
A Government representative referring to the ILO direct contacts mission of 2012, indicated that the terms of reference of this mission had been too vague, open-ended and had not been outcome-oriented. The Government was committed to accepting a direct contacts mission that would be able to speak to all parties, and that would provide solutions based on the correct legal and factual situation. The fact that the terms of reference of the mission in 2012 had not been acceptable should not prevent a mission from taking place in the coming year. In this regard, the Government reiterated its commitment to welcoming an ILO direct contacts mission in December 2013, based on terms of reference that were acceptable to all.

Concerning restrictions on public meetings, the speaker underlined that all persons and entities were now able to associate, organize and meet in any public place without the need for a permit. Trade unions, political parties, and civil society groups had been regularly holding public meetings, and freely expressing their views in the media. Allegations that minutes had to be kept of meetings and speeches were not true. Turning to issues raised concerning several pieces of legislation, the speaker underlined that the serious offence provisions contained in the Public Order Act only applied to offences such as treason, sedition and religious and racial vilification. Moreover, the definition of the term “terrorism” in the Public Order Act was very similar to legislation in many other countries. Furthermore, the Political Parties Decree did not take away any rights from workers. This Decree sought to maintain political neutrality of public officials, but did not prevent workers who were not trade union officials from becoming members of a political party. The Decree also introduced greater transparency and accountability with respect to political parties. In addition, the draft Constitution, which provided for fundamental civil and political rights as well as socio-economic rights, would also provide the right of any person affected by an executive and administrative decision to seek the review of this decision in a court of law or before an independent tribunal. The draft Constitution also contained provisions that would contribute to the creation of transparent rules of