees, where people could be detained for up to 48 hours. With government resources and funding from Norway, three fourths of the units had been renovated and brought into line with the standards of the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture. A rule book set out requirements for the units, including with respect to their size. A number of units had been equipped for video and audio recording. The Government was preparing regulations regarding police action and prosecutor interviews with detainees.
- 33. The definition of a public assembly under the Constitution and the Public Assembly Act was almost identical to that under article 21 of the Covenant. Under the Act, a public assembly must involve more than 20 people and be held for purposes such as promoting national aims or democratic rights. The Act imposed certain restrictions on freedom of assembly. Public assemblies that posed a threat to national security, public health or morals or the rights and freedoms of others were prohibited, as were assemblies in front of schools, public health facilities and buildings of importance to national security. Notification of a public assembly had to be registered with the competent authorities at least five days before the date of the assembly. Assemblies that took place on private premises, traditional assemblies such as fairs and funerals and spontaneous assemblies arising in reaction to current events that had not been organized by any physical or legal person were exempt from the notification requirement. Persons who wished to organize a public assembly were required to provide information on themselves, the location and date of the assembly, the programme and goals of the assembly and the measures taken to ensure the safety of the public.
- 34. The Ministry of the Interior could decide that a public assembly should not go ahead for one of the aforementioned reasons, or if the purpose of the assembly was to promote violence or to serve as a call to arms or to incite hatred on the grounds of race, ethnicity or nationality, or if the assembly would violate human rights or minority rights. The decision to forbid an assembly could also be taken during the assembly if the threat of violence arose. Where a decision to prohibit an assembly was taken, the organizers of the assembly had 24 hours to submit an appeal to the Ministry of the Interior. Regarding the incident involving the arrest of environmental protesters alluded to by Ms. Kpatcha Tchamdja, a number of persons protesting the construction of a new bridge over a tributary of the Danube River had been arrested and charged near Novi Sad in 2023 after attacking workers hired to deforest the construction site.
- 35. With regard to the rights of persons deprived of their liberty, in 2023, a total of 26,000 persons had been arrested in Serbia on misdemeanour charges and detained for between 24 and 48 hours. The majority of those arrested had been charged with traffic offences, while just under a third had been charged with criminal misdemeanours and the remainder had been charged with breaching the peace and public order. Persons arrested and detained on charges of misdemeanours were held separately from convicted persons. Under articles 19, 29 and 68 to 79 of the Rule Book on Police Powers, all persons deprived of their liberty must be informed, in a language that they understood, of the reasons for their arrest and their right to legal counsel. Where the prisoner was a foreign national, he or she had the right to consular assistance. In the event that the prisoner claimed to require medical assistance, he or she had the right to be examined by a doctor. Medical examinations were routine for persons suspected of being under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
- 36. The authorities kept electronic records on all prisoners and had recently improved its record-keeping system after studying the systems used in several Western European States. Every record must indicate, inter alia, whether the prisoner had consulted a lawyer and when, whether medical assistance had been provided and who had been notified of the prisoner's detention. The Protector of Citizens regularly conducted unannounced monitoring visits to police stations and had recently concluded that there had been improvements in the way prisoners were treated by police officers. Moreover, the national preventive mechanism had recently concluded that detention conditions on police premises had improved and that police

officers were doing more to ensure respect for the rights of prisoners and keep accurate and complete records.

- 37. The Ministry of the Interior was working on a bill that would regulate the use of biometric data by the law enforcement authorities. A first draft of the bill had been withdrawn in 2022 to allow for consultations with civil society, public prosecution and judicial authorities and the Commissioner for Information of Public Importance and Protection of Personal Data. Under a new draft of the bill, law enforcement officials would be barred from using facial recognition in the investigation of crime, except in cases involving the most serious criminal offences.
- 38. A representative of Serbia said that, pursuant to articles 136 and 137 of the Criminal Code, public prosecutors could open investigations ex officio into cases of suspected torture or ill-treatment by public officials. The Internal Control Sector had produced guidance on the investigation of torture and ill-treatment and issued recommendations to prosecutors and the police to make their investigations more efficient and ensure that they aligned with the recommendations of international human rights committees. The Administration for the Enforcement of Criminal Sanctions had issued guidelines for the conduct of employees in correctional institutions in the event of allegations of abuse, which including instructions on medical examinations and the recording and use of photographic evidence of injuries. It had also issued a handbook on the implementation of United Nations standards and the Manual on the Effective Investigation and Documentation of Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (Istanbul Protocol) in prisons. In cooperation with the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, training on the Istanbul Protocol had been organized for prison officers. The prison staff training centre had published guidelines on the use of force by prison officials; the excessive use of force in the treatment of prisoners was not tolerated.
- 39. The definition of the offence of rape in article 178 of the Criminal Code was not consonant with the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention), in that, in Serbia, the offence was centred around the use of force by the perpetrator, while the main element in the definition set out in the Istanbul Convention was lack of consent by the victim. The Government was considering two options to bring the definition of rape in the Criminal Code into line with the Istanbul Convention: one was to amend article 178 by inserting a new paragraph on the lack of consent; the other was to establish an entirely new article in the Criminal Code that provided that non-consensual acts of a sexual nature constituted rape. The Working Group on Amendments to the Criminal Code was currently in session. It would issue various recommendations at the end of its session, including in relation to the offence of rape and the possible introduction in the Criminal Code of the offence of femicide.
- 40. A representative of Serbia said that the Government had established a council for combatting trafficking in persons in 2023. In December 2023, at its first meeting, the council had adopted a new strategy and action plan on trafficking in persons and had undertaken to draft a bill on the subject to harmonize the work of the various government agencies involved in anti-trafficking efforts and ensure the timely identification and protection of victims. A working group on the implementation of the strategy would soon be established. The National Coordinator for Fighting against Trafficking in Human Beings had been appointed in 2023 and the capacity of the Centre for the Protection of Victims of Trafficking in Human Beings had been increased. A new programme for combatting trafficking in persons for the period 2024-2029 and an accompanying action plan had been developed and would soon be adopted. State funding would be provided for the implementation of the action plan, which aimed, inter alia, to bolster labour inspections with a view to identifying more trafficking victims. The authorities had received allegations of human rights violations of Vietnamese workers at the Linglong tire factory and had launched investigations involving multiple government agencies. So far, the prosecution authorities had not identified any victims of trafficking in persons. The Protector of Citizens had issued a report on the case, in which it was stated that no inconsistencies had been identified in the work of State agencies in that regard.
- 41. **A representative of Serbia** said that the Ministry of the Interior had established an internal working group to draft a new bill on asylum and temporary protection. In accordance

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with the current Law on Asylum and Temporary Protection of 2018, the Government had developed a new rule book on the issuance of biometric and machine-readable travel documents to refugees. The new travel documents allowed refugees to enjoy their right to freedom of movement in the Schengen area, facilitated their access to the Serbian labour market and allowed for their registration in international refugee databases. Regarding allegations that some refugees had been forcibly removed from Serbia, the Constitutional Court had ruled in 2020 that 17 refugees from Afghanistan had been wrongly pushed back to Bulgaria at the Serbian border by the border police in 2017. That had been an isolated incident and there was no trend of similar incidents occurring. Should a similar case occur in the future, the Government would take the appropriate steps to address it and prevent any further recurrence.

- 42. With regard to the detention of refugees and asylum-seekers at Belgrade Nikola Tesla Airport, the State strictly controlled entry to its territory at its borders. Persons who arrived at the border without fulfilling all conditions for entry to the country were turned back, in accordance with the procedures laid down by law. Such persons were notified of the decision to deny entry in written form and placed in the Airport's transit zone. The airline with which they had travelled to Serbia was responsible for paying for their accommodation in the transit zone and arranging for their return to their country of origin or to a third country that they were entitled to enter. New accommodation had been opened in the transit zone in 2022, with a total capacity of 24 persons. Male and female migrants were housed in separate areas and there was a special area for mothers with children and an outdoor enclosure of 45 square metres for daily exercise. The whole facility measured 130 square metres. While persons detained in the transit zone were able to obtain legal assistance, delays were sometimes caused by the fact that defence counsel needed to be issued with a permit to enter restricted areas of the airport.
- 43. A separate unit had been established by the police to handle cases of domestic violence and sexual violence. Specialist officers had been trained to deal with victims of those offences.
- 44. **A representative of Serbia** said that the reception of asylum-seekers was handled in line with Directive 2013/33/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 26 June 2013 laying down standards for the reception of applicants for international protection (recast). A mandatory vulnerability assessment was conducted on arrival. Conditions at the asylum centres, one of which was dedicated to persons arriving from Ukraine, were regularly monitored by the Protector of Citizens, which acted as the national preventive mechanism. Minors, including unaccompanied minors, were accommodated separately. Primary health-care services and psychological support was provided at the centres. School-age children were currently placed in the education system within three months; the Commissariat for Refugees and Migration was working with the Ministry of Education to speed up the process.
- 45. All persons who were granted asylum received support with language learning, cultural orientation and job-seeking. The Commissariat worked with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to resolve integration issues; as a result, improvements had been made to the issuance of travel documents and to the naturalization process for persons who had been granted international protection.
- 46. **A representative of Serbia** said that the Government was strongly committed to strengthening freedom of expression and ensuring a free media. A working group had been formed to prepare the action plan for the implementation of the media strategy for 2024–2025. The organizational, functional and financial independence of the Regulatory Authority of Electronic Media had been strengthened under new legislation. Members of the Authority's Council served a six-year, non-renewable term, and the criteria for nomination to the Council had been made stricter. The purpose of the Media Register was to ensure that information about the media and media content producers, including details on ownership and on any public funds received, was publicly available. Data from the Agency for Business Registers showed that, in 2023, approximately 96 per cent of the registered media publishers had met the criteria for inclusion in the Central Records of Beneficial Owners.

- 47. **A representative of Serbia** said that, during the tenure of the previous Government, there had been three members of parliament, two State secretaries and numerous public officials of Roma origin. There were seven registered political parties representing the interests of the Roma community. The National Council of the Roma National Minority had a mandate to work on a number of issues, including education, culture and the official use of the Roma language. The Government had established a coordination body tasked with improving the situation of the Roma minority; its efforts had borne good results.
- 48. **Mr. Quezada Cabrera** said that he would welcome more information on the functions and powers of the National Rapporteur on Trafficking in Human Beings. He would also be interested to learn about any training that was provided to officials, in particular immigration control officials and labour inspectors, on the identification of victims of trafficking.
- 49. **Mr. Gómez Martínez** said that he would appreciate details of how the State party guaranteed access to justice for persons who were unable to afford it. He was interested to learn what the first measures taken by the High Judicial Council and the State Prosecutorial Council had been.
- 50. **Mr. Santos Pais** said that he wished to know whether persons detained in airport transit zones were provided with translations, in a language they could understand, of decisions taken in their case. He would appreciate more details of extradition procedures, in particular concerning Cevdet Ayaz, a Turkish national. It was unclear whether, once a judicial decision on removal had been issued, the authorities would consider any new elements that might indicate that an individual should not be removed from the State party. He would welcome information on the assessment procedure for child asylum-seekers.
- 51. **Ms. Kpatcha Tchamdja** asked how soon the State party would align its definition of torture with international standards.
- 52. **A representative of Serbia** said that the Government had published a rule book outlining a methodology for the calculation of the value of unpaid work performed by women who were not employed outside the home. The rule book was intended as the basis for the creation of a mechanism for the payment of a social security pension to those women.
- 53. To conclude, the delegation had been encouraged by the dialogue to continue government efforts to improve the human rights situation in Serbia, in particular for vulnerable and marginalized groups, and looked forward to receiving the Committee's concluding observations.

The meeting rose at 12.55 p.m.