

ADEQUATE OR DECENT STANDARD OF LIVING - GENERAL

III. CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS

CERD

- United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, CERD, A/46/18 (1991) 49 at para. 209.

It is necessary for the State party to make increased efforts to improve the situation of members of ethnic minorities with regard to education, employment, housing and economic standing.

- Mexico, CERD, A/50/18 (1995) 66 at para. 380.

The situation of extreme poverty and marginalization of the majority of the indigenous population in the State party is a matter of concern. Such a situation has complex causes, some of them stemming from the impact of the encounter of civilizations, as well as the consequences of the recent internationalization of the economy for social policies in Mexico. It has been and still is the responsibility of the Government to improve the economic and social situation of the indigenous population of the State party.

- Nicaragua, CERD, A/50/18 (1995) 89 at paras. 533 and 633.

Paragraph 533

The realization of economic and social rights is a matter of continuous concern, in particular as the so-called structural adjustment measures and the privatization of State property have had negative consequences on the enjoyment of the economic, social and cultural rights of the Nicaraguan people, especially on its most vulnerable sectors and the indigenous communities.

Paragraph 633

When promoting projects of economic development, the Government should undertake the necessary measures to effectively protect the identity of ethnic groups in the areas concerned.

- Madagascar, CERD, A/51/18 (1996) 28 at para. 162.

Grave concern is expressed at the continuing deterioration of the social, cultural and economic conditions prevailing in the State Party. The general impoverishment of the country, the dysfunctioning of social services and social security and the existence of tensions between various groups of the population, which all lead to racial or ethnic discrimination, are a matter of anxiety.

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- Bolivia, CERD, A/51/18 (1996) 41 at paras. 268 and 284.

Paragraph 268

Note is taken, with concern, of the conditions of extreme poverty principally affecting members of the indigenous population. Poverty is evident in the lack of access to some basic services, such as clean water, medical care, education and electricity.

Paragraph 284

Immediate attention should be paid to the development of rural areas where many indigenous communities are situated. The Government is encouraged to consider the expansion of the economic and social infrastructure to enable those communities to be provided with access to clean water, energy, medical care, education, and other essential services and, in this regard, it calls special attention to the situation of the Guaraní people. The Government is encouraged to seek international assistance towards this end.

- Mexico, CERD, A/52/18 (1997) 42 at paras. 299 and 309.

Paragraph 299

The State party has not fully succeeded in eliminating endemic poverty, which has aggravated the social inequalities that affect indigenous populations.

Paragraph 309

With respect to the enjoyment of economic, social and cultural rights, it is noted with concern that the members of indigenous groups live in extreme poverty. Another source of concern is the land delimitation and distribution process, which does not seem to have fully respected the land rights of the indigenous populations.

- Israel, CERD, A/53/18 (1998) 30 at para. 84.

The State party should reinforce its efforts to reduce the persisting gap between the living standards and the involvement in national affairs of the Jewish majority and the Arab minority. This should be done in a manner consistent with the measures adopted for assisting the integration of Ethiopian Jews. The State party is encouraged to adopt new labour legislation in order to secure the protection against ethnic discrimination of the rights of Palestinians working in Israel on a daily basis; the rights of migrant workers, including undocumented workers, are also a matter of concern.

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- Cambodia, CERD, A/53/18 (1998) 55 at para. 293.

Concern is expressed about the situation of the indigenous peoples (also referred to as Highland Peoples, Khmer Loeu or Hill Tribes Peoples), and their lack of legal status, as well as the insufficient legal framework to protect their rights, culture and traditional lands. The rights of indigenous peoples have been disregarded in many government decisions, in particular those relating to citizenship, logging concessions and concessions for industrial plantations. The lack of participation of the indigenous peoples in the management of natural resources and in other activities of concern to them is also a matter of concern.

- Colombia, CERD, A/54/18 (1999) 44 at paras. 469 and 475.

Paragraph 469

Concern is expressed that development and resource exploration programmes on land subject to the property rights of indigenous and Afro-Colombian communities have been pursued without sufficient consultation with the representatives of these communities and without sufficient concern for the environmental and socio-economic impact of these activities.

Paragraph 475

Recognizing that many Afro-Colombians live in extreme poverty in urban slum areas, the State party should take steps to address *de facto* racial segregation in urban centres.

- Dominican Republic, CERD A/54/18 (1999) 47 at para. 514.

The State party should take urgent measures to ensure the enjoyment by persons of Haitian origin of their economic, social and cultural rights without discrimination. Efforts should be made, in particular, to improve their living conditions in the bateyes (shanty towns).

- Rwanda, CERD, A/55/18 (2000) 31 at para. 139.

It is noted that State financial and material resources were reduced to a minimum by acts of destruction and theft during the armed conflicts in 1994. While noting the progress made by the State party in addressing some of the economic problems facing the country, the Committee is aware that the continuing economic difficulties in the State party, its heavy dependence upon scarce international assistance, and the limited resources available to the State party are significant obstacles to the full implementation of the Convention.

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- Argentina, CERD, A/56/18 (2001) 18 at para. 49.

It is noted with concern that the territories where indigenous peoples have settled coincide with the areas with the highest index of unmet basic needs, and that the poverty and unemployment indices among indigenous populations and other vulnerable groups have risen as a result of the economic crisis. The State party should take steps to alleviate this situation.

- Bangladesh, CERD, A/56/18 (2001) 21 at para. 74.

Concern is expressed about the poor living conditions in the refugee camps for Rohingyas. It is recommended that the State party suitably address the situation pertaining to refugees.

- Japan, CERD, A/56/18 (2001) 34 at para. 177.

While noting the recent increase in the number of refugees accepted by the State party, concern is expressed about the different standards of treatment applicable to Indochinese refugees on the one hand and the limited number of refugees of other national origins on the other. Whereas Indochinese refugees have access to accommodation, financial aid and state funded Japanese language courses, such assistance is as a rule not available to other refugees. It is recommended that the State party take measures to ensure equal entitlement of all refugees to such services. In this context, the State party should also ensure that all asylum-seekers have the right, *inter alia*, to an adequate standard of living and medical care.

- China, CERD, A/56/18 (2001) 44 at para. 236.

The efforts made by the State party to promote economic and social development in economically backward regions inhabited largely by minority populations, including Inner Mongolia, Guangxi, Tibet, Xinjiang, Guizhou, Yunnan and Qinhai, are welcomed. The investments in infrastructure development and the creation of poverty alleviation projects financing the construction of primary schools in western China are particularly noted.

- Viet Nam, CERD, A/56/18 (2001) 68 at para. 411.

The efforts of the State party to rebuild and renew the social and economic structure of Vietnamese society through its Strategy Plan for Social Economic Stabilization and Development are commended. A growing economy should contribute to the easing of racial and ethnic tensions.

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ICCPR

- United States of America, ICCPR, A/50/40 vol. I (1995) 52 at paras. 291 and 302.

Paragraph 291

It is noted with concern that information provided in the core document reveals that disproportionate numbers of Native Americans, African Americans, Hispanics and single parent families headed by women live below the poverty line and that one in four children under six live in poverty. It is also of concern that poverty and lack of access to education adversely affect persons belonging to these groups in their ability to enjoy rights under the Covenant on the basis of equality.

Paragraph 302

The Self-Governance Demonstration Project and similar programmes should be strengthened to continue to fight the high incidence of poverty, sickness and alcoholism among Native Americans.

- Guatemala, ICCPR, A/51/40 vol. I (1996) 33 at para. 221.

It is noted that social and economic disparity is pervasive in the country. High levels of poverty and illiteracy, lack of opportunities, and discrimination against the indigenous population, women and the poor contribute to widespread violation of human rights.

- Georgia, ICCPR, A/52/40 vol. I (1997) 40 at para. 249.

The increase in the number of children affected by poverty and social dislocation and the concomitant increase in the number of street children, delinquents and drug addicts is of concern.

- India, ICCPR, A/52/40 vol. I (1997) 67 at para. 420.

The size of the country, its huge population, the massive poverty and the great disparities in the distribution of wealth among various social groups affect the advancement of rights.

- Israel, ICCPR, A/53/40 vol. I (1998) 45 at paras. 308 and 310.

Paragraph 308

Deeply imbedded discriminatory social attitudes, practices and laws against Arab Israelis that have resulted in a lower standard of living compared with Jewish Israelis, as is evident in their significantly

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lower levels of education, access to health care, access to housing, land and employment, are of serious concern. Most Arab Israelis, because they do not join the army, do not enjoy the financial benefits available to Israelis who have served in the army, including scholarships and housing loans. That the Arabic language, though official, has not been accorded equal status in practice, and that discrimination against members of the Arab minority appears to be extensive in the private sector are also of concern. The State party is urged to take steps without delay to ensure equality to Arabs and to proceed as soon as possible with the planned formulation of a draft law on discrimination in the private sector and to adopt it at an early date.

Paragraph 310

Members of Bedouin communities, many of whom have expressed a desire to continue to live in settlements in the Negev which are not recognized by the Israeli Government and which are not provided with basic infrastructure and essential services, should be given equality of treatment with Jewish settlements in the same region, many of which are also dispersed and populated by small numbers of people.

- Canada, ICCPR, A/54/40 vol. I (1999) 48 at para. 242.

Many women have been disproportionately affected by poverty. In particular, the very high poverty rate among single mothers leaves their children without the protection to which they are entitled under the Covenant. A thorough assessment of the impact of recent changes in social programmes on women, which may have exacerbated these inequalities and harmed women and other disadvantaged groups, should be conducted and action should be undertaken to redress any discriminatory effects of changes to social programmes.

- Kyrgyzstan, ICCPR, A/55/40 vol. I (2000) 57 at para. 401.

Although article 15 of the Constitution provides for the equality of men and women, the condition of women continues to decline in the private and public sectors. The number of women in Parliament, in public service and in management posts remains very low, a situation which constitutes a serious contravention of the fundamental principle of equality and which has a negative impact on the enjoyment of all other rights and on the harmonious development of society. Moreover, the problems of poverty and unemployment have contributed to high rates of maternal and infant mortality.

- Ireland, ICCPR, A/55/40 vol. I (2000) 61 at paras. 448 and 449.

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Paragraph 448

With respect to the Travelling community, the generally lower living standards of members of this community, their low levels of participation in national political and social life and their high levels of maternal and infant mortality are of concern.

Paragraph 449

The State party is urged to continue its efforts to take positive action to overcome discrimination and to ensure the equal enjoyment of rights by members of the Travelling community and in particular to improve their access to health, education and welfare services, including accommodation, and their participation in political and public life. Programmes to change attitudes and to promote understanding between the Travelling and the settled communities (arts. 26, 27) should be actively pursued.

- Australia, ICCPR, A/55/40 vol. I (2000) 71 at para. 509.

The State party should take further steps in order to secure the rights of its indigenous population under article 27 of the Covenant. The high level of exclusion and poverty facing indigenous persons is indicative of the urgent nature of these concerns. In particular, it is recommended that the necessary steps be taken to restore and protect the titles and interests of indigenous persons in their native lands, including by considering amending anew the Native Title Act, taking into account these concerns.

- Dominican Republic, ICCPR, A/56/40 vol. I (2001) 54 at para. 78(17).

Concern is expressed over the living and working conditions of Haitian workers and the tolerated practices that restrict their freedom of movement. The State party should give priority to addressing the issue of the working and living conditions of Haitian workers, and ensure that those workers can take advantage of the rights and safeguards laid down in articles 8, 17 and 22 of the Covenant.

ICESCR

- Ecuador, ICESCR, E/1991/23 (1990) 33 at para. 158.

Concern is expressed about the situation of abandoned children in the State party and about the need for more to be done to ensure the right to an adequate standard of living.

- Kenya, ICESCR, E/1994/23 (1993) 24 at paras. 78 and 82.

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Paragraph 78

It is noted with concern that the possibilities of employment creation are extremely limited and, at present, only a small proportion of young persons leaving school can expect to find work. The labour force participation rate is decreasing, as is the level of annual earnings at the minimum wage (in US dollars at the official exchange rate). These minimum wages appear to be far too low to even allow a very modest standard of living. Furthermore, the enforcement of minimum wages does not seem to be adequately secured in practice. Generally, wages have not kept pace with the high rise in the rate of inflation.

Paragraph 82

It is noted that between 1980 and 1989 no less than 44 per cent of the population - in rural areas 55 per cent - lived below the poverty line. A distressing inequality in income distribution is further noted. Concern is also expressed over the fact that more than 30 per cent of the population of Kenya are reported to suffer from malnutrition. With regard to the right to adequate housing, it is noted with great concern that practices of forced evictions without consultation, compensation or adequate resettlement appear to be widespread in Kenya, particularly in Nairobi.

- Canada, ICESCR, E/1994/23 (1993) 28 at paras. 102-104, 110, 114 and 119.

Paragraph 102

It is of concern that more than half of the single mothers in Canada, as well as a large number of children, live in poverty. Of particular concern is the fact that the federal Government appears to have reduced the ratio of its contributions to cost-sharing agreements for social assistance.

Paragraph 103

Information has been received from non-governmental organizations about families being forced to relinquish their children to foster care because of inability to provide adequate housing or other necessities.

Paragraph 104

It is of concern that there seems to exist no procedure to ensure that those who must depend entirely on welfare payments do not thereby derive an income which is at or above the poverty line.

Paragraph 110

It is of concern that in some court decisions and in recent constitutional discussions, social and economic rights have been described as mere "policy objectives" of governments rather than as fundamental human rights. The evidence received indicating that some provincial governments in Canada appear to take the position in courts that the rights in article 11 of the Covenant are not protected, or only minimally protected, by the Charter of Rights and Freedoms is also of concern.

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Paragraph 114

Human rights legislation should incorporate more explicit reference to social, economic and cultural rights.

Paragraph 119

The Canadian courts should continue to adopt a broad and purposive approach to the interpretation of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms and of human rights legislation so as to provide appropriate remedies against violations of social and economic rights in Canada.

- Mexico, ICESCR, E/1994/23 (1993) 47 at paras. 231, 234 and 236.

Paragraph 231

It is disturbing that a particularly large number of persons live in extreme poverty. In this connection, the decline in the purchasing power of the minimum wage during recent years is noted with concern since it is no longer adequate to enable people to live above the poverty line.

Paragraph 234

Concern is also expressed over the fact that a large segment of the population of Mexico have to endure inadequate living and housing conditions, without access to basic services such as sewage and potable water.

Paragraph 236

Efforts should be made to curb the decline in the purchasing power of the minimum wage and to redeploy certain budgetary resources to benefit the most vulnerable segments of society, and particularly children and persons living below the poverty line. Resources should be made available for indigenous groups to enable them to preserve their language, culture and traditional way of life, and at the same time to promote the economic, social and cultural rights provided for in the Covenant. The State party should take energetic steps to mitigate any negative impact that the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) might have on the enjoyment of the rights set out in the Covenant.

- Uruguay, ICESCR, E/1995/22 (1994) 23 at paras. 73, 74, 76, 78 and 81.

Paragraph 73

The standard of living of persons in rural areas, particularly those close to borders with neighbouring countries is of concern.

Paragraph 74

The impact of inflation on the enjoyment of an adequate standard of living is of concern.

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Paragraph 76

The serious deterioration of teachers' salaries in terms of purchasing power, the conflictual nature of relations between teachers and the State and the apparent ineffectiveness of the measures taken to remedy that situation is of concern.

Paragraph 78

The State party should consider the possibility of ratifying the Protocol of San Salvador additional to the American Convention on Human Rights.

Paragraph 81

Urgent measures should be adopted to increase the purchasing power of teachers' salaries.

- Morocco, ICESCR, E/1995/22 (1994) 28 at paras. 117-119.

Paragraph 117

It is of concern that economic constraints have led to a decline in the standard of living of certain segments of the population.

Paragraph 118

Further measures should be taken by the State party to reduce existing disparities between the modern and traditional sectors of society and in particular between the rural and urban areas.

Paragraph 119

There is a need to adopt further measures to provide adequate safety nets for the vulnerable sectors of society affected by structural adjustment programmes. Such measures should include a system of taxation favouring direct and progressive taxes and the extension of the social security system to those categories which do not yet benefit from it.

See also:

- Morocco, ICESCR, E/2001/22 (2000) 82 at para. 550

- Iraq, ICESCR, E/1995/22 (1994) 32 at para. 130.

It is of deep concern that the measures being taken by the State party are not sufficient to avoid continued suffering and even greater deprivation of the economic, social and cultural rights of the Iraqi people. Whatever the difficulties caused by the economic embargo, the State party should nonetheless do everything possible to promote the realization of the Covenant to the maximum of its available resources.

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- Argentina, ICESCR, E/1995/22 (1994) 47 at para. 236.

The legal provision permitting rent increases of about 12 per cent, approximately double the previous year's inflation rate, while wages are apparently frozen is specifically noted with concern.

- Mali, ICESCR, E/1995/22 (1994) 64 at paras. 347, 350 and 353.

Paragraph 347

It is noted that the official minimum wage is one of the lowest in Africa.

Paragraph 350

It is of concern that child, infant and maternal mortality rates in Mali are still among the highest in the world. Thus, almost one in five children under the age of five dies each year. Approximately 1,000 deliveries per 100,000 births result in the death of the mother. Diarrhoea, malaria and acute respiratory infections, aggravated by malnutrition, alone account for more than 40 per cent of deaths. Acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS) is spreading rapidly. With regard to water and sanitation, the average rate of access to water country-wide is about 50 per cent, but as low as 4 per cent in the difficult terrain of the north of the country. The overall rate of access to sanitation facilities is estimated at approximately 15 per cent. The geographical distribution of health services and personnel continues to show a heavy urban bias.

Paragraph 353

Every effort should be undertaken to ensure that measures of economic liberalization and structural adjustment will not adversely affect the most vulnerable groups within Malian society.

- Portugal, ICESCR, E/1996/22 (1995) 28 at paras. 95 and 98.

Paragraph 95

The increase in the minimum wage has not kept pace with economic growth in recent years and concern is expressed about a tendency for the minimum wage to depreciate.

Paragraph 98

The Government should seek to ensure a gradual increase in the minimum wage, which should take account of the State party's economic growth and the inflation rate, with the object of increasing the purchasing power of those living on the minimum wage.

- Suriname, ICESCR, E/1996/22 (1995) 37 at paras. 158, 165 and 167.

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Paragraph 158

The inconsistent protection of the rights of workers, depending on their membership in trade unions, is noted with concern. Workers who are not covered by collective bargaining agreements are not guaranteed a minimum wage, are not covered by occupational safety clauses and receive little or no protection in the event of illness. Women workers who are not members of trade unions receive little or no maternity benefits and may be dismissed if they become pregnant. Further concern is expressed about the inadequate protection of immigrant workers.

Paragraph 165

Legislation should be enacted to protect workers who are not covered by collective bargaining agreements, in order to ensure them a minimum wage, health and maternal benefits, safe working conditions, and other guarantees that meet international standards for conditions of work. The Government is encouraged to extend such protection also to immigrant workers.

Paragraph 167

Definite criteria should be established for the administration of social assistance to the poor so as to protect the lowest-income groups. The Government should undertake a redefinition of the official subsistence minimum so that all disadvantaged persons genuinely in need receive an adequate level of assistance.

- Colombia, ICESCR, E/1996/22 (1995) 41 at paras. 187, 193 and 200.

Paragraph 187

The drop in the real value of wages is noted with concern. In March 1995, 23.8 per cent of the active population, in the seven principal towns of the country, received the minimum legal wage (approximately US\$ 135) and 64.2 per cent received less than twice the minimum legal wage. Thus some 75 per cent of workers cannot afford to fill the "family basket", which costs two and a half times the minimum legal wage.

Paragraph 193

The Government should address the problem of the inequitable distribution of wealth through its economic development programmes and a modification of the tax and fiscal systems, with the object of effectively combatting the poverty that characterizes the country.

Paragraph 200

The Government should:

- (a) improve the training of "community mothers" and regularize their work situation, treating them

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for all purposes as workers in the employ of a third party;

(b) combat the practice of non-utilization of budget items earmarked for social expenditure in the State's overall budget and ensure that such appropriations are used for the purposes for which they were budgeted;

(c) improve the supply of housing, especially low-cost housing for the benefit of the poorest sectors, in urban areas and also in rural areas, and allocate resources to provide the entire population with drinking-water and sewerage services.

- Mauritius, ICESCR, E/1996/22 (1995) 47 at para. 231.

Notwithstanding the geographical isolation of the island of Rodrigues and the consequent logistical problems in the delivery of basic government services, a fact which is a considerable impediment, the Government is still under the obligation to ensure the enjoyment by the population of Rodrigues of its economic, social and cultural rights.

- Ukraine, ICESCR, E/1996/22 (1995) 50 at paras. 266, 267 and 271.

Paragraph 266

It is noted with concern that social services are not adequate to ensure a minimum standard of living for the most vulnerable groups, including pensioners, unemployed persons, persons with disabilities and non-citizens.

Paragraph 267

Attention is called to the fact that the official minimum wage is far below the level of the official poverty line.

Paragraph 271

The civil status of repatriated members of minorities, especially the Crimean Tatars, should be regularized as soon as possible. Steps should be taken immediately to reintegrate them fully into the region and to guarantee their rights to work and to an adequate standard of living, as defined in articles 6 and 11 of the Covenant. Every effort should be made in order to obtain international assistance towards this end.

- Paraguay, ICESCR, E/1997/22 (1996) 22 at paras. 71, 73, 82 and 92.

Paragraph 71

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The plight of the indigenous population, as well as the estimated 200,000 landless mestizo peasant families, is of concern. The main reason for hunger and malnutrition among the indigenous population and the deprivation of their rights is linked to the severe problem of obtaining access to traditional and ancestral lands. Although recognized by Law 904/81 and other subsequent laws, this right remains in abeyance. Eighty documented claims for legalizing indigenous access to traditional land have been pending for a number of years. All indigenous groups in the Chaco were expelled from their traditional land by cattle ranchers or industrial enterprises. Concern is also expressed about the situation of landless peasant families, of whom 50,000, on 15 March 1996, marched on the capital, Asunción, demanding adoption of legislative measures with respect to the land occupied by them and denouncing the Government's failure to fulfil past promises of agrarian reform. In Paraguay today, 5 per cent of the population owns between 60 and 80 per cent of the national territory, a situation fraught with danger for peace and stability.

Paragraph 73

It is of concern that many workers - perhaps even as many as 50 percent - do not receive the minimum wage.

Paragraph 82

The Government of Paraguay should continue the economic development, agrarian reform and fiscal reform programmes now under way in order to deal with the serious problem of unfair distribution of wealth, as a means of combating poverty.

Paragraph 92

The State party is encouraged to ratify the Additional Protocol to the American Convention on Human Rights in the Area of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (Protocol of San Salvador).

- Guatemala, ICESCR, E/1997/22 (1996) 29 at para. 134.

Concern is expressed at the issue of low access to safe water for the rural population, the higher incidence of infant mortality within certain socio-economic groups, the situation of persons with disabilities, the prevalence of endemic diseases, the problem of the inadequacy of social welfare and security, the persisting housing shortage and the inadequacy of access to health care. This general situation affecting the most vulnerable in Guatemalan society deprives them of their full enjoyment of the economic, social and cultural rights provided for in the Covenant.

- El Salvador, ICESCR, E/1997/22 (1996) 34 at paras. 164, 172 and 173.

Paragraph 164

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It is of concern that despite the increase in the minimum wage, it remains below the cost of subsistence. The minimum wage amounts to 1,050 colones in urban areas and 900 colones in rural areas, while basic subsistence costs amount to 4,500 colones.

Paragraph 172

The Government should address the problem of the inequitable distribution of wealth among the population in order to combat the poverty that characterizes the country.

Paragraph 173

Every effort should be made to ensure the prompt and full implementation of the 1992 Peace Agreement, including the provisions which relate to land redistribution and economic, social and cultural rights, respect for which is a guarantee of social peace in El Salvador.

- Dominican Republic, ICESCR, E/1997/22 (1996) 44 at paras. 224, 229 and 235.

Paragraph 224

The exploitation of Haitians and their unacceptable living conditions in the *bateye* is of particular concern. In this connection, there is no reason not to accept the veracity of various reports which emphasize the dire predicament of workers in the *bateyes*, especially women workers whose presence there is not administratively recognized and who therefore become vulnerable to extreme exploitation (their wages are 50 per cent lower than men's) and are often deprived of their rights and the most basic health and social services. Both men and women in the *bateyes*, as well as Haitian workers in other sectors of the economy, live in perpetual insecurity and they constitute the principal national group in the Dominican Republic who are subject to deportation in inhumane conditions, often at the whim of employers, who take advantage of the State's inaction to exploit the vulnerability of this group.

Paragraph 229

It is noted with concern that large-scale emigration of Dominicans has been going on for many years and has had and will continue to have a harmful effect on the Dominican economy, since a large number of emigrants are skilled workers. The State party will have to take measures in the educational and socio-economic fields to stem the outflow of skilled workers.

Paragraph 235

Limited access to safe drinking-water for the rural population and those living in deprived urban areas, the higher incidence of infant mortality in certain socio-economic groups, the deplorable situation of persons with disabilities, the prevalence of endemic diseases, the inadequacy of social welfare and social security, the persisting housing shortage and the inadequacy of access to health care, are matters of concern.

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- Belarus, ICESCR, E/1997/22 (1996) 51 at paras. 280, 282 and 288.

Paragraph 280

Deep concern is expressed at the growing number of people in Belarus living at or below the poverty line, the sharp decline in purchasing power and the widening gulf between rich and poor, with the poorest segments of the population having extremely low incomes.

Paragraph 282

It is of concern that some 600,000 children still live in the zone affected by the accident at the Chernobyl nuclear power station.

Paragraph 288

It is emphasized that any economic reform adopted should be undertaken in a manner that is consistent with protection of the economic and social rights of the poorer segments of society.

- Finland, ICESCR, E/1997/22 (1996) 55 at paras. 308 and 315.

Paragraph 308

Although it is noted that collective agreements in some sectors of professional activity contain provisions for the determination of minimum wages, it is of concern that no minimum wage is guaranteed by law.

Paragraph 315

Consideration should be given to enacting legislation providing for minimum wages, and their periodic adjustment, so that protection is ensured to workers who are not protected by sectoral collective agreements.

See also:

- Finland, ICESCR, E/2001/22 (2000) 73 at paras. 442 and 445.

- Russian Federation, ICESCR, E/1998/22 (1997) 27 at paras. 106-108, 111, 121 and 122.

Paragraph 106

The non-payment of wages, which has led to a large number of strikes, particularly in the State sector, and the payment of wages in kind by some employers are of concern. Late payment of wages is similarly unacceptable because it impedes the workers' from meeting their needs and, in an inflationary environment, robs them of the value of the money that has been earned.

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Paragraph 107

Poverty, estimated to affect at least 30 per cent of the population, and the inability of the State party to provide adequate social services and a reasonable subsistence-level revenue to poor persons are of serious concern.

Paragraph 108

Concern is expressed that the Government's ability to pay pensioners, who constitute a sizeable and increasing percentage of the population, is seriously affected by a lack of adequate financial resources. As a result, many are not receiving their pensions and are thus unable to satisfy their basic needs. The funding of pensions is being seriously impaired by the failure of enterprises to make their legal contributions to the pension fund.

Paragraph 111

Alarm is expressed at the extent of the environmental problems in the State party. The industrial leakage of harmful waste products is such a severe problem in some regions that they could be correctly declared environmental disaster areas. Concern is expressed that there has been a curtailment of funds to modernize an out-of-date water-delivery system, which adversely affects the population's access to clean water.

Paragraph 121

Immediate steps should be taken to ensure the payment of wages by both the State and private enterprises, and to punish those who have illegally diverted the funds in question for other purposes.

Paragraph 122

Assistance to those who live in poverty should be increased, and adequate financial resources should be made available so that they can live in dignity. Similar efforts should be undertaken on behalf of pensioners, many of whom live in serious financial difficulty. Greater efforts should be made to target social welfare expenditure to the truly needy sectors of the population.

- Peru, ICESCR, E/1998/22 (1997) 33 at paras. 141, 147 and 161.

Paragraph 141

The greatest obstacles to the fulfilment of economic, social and cultural rights are:

- (a) The failure to address the persistent and serious problems of poverty; 60 per cent of Peruvians live beneath the poverty line and do not enjoy proper health and educational facilities;
- (b) Gross inequality in the distribution of wealth among the population;
- (c) The failure to implement agrarian reforms;

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(d) The lack of proper health services and the drastic reduction of public expenditures in the field of health;

(e) The impoverishment of State schools, coupled with a decline in teachers' salaries and the consequent deterioration in educational standards, accompanied by the increasing poverty of families;

(f) The acute forms of discrimination that particularly affect women, indigenous people and other minority groups, and the great inequalities permeating society.

Paragraph 147

Concern is expressed that many workers do not earn the minimum wage fixed by law. It is of concern that the minimum wage is lower than the cost of the basic shopping basket. The characterization of young people aged 16 to 25 as "apprentices" and their resulting exclusion from coverage by the relevant labour legislation is also a major source of concern.

Paragraph 161

The State party should make the necessary efforts to ensure compliance with the legislation on minimum wage, safety and health in the workplace, and equal pay for equal work for men and women, and to ensure the legal recognition of young people from 16 to 25 years of age as workers. It is stressed that sufficient resources should be allocated to the labour-inspection services to enable them to perform their task properly. The State party should take steps to ensure that the private pension system is not promoted to the detriment of the public pension system, in terms of safeguarding pensioners' acquired rights.

- Dominican Republic, ICESCR, E/1998/22 (1997) 43 at paras. 218, 227, 235 and 239.

Paragraph 218

Despite steps taken to raise the minimum wage, the minimum wage is not yet sufficient to ensure a decent living for workers and their families, in accordance with article 7 (a) (ii) of the Covenant.

Paragraph 227

In order to combat poverty, measures should be taken by the authorities, notably at the fiscal and social levels, to address the problem of the inequitable distribution of wealth among the population.

Paragraph 235

With respect to the State party's obligations under article 7 (a) (ii) of the Covenant, it is recommended that the minimum wage be reviewed without delay and be periodically adjusted in order to provide workers with a "decent living for themselves and their families in accordance with the provisions of the ... Covenant". All sectors of activity should be covered by the regulation of the

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minimum wage, including the sugar cane industry, and inspection mechanisms should be set up and given the means to conduct surveys in this area.

Paragraph 239

The Government is called upon to pursue and intensify its efforts to ensure that safe drinking water is made available to the rural population and all those living in deprived urban areas.

- Iraq, ICESCR, E/1998/22 (1997) 50 at paras. 254, 257, 265, 266 and 280.

Paragraph 254

Sufficient measures have not been taken to date by the authorities to alleviate the extremely difficult living conditions of the population and the deprivation of most of their basic economic, social and cultural rights.

Paragraph 257

Concern is expressed about reports of discrimination against members of certain minorities, especially Kurds, Marsh people, Assyrians, Shiite Muslims and Turkomans, with respect to their enjoyment of rights under the Covenant. Furthermore, it is noted with deep concern that the effect of the embargo is harsher on members of racial, ethnic or religious minorities, and that there exists discrimination in the allocation by the authorities of the limited resources available between rural and urban areas, and against the southern region with respect to the Marsh people.

Paragraph 265

It is noted with concern that in 1995, 50 per cent of the rural population in the central/southern part of Iraq had no access to potable water supplies. This figure increases to 90 per cent in the southern governorate of Thi Qar. It is stressed that this situation does not conform with the provisions of article 11 of the Covenant on the right to an adequate standard of living.

Paragraph 266

With respect to article 12 of the Covenant, it is noted with concern that, with the destruction of parts of the infrastructure in the State party, the non-availability of safe drinking water has led to widespread contaminated water and related health problems, such as waterborne and diarrhoeal diseases and cholera. Due to food shortages and the resulting restrictions on its distribution, and to the non-availability of certain medicines, medical equipment and other articles of personal hygiene, the standard of physical health of the population is declining at a rapid pace. In particular, certain diseases previously eradicated from the State party have reappeared, such as typhoid, infantile paralysis, tetanus, viral hepatitis, Giardia, German measles, kala-azar, undulant fever, haemorrhagic fever, croup, whooping cough, rickets, scabies, hydrocysts and rabies.

Paragraph 280

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Every effort should be made by the Government to ensure, through the development of adequate infrastructure in all parts of the country, access to potable water by the population as a whole, and especially in the rural areas.

- Azerbaijan, ICESCR, E/1998/22 (1997) 61 at paras. 340, 348 and 354.

Paragraph 340

Alarm is expressed over the prolonged decline in the standard of living. This is evident in the rising level of poverty, the large proportion of the population living without safe drinking water, the lack of affordable housing, the decline in agricultural production due to the inefficiencies of the process of privatization of State farms and therefore inadequacies in food production and distribution, the declining quality of medical care and the declining numbers of persons benefiting from medical care.

Paragraph 348

The Government is urged to work with the informal sector and regulate it, rather than eliminate it, as it serves as a means of sustenance for a large number of persons. Some work in this sector may potentially grow in micro-enterprises. Those engaged in this sector should be able to benefit from low-interest loans and credit incentives such as those that are being provided to small businesses.

Paragraph 354

The Government should address as a matter of utmost urgency the basic needs of the population, including safe drinking water, food, affordable housing and health care.

- Uruguay, ICESCR, E/1998/22 (1997) 67 at paras. 367, 368, 376 and 378.

Paragraph 367

It is noted with concern that there has been a substantial decrease in the number of persons affiliated with trade unions and that the minimum wage is established unilaterally for the agricultural sector. The fact that the minimum wage is totally insufficient to live on and is used only as an indicator is of particular concern.

Paragraph 368

The resources devoted to public health and education are considered inadequate. Alarm is expressed at the fact that the very low wages paid to nurses has led to a low ratio of nurses to doctors (lower than 1:5), which tends to diminish the quality and accessibility of medical care available to the community. A similar problem exists in the education sector, as manifested especially by the continued deterioration of teachers' salaries in terms of purchasing power.

Paragraph 376

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The State party is called upon to comply with its obligations under article 7 of the Covenant and, in particular, to take steps towards fixing a national minimum wage indexed to the cost of living in consultation with employers' and workers' representatives. The State is urged to ensure that its existing legislation in respect of the occupational health and safety of workers is fully implemented and that the labour inspection system is strengthened.

Paragraph 378

The State party should take measures to increase the real salaries of teachers and nurses.

- Saint Vincent and The Grenadines, ICESCR, E/1998/22 (1997) 72 at paras. 423, 425 and 432.

Paragraph 423

With respect to article 3 of the Covenant, it is noted that women are accorded low wages, low status and little opportunity for economic development. Moreover, it is noted that obstacles remain for women at the tertiary education level, that occupational segregation in the labour market persists, in particular at the decision-making level and in the public sector, and that women have limited access to credit and land ownership. Concern is expressed about domestic violence, which seems to be on the rise.

Paragraph 425

The current minimum wage is insufficient to provide a decent standard of living, and the Wages Council has not reviewed the minimum wage for more than seven years, despite its legal obligation to do so every two years.

Paragraph 432

It is noted with concern that the cost of food and rent rose considerably higher than the general consumer price index between 1990 and 1995 and that, according to information received, 10.8 per cent of all households derive their domestic water supply from springs, rivers, streams and other communal catchments.

- Sri Lanka, ICESCR, E/1999/22 (1998) 22 at paras. 71 and 86.

Paragraph 71

Grave concern is expressed at the situation of an estimated 800,000 persons displaced because of the armed conflict, many of whom have been living in temporary shelters for the past 15 years and who

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lack basic sanitation, education, food, clothing and health care. It is reported that Tamil families who were forced by the military to leave their ancestral villages in the Welioya region are among the displaced. The results of an independent survey which estimated the incidence of undernourishment of women and children living in temporary shelters to be as high as 70 per cent, and the reports that in many cases food assistance did not reach the intended beneficiaries are alarming.

Paragraph 86

Mechanisms should be established to facilitate the flow of humanitarian assistance and to strictly monitor and ensure that the intended recipients actually receive the assistance. In particular, the Government should seek further international assistance in its efforts to provide permanent housing to displaced persons who have been living in "temporary" shelters since the war began 15 years ago. The Government should reassess the food assistance programme already in place in affected areas with a view to improving the nutritional standards of the food provided, particularly to children and expectant and nursing mothers.

- Nigeria, ICESCR, E/1999/22 (1998) 27 at paras. 107 and 119.

Paragraph 107

The high percentage of unemployment and underemployment among Nigerian workers, particularly agricultural workers, due to the neglect of the agricultural sector is of concern. This has led to massive migrations by agricultural workers in search of work to the cities, where they live in poverty and degrading conditions.

Paragraph 119

It is disturbing that 21 per cent of the population of Nigeria live below the poverty line in spite of the country's rich natural resources. It is of further concern that due to economic and administrative mismanagement, corruption, runaway inflation and the rapid devaluation of the naira, Nigeria now ranks among the world's 20 poorest countries.

- The Netherlands, ICESCR, E/1999/22 (1998) 37 at para. 184.

The living conditions of asylum seekers in some reception centres in the country are of concern.

- Israel, ICESCR, E/1999/22 (1998) 43 at paras. 252, 254, 257, 265 and 268.

Paragraph 252

It is noted with deep concern that a significant proportion of Palestinian Arab citizens of Israel continue to live in unrecognized villages without access to water, electricity, sanitation and roads.

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Such an existence has caused extreme difficulties for the villagers in regard to their access to health care, education and employment opportunities. In addition, these villagers are continuously threatened with demolition of their homes and confiscation of their land. The inordinate delay in the provision of essential services to even the few villages that have been recognized is regretted. In this connection, it is noted that while Jewish settlements are constructed on a regular basis, no new Arab villages have been built in the Galilee.

Paragraph 254

Grave concern is expressed over the situation of the Bedouin Palestinians settled in Israel. The number of Bedouins living below the poverty line, their living and housing conditions, their levels of malnutrition, unemployment and infant mortality are all significantly higher than the national averages. They have no access to water, electricity and sanitation and are subjected on a regular basis to land confiscations, house demolitions, fines for building "illegally", destruction of agricultural fields and trees, and systematic harassment and persecution by the Green Patrol. It is noted that the Government's policy of settling Bedouins in seven "townships" has caused high levels of unemployment and loss of livelihood.

Paragraph 257

The situation of non-Jewish women who are reportedly worse off in terms of living conditions, health and education is noted. Concern is expressed over persistent reports that the Dimona nuclear plant could pose a serious threat to the right to health and to the environment unless urgent preventive measures are undertaken.

Paragraph 265

The State party should respect the right to self-determination as recognized in article 1, paragraph 2, of the Covenant, which provides that "in no case may a people be deprived of its own means of subsistence". Closure restricts the movement of people and goods, cutting off access to external markets and to income derived from employment and livelihood. The Government should undertake to ensure safe passage at checkpoints for Palestinian medical staff and people seeking treatment, the unhampered flow of essential foodstuffs and supplies, the safe conduct of students and teachers to and from schools, and the reunification of families separated by closures.

Paragraph 268

The State party should recognize the existing Arab Bedouin villages, the land rights of the inhabitants and their right to basic services, including water.

- Cyprus, ICESCR, E/1999/22 (1998) 50 at para. 286.

It is noted with concern that the legal minimum wage does not guarantee an adequate standard of living especially with regard to shop assistants, nurses, clerks and nursery assistants.

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- Germany, ICESCR, E/1999/22 (1998) 54 at paras. 314 and 337.

Paragraph 314

It is noted that no poverty line or threshold has yet been established.

Paragraph 337

The integration of eastern and western Germany should be accelerated on all fronts, with a view to reducing the gap that may still exist between them.

- Switzerland, ICESCR, E/1999/22 (1998) 59 at para. 350.

It is noted that despite the high level of development reached by Switzerland and the strength of its economy, there exist unacceptable levels of poverty among certain segments of the population, in particular among women.

- Canada, ICESCR, E/1999/22 (1998) 63 at paras. 389, 390, 396, 399, 403, 407, 416 and 417.

Paragraph 389

Information has been received about a number of cases in which claims were brought by people living in poverty (usually women with children) against government policies which denied the claimants and their children adequate food, clothing and housing. Provincial governments have urged upon their courts in these cases an interpretation of the Canadian Charter which would deny any protection of Covenant rights and consequently leave the complainants without the basic necessities of life or any legal remedy.

Paragraph 390

It is of deep concern that the provincial courts in Canada have routinely opted for an interpretation of the Canadian Charter which excludes protection of the right to an adequate standard of living and other Covenant rights. It is noted with concern that the courts have taken this position despite the fact that the Supreme Court of Canada has stated, as has the Government of Canada before this Committee, that the Canadian Charter can be interpreted so as to protect these rights.

Paragraph 396

Information has been received to the effect that cuts of about 10 per cent in social assistance rates for single people have been introduced in Manitoba; 35 per cent in those for single people in Nova Scotia; and 21.6 per cent in those for both families and single people in Ontario. These cuts appear to have had a significantly adverse impact on vulnerable groups, causing increases in already high levels of

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homelessness and hunger.

Paragraph 399

It is of grave concern that a wealthy country such as Canada has allowed the problem of homelessness and inadequate housing to grow to such proportions that the mayors of Canada's 10 largest cities have now declared homelessness a national disaster.

Paragraph 403

It is of concern that the significant reductions in provincial social assistance programmes, the unavailability of affordable and appropriate housing and widespread discrimination with respect to housing create obstacles to women escaping domestic violence. Many women are forced, as a result of those obstacles, to choose between returning to or staying in a violent situation, on the one hand, or homelessness and inadequate food and clothing for themselves and their children, on the other.

Paragraph 407

It is of concern that the minimum wage is not sufficient to provide an adequate standard of living for a worker and his or her family.

Paragraph 416

An official poverty line should be established and social assistance at levels which ensure the realization of an adequate standard of living for all should be established.

Paragraph 417

Federal and provincial agreements should be adjusted so as to ensure, in whatever ways are appropriate, that services such as mental health care, home care, child care and attendant care, shelters for battered women and legal aid for non-criminal matters, are available at levels that ensure the right to an adequate standard of living.

- Iceland, ICESCR, E/2000/22 (1999) 26 at para. 82.

It is noted with concern that 10 per cent of the population live below the poverty line, and that the problem of poverty particularly affects single parents, couples with children, farmers, students and household workers. The State party's social welfare expenditure appears to be insufficient to help those vulnerable groups, despite the State party's relative affluence and resources.

- Ireland, ICESCR, E/2000/22 (1999) 33 at paras. 134, 135 and 147.

Paragraph 134

While the State party's National Anti-Poverty Strategy addresses issues relating to, *inter alia*,

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educational disadvantage and rural poverty, the Strategy does not adopt a human rights framework consistent with the provisions of the Covenant.

Paragraph 135

The persistence of poverty among disadvantaged and vulnerable groups, notably the disabled, the traveller community, children, elderly women and single women with children is of concern. Moreover, it is noted with concern that social welfare payments are not above the income poverty line and that child-care benefits are not sufficient to cover the cost of bringing up a child.

Paragraph 147

The State party should expand the scope of its National Anti-Poverty Strategy, including the poverty-proofing of policy proposals, and integrate a human rights approach into the Strategy.

- Tunisia, ICESCR, E/2000/22 (1999) 36 at paras. 168 and 179.

Paragraph 168

The disparities of living standards, especially with regard to education, health, life expectancy, child mortality, access to piped water and electricity and employment, found between the prosperous north-east coast of Tunisia and the underdeveloped north-west, between the interior of the country and the south, and between the towns and rural areas is of concern.

Paragraph 179

The State party should develop an immediate national plan of action in order to reduce the disparities of living standards that exist between the various regions.

- Solomon Islands, ICESCR, E/2000/22 (1999) 40 at paras. 203-205 and 209.

Paragraph 203

Concern is expressed about the plans to privatize communal land with a view to making it accessible for commercial use and urban development. Approximately 90 per cent of the land in the State party is held under customary land tenure, meaning that the land belongs to the community as such rather than to individuals. Attention is drawn to the fact that the envisaged privatization of land under customary tenure may undermine the foundations of the State party's society and could lead to the dispossession of the majority of people, thereby depriving them of their basic source of income. With regard to the Government's plans to privatize housing completely, concern is expressed that the number of homeless people in the urban areas will increase considerably.

Paragraph 204

The State party does not give due consideration to the threats to the natural environment caused by

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the practices of deforestation and overfishing, affecting the maintenance of an adequate standard of living, as guaranteed by article 11 of the Covenant.

Paragraph 205

Infant mortality remains a major cause of concern, in spite of the commendable health policies of the Government, which have drastically decreased the mortality rate of children under the age of 5. According to WHO, in 1996 the infant mortality rate was estimated at 26.8 deaths per 1,000 live births, while, according to the first country cooperation framework for the Solomon Islands (1997-2001), the maternal mortality rate is as high as 550 deaths per 100,000 live births. The low percentage of the population with access to adequate sanitation (only 9 per cent of the rural population) and to safe drinking water available in the home or within reasonable access (63 per cent of the entire population), is of concern. The lack of adequate sanitation facilities directly adds to the severe malaria problem affecting more than one third of the population.

Paragraph 209

The Government should undertake measures to prevent the excessive exploitation of the country's forestry and fishing resources.

- Bulgaria, ICESCR, E/2000/22 (1999) 46 at paras. 226, 235 and 244.

Paragraph 226

The situation in which those who are employed receive salaries which do not allow them to secure for themselves and their families an adequate standard of living is deplored.

Paragraph 235

The obligations arising from the Covenant require that an adequate standard of living for all citizens, and in particular the most vulnerable groups, must be assured. General Comment No. 12 (1999) on the right to adequate food is referred to in this regard.

Paragraph 244

The State party should explain the measures it has taken to ensure that all teaching staff enjoy the conditions, including wages, commensurate with their status, in accordance with article 13, paragraph 2 (e) of the Covenant.

- Cameroon, ICESCR, E/2000/22 (1999) 56 at paras. 333, 335-337 and 352-354.

Paragraph 333

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It is regretted that the minimum wage set by the Government is not adequate to enable workers to live above the poverty line, let alone to provide a decent standard of living for themselves and their families.

Paragraph 335

The increasing incidence of poverty and unemployment in the State party, especially among the most vulnerable groups, such as minority groups and the elderly, and among the rural population is of concern. Alarm is expressed at reports indicating that 55 per cent of the population were living below the poverty line in 1998 of which 40 per cent lived in rural areas compared with 15 per cent in urban areas. In this regard, the the inadequacy of social security with regard to child maintenance for single parents and low-income families is of concern.

Paragraph 336

The lack of access to potable water for large sectors of society is regretted, especially in rural areas where only 27 per cent of the population have access to safe water (within reasonable reach), while 47 per cent of the urban population have such access.

Paragraph 337

Concern is expressed about the protection of the rights of the Baka Pygmies, in particular their right to an adequate standard of living including the right to food, which has been adversely affected by the depletion of the natural resources of the rainforest upon which they depend for subsistence, and by the compulsory acquisition by the Government of their land.

Paragraph 352

The State party should review its macroeconomic reform programmes with respect to their impact on the standard of living of vulnerable groups, particularly in the rural areas, and make efforts to adjust these reforms in a way that better responds to the current needs of such groups. When in negotiations with international financial institutions, the State party should take into account its international legal obligations to protect, promote and fulfil economic, social and cultural rights.

Paragraph 353

The State party is urged to take effective measures to protect the right of the Baka Pygmies to an adequate standard of living, in particular their right to food, when negotiating contracts for projects which impact negatively on their lives.

Paragraph 354

The State party is called upon to make safe drinking water accessible to the entire population.

- Mexico, ICESCR, E/2000/22 (1999) 62 at paras. 378 and 382.

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Paragraph 378

The increase in the number of persons living in poverty and extreme poverty is disturbing. Unless the structural causes of poverty are properly addressed, a more equitable distribution of wealth between the various sectors of society, between states and between rural and urban areas will not be achieved.

Paragraph 382

It is regretted that the minimum wage level has not been adjusted upwards despite the positive growth of macroeconomic indicators. At present, about five minimum wages are needed to obtain the officially set basic food basket, in violation of article 7, paragraph (a) (ii) of the Covenant.

- Georgia, ICESCR, E/2001/22 (2000) 30 at paras. 78, 81, 82, 90, 97 and 102.

Paragraph 78

It is noted with satisfaction that the Government of Georgia is willing to cooperate with various international organizations, such as the United National Development Programme, ILO, World Health Organization, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, as well as with regional organizations such as the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, in order to realize the rights set forth in the Covenant, and in particular to address the problem of poverty.

Paragraph 81

Concern is expressed about the grave problem of poverty with which the Government is confronted. Despite the efforts made by the State party, the average minimum wage is still insufficient to ensure an adequate standard of living for large parts of the Georgian population.

Paragraph 82

Concern is expressed about the inadequate measures being taken to combat poverty. With regard to activities aimed at poverty reduction, there seems to be a lack of effective management in the policy-making and implementation phases, particularly with regard to the reform of the pension and taxation systems. A lack of clearly established guidelines and indicators hinders the transition process.

Paragraph 90

It is noted with concern that the number of children begging in the streets is on the increase and that many of them are drawn by adults into various types of criminal activity.

Paragraph 97

The Committee supports the suggestion in the UNDP *Human Development Report Georgia 1999* that the poverty threshold level not be changed in accordance with proposals which the State party has received, as such a change would incorrectly reflect the poverty situation in the country. In this

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respect, the State party is urged to take adequate measures to ensure that the minimum wage is sufficient to meet the basic needs of the wage earner and his or her family.

Paragraph 102

The State party is urged to treat with more concern the growing number of children begging on the street and to take the appropriate measures to solve the problem.

- Italy, ICESCR, E/2001/22 (2000) 34 at paras. 116, 122, 129, 135 and 136.

Paragraph 116

It is noted with concern that a large number of the Roma population live in camps lacking basic sanitary facilities on the outskirts of major Italian cities. The Roma on the whole live below the poverty line and are discriminated against, especially in the workplace, if and when they find work, and in the housing sector. Life in the camps has had a major negative impact on the Roma children, many of whom abandon primary and secondary schooling in order to look after their younger siblings or to go out begging in the streets in order to help increase their family income.

Paragraph 122

It is noted with concern that there are still substantial economic and social inequalities between the northern and southern parts of the country, which impact negatively on the situations of women, young people, children and disadvantaged and marginalized groups.

Paragraph 129

It is recommended that the State party step up its efforts to improve the situation of the Roma population by replacing camps with low-cost houses; by legalizing the status of Roma immigrants; by setting up employment and educational programmes for parents; by giving support to Roma families with children at school; by providing better education for Roma children; and by strengthening and implementing anti-discrimination legislation, especially in the employment and housing sectors.

Paragraph 135

The State party should seriously address the persistent problem of economic and social disparities existing between the northern and southern parts of Italy, which have a negative effect on the situations of women, young persons, children and disadvantaged and marginalized groups.

Paragraph 136

The State party should step up its efforts to assist those living under the poverty line, the majority of whom are women.

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- Egypt, ICESCR, E/2001/22 (2000) 38 at paras. 152, 153 and 173.

Paragraph 152

The Committee is of the view that the state of emergency that has been in place in Egypt since 1981 limits the scope of implementation of constitutional guarantees for economic, social and cultural rights; that some aspects of structural adjustment programmes and economic liberalization policies introduced by the Government of Egypt, in concert with international financial institutions, have impeded the implementation of the Covenant's provisions, particularly with regard to the most vulnerable groups of Egyptian society; and that the persistence of traditional practices and attitudes, deeply entrenched in Egyptian society, with regard to women and children hamper the ability of the Government to protect and promote their economic, social and cultural rights.

Paragraph 153

The discrepancies between available resources and the actual needs of the people are becoming increasingly marked given the climatic and geographical conditions in the country and the rapid increase in the population. These factors impede the full enjoyment of economic, social and cultural rights in the country.

Paragraph 173

The State party is strongly urged to seek assistance, including international cooperation, in order to collect the statistics and information necessary to formulate effective strategies to address problem areas such as unemployment, poverty, housing and forced evictions.

- Congo, ICESCR, E/2001/22 (2000) 43 at paras. 194, 196 and 206.

Paragraph 194

The Committee takes into account the massive population displacements caused by the violence during the 1997-1999 civil war, which seriously disrupted the functioning of the State public services, economic activity and social stability. The damage inflicted by the civil war has been tentatively estimated at approximately 55 per cent of the gross domestic product projected for 2000.

Paragraph 196

Particular concern is expressed that the external debt was estimated to be over US\$ 5 billion at the end of 1998 which, for a population of 2.9 million people, amounted to a per capita debt of almost US\$ 1,700.

Paragraph 206

Grave concern is expressed regarding the decline of the standard of health in the Congo. The AIDS epidemic is taking a heavy toll on the country, while the ongoing financial crisis has resulted in a serious shortage of funds for public health services, and for improving the water and sanitation

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infrastructure in urban areas. The war has caused serious damage to health facilities in Brazzaville. According to a joint study by WHO and UNAIDS, some 100,000 Congolese, including over 5,000 children, were affected by HIV at the beginning of 1997. More than 80,000 people are thought to have died from AIDS, with 11,000 deaths reported in 1997 alone. Some 45,000 children are said to have lost either their mother or both parents as a result of the epidemic.

- Jordan, ICESCR, E/2001/22 (2000) 49 at para. 237.

The persistence of relatively high levels of unemployment and poverty in the country is noted with concern.

- Mongolia, ICESCR, E/2001/22 (2000) 53 at paras. 265, 267-271 and 280.

Paragraph 265

The Committee notes with appreciation that the State party is developing international cooperation with a view to resolving the social and economic problems of its population. In particular the "Poverty Partnership Agreement" signed by the State party with the Asian Development Bank is noted. This agreement allows Mongolia to draw US\$ 40 million per year for poverty reduction, the achievement of full primary education and the reduction of infant mortality rates by 50 per cent by 2005.

Paragraph 267

The Committee is aware that the State party is currently experiencing great difficulties in the process of transition to a market economy. These difficulties are due, *inter alia*, to the sudden interruption of economic links with the former Soviet Union, and the discontinuance of various types of assistance previously received, which accounted for almost 30 per cent of GDP in 1990. This influenced the closure or downsizing of State enterprises and gave rise to great increases in unemployment and to a serious lowering of standards of living. The concurrent deterioration in the State party's terms of trade in international markets and the Asian economic crisis further aggravated Mongolia's economic situation. It is acknowledged that problems related to these matters seriously hamper the State party's ability to comply with its obligations under the Covenant.

Paragraph 268

It is acknowledged that the existing divergence between available resources and the needs of the people is further exacerbated by the recent extreme climatic conditions prevailing in Mongolia, which also constitute a serious impediment to the enjoyment of economic, social and cultural rights in the country.

Paragraph 269

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Concern is expressed about the negative consequences of the transition process on a large part of the Mongolian population. According to World Bank figures from 1998, 35 per cent of the population lives below the weighted national average poverty line and 18 per cent of the population is destitute. Deep concern is also expressed about the information submitted by the State party that the social safety nets put in place to minimize the impact of the transition have had only a limited effect in curbing the extent and depth of poverty.

Paragraph 270

Deep concern is expressed about the adverse effects of the prevailing traditional values and practices and of poverty on women.

Paragraph 271

It is deeply disturbing that the State party has not been able to mitigate the adverse effects of poverty on children, who represent 42 per cent of the population. In particular, concern is expressed about the extent of the phenomenon of street children, whose numbers are currently estimated at 30,000, 60 per cent of whom live in Ulaanbaatar in deplorable conditions with inadequate nutrition and susceptible to disease, violence, sexual and economic exploitation, substance abuse and mental trauma.

Paragraph 280

With regard to poverty, the Committee notes the National Human Development Plan (NHDP) and the National Poverty Alleviation Programme (NPAP) established by the Government with a view to reducing poverty. The State party is urged to continue to direct resources to those most in need. The State party is reminded of its obligation, even under severe resource constraints, to protect the vulnerable groups of society, as stated in paragraph 12 of the Committee's General Comment No. 3.

- Sudan, ICESCR, E/2001/22 (2000) 57 at paras. 302 and 303.

Paragraph 302

It is noted with regret that the current economic and financial difficulties of the State party, particularly the problem of foreign debt, make it more difficult to start the much-needed process of moving towards modernization, democratization and the realization of human rights for all. It is noted that foreign debt amounted to over 22 billion United States dollars in 1998 and that, as a Least Developed Country, the State party has insufficient resources to meet its debt servicing obligations.

Paragraph 303

The factors impeding the realization of economic, social and cultural rights include the great size of the country, the lack of infrastructure, such as a road network, hospitals and schools, the civil war in the south, and the economic difficulties mentioned earlier, all of which have exacerbated the difficulties preventing the State party from adequately addressing the problem of widespread poverty.

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- Kyrgyzstan, ICESCR, E/2001/22 (2000) 62 at paras. 338, 342, 347 and 357.

Paragraph 338

The Committee is aware that the State party is currently confronted with the difficulties commonly encountered by the countries in transition and that this process is exacerbated by the Kyrgyz economy's high level of dependence on the external economic environment, and by the diverting of resources to service the country's sizeable foreign debt.

Paragraph 342

Recent estimates of unemployment reaching 26 per cent are noted with concern. It is regretted that despite the efforts of the Government to raise the statutory minimum wage to match the minimum consumer budget, the minimum wage does not provide a decent standard of living to the worker and his/her dependants. Furthermore, it is noted with regret that the Government is in arrears in payments of pensions and of civil servants' salaries.

Paragraph 347

Deep concern is expressed about the high rate of poverty, estimated to affect more than 50 per cent of the population. The most affected areas are the remote southern rural areas, where persons over the age of 60, women and children, especially, suffer from poverty. In particular, concern is expressed about malnutrition, which mostly affects infants (19.7 per cent), children and adolescents.

Paragraph 357

The State party is urged to continue seeking international, financial and technical assistance, as provided for in articles 2.1 and 23 of the Covenant, in its efforts to improve the enjoyment of economic, social and cultural rights in Kyrgyzstan, and to continue to direct resources to those most in need. The Government should assess the impact of its economic reforms on the well-being of the population. In this regard, the Committee would like to remind the State party of its obligation, even under severe resource constraints, to protect the vulnerable groups of society, as stated in paragraph 12 of the Committee's General Comment No. 3.

- Australia, ICESCR, E/2001/22 (2000) 66 at paras. 383, 392, 397 and 398.

Paragraph 383

It is noted with concern that homeworkers, who are predominantly women, do not enjoy any form of social protection and are paid substantially lower wages than the minimum wage, which compels

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them to work excessively long hours in order to earn enough to ensure the daily subsistence of their families.

Paragraph 392

It is strongly recommended that the State party undertake measures to protect homeworkers and to ensure that they receive the official minimum wage, that they benefit from adequate social security and that they enjoy working conditions in conformity with the legislation.

Paragraph 397

The State party is called upon to ensure that the two-year waiting period for the receipt of social security assistance by new immigrants does not infringe upon their right to an adequate standard of living.

Paragraph 398

The State party is strongly urged to establish an official poverty line, so that a credible assessment can be made of the extent of poverty in Australia.

- Portugal, ICESCR, E/2001/22 (2000) 70 at paras. 410 and 418.

Paragraph 410

It is regretted that approximately one fifth of the population of the State party still lives below the poverty line and that no comprehensive study of the problem of poverty has been undertaken by the State party.

Paragraph 418

The State party is urged to review its general strategy for the eradication of poverty and to step up its activities to combat it.

- Yugoslavia (preliminary), ICESCR, E/2001/22 (2000) 80 at para. 506.

The State party is urged to give priority to the reconstruction of homes in order to reduce the number of homeless in the country.

- Morocco, ICESCR, E/2001/22 (2000) 82 at paras. 521, 529, 536, 537, 553, 560 and 561.

Paragraph 521

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The Committee notes the difficulties faced by the State party in complying with its debt servicing obligations which take up a considerable percentage of gross national product, thus impeding the State party's ability to comply with its obligations under the Covenant.

Paragraph 529

Concern is expressed that the minimum wage is not sufficient to allow workers to maintain an adequate standard of living for themselves and their families. Moreover, no adequate reason was given for the considerable discrepancy between the minimum wage of industrial workers and that of agricultural workers.

Paragraph 536

Concern is expressed about the high percentage of people living below the poverty line, especially in rural areas.

Paragraph 537

The disparities in the standard of living between rural and urban areas, insofar as the former have considerably less access to clean drinking water, sanitary facilities and electricity, is noted with concern.

Paragraph 553

It is recommended that the State party undertake measures to eliminate the existing significant disparity in the minimum wage afforded to the various categories of workers, particularly industrial and agricultural workers. In addition, it is strongly recommended that the minimum wage be established at a level that will better ensure an adequate standard of living for workers and their families, in accordance with article 7 of the Covenant.

Paragraph 560

The State party is urged to address the problem of poverty, especially in the rural areas.

Paragraph 561

The Committee reiterates the recommendation it made in 1994 (E/C.12/1994/5, para. 18), which strongly encourages the State party to take measures to reduce the disparities that exist between the rural and urban areas by improving access to water, electricity and sanitary facilities in the rural areas.

- Venezuela, ICESCR, E/2002/22 (2001) 29 at paras. 87, 90, 97 and 101

Paragraph 87

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Despite the stipulations in article 91 of the Constitution establishing the right of everyone to sufficient wages to support a worker and his family, and by which minimum wages are adjusted every year, concern is expressed that the minimum wage is still far short of meeting workers' basic requirements, and that there are disparities between urban and rural wages.

Paragraph 90

It is of deep concern that the efforts of the State party to improve the situation of its people are inadequate, and that there is still an alarmingly high level of poverty in Venezuela, especially among the indigenous peoples, and that economic, social and cultural rights are not integrated into the Government's anti-poverty programme.

Paragraph 97

It is recommended that the State party take effective action to reduce the unemployment rate by, *inter alia*, providing training for young people and protection against unwarranted dismissal for workers, and by conducting regular reviews of the minimum wage levels to enable workers to attain an adequate standard of living for themselves and their families.

Paragraph 101

The State party is urged to seek international technical assistance in the implementation of its anti-poverty programme.

- Honduras, ICESCR, E/2002/22 (2001) 33 at paras. 116, 122, 124, 127, 141 and 149

Paragraph 116

It is noted that the efforts of the State party to comply with its obligations under the Covenant are impeded by the fact that it is a Highly Indebted Poor Country and that up to 40% of its annual national budget is allocated to foreign debt servicing.

Paragraph 122

Concern is expressed about the lack of legislative and administrative measures by the State party to control the negative effects of transnational companies' activities on the employment and working conditions of Honduran workers and to ensure compliance with national labour legislation. Examples of such negative impacts are the low-level of wages and the sub-standard working conditions in the *maquilas* (assembly plants), and in particular those employing primarily women workers.

Paragraph 124

It is of grave concern that the minimum wage of workers is insufficient to provide for an adequate standard of living in the State party.

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Paragraph 127

Alarm is expressed about the high number of children who are forced to work to support themselves, and in particular the serious situation of street children and the existence of street gangs (*maras*). In this regard, the Committee is also gravely concerned about the high incidence of sexual abuse, exploitation and prostitution of children in the State party, and about the lack of a national plan to address these issues.

Paragraph 141

It is recommended that the State party explicitly take the Covenant into account in relation to the policies, programmes and projects deriving from its Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper, which forms part of the enhanced Highly Indebted Poor Countries Initiative. In this regard, the State party is referred to the statement on poverty adopted by the Committee on 4 May 2001.

Paragraph 149

It is recommended that the minimum wage be determined on the basis of criteria of an adequate standard of living in the State party.

See also:

- Bolivia, ICESCR, E/2002/22 (2001) 52 at para. 294.

- Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (China), ICESCR, E/2002/22 (2001) 39 at paras. 176, 180, 181, 198, 200 and 201.

Paragraph 176

The economic policies of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, based essentially on the philosophy of "positive non-interventionism", i.e. keeping taxes low and limiting government expenditure to the provision of essential services and guaranteeing free trade, free enterprise and a low tax regime for at least 50 years, have had a negative impact on the realization and enjoyment of the economic, social and cultural rights of inhabitants, which has been exacerbated by globalization.

Paragraph 180

The widespread and unacceptable incidence of poverty is of grave concern. It is of special concern that a large number of older persons continue to live in poverty without effective access to social services.

Paragraph 181

There is deep concern that the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region lacks adequate institutional arrangements to ensure the formulation and implementation of comprehensive, integrated, consistent and effective anti-poverty strategies.

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Paragraph 198

A comprehensive pension system should be adopted that provides adequate retirement protection for the entire population, in particular for housewives, self-employed persons, older persons and persons with disabilities.

Paragraph 200

It is strongly recommended that the authorities establish either an inter-departmental anti-poverty unit or an independent anti-poverty commission, to conduct relevant research, formulate anti-poverty strategies and monitor all policies for their impact on poverty.

Paragraph 201

The authorities are urged to ensure that Comprehensive Social Security Assistance levels permit recipients a reasonable standard of living consistent with articles 9 and 11 of the Covenant.

- Republic of Korea, ICESCR, E/2002/22 (2001) 45 at paras. 215, 219, 222 and 233.

Paragraph 215

The extended application of the minimum wage to workers in all enterprises is welcomed. The minimum wage had previously been applicable only to workers in enterprises employing over 10 persons.

Paragraph 219

The Committee notes the continued negative effects on the enjoyment of economic, social and cultural rights of the pervasive "fortress mentality", which is enforced by the National Security Law. Moreover, the high level of defense expenditure creates an imbalance in contrast with the shrinking budget for key areas of economic, social and cultural rights.

Paragraph 222

Concern is expressed that the State party did not take into account its Covenant obligations when negotiating with international financial institutions to overcome its financial crisis and restructure its economy. The over-reliance on macro-economic policies has had profound negative effects on the enjoyment of economic, social and cultural rights in that there have been large-scale employee dismissals and lay-offs, the significant deterioration in employment stability, growing income inequalities, an increasing number of broken families and marginalization of a large number of persons.

Paragraph 233

While welcoming the adoption of programmes to supplement the incomes of those living under the poverty line, notably through the National Basic Livelihood Security Act, the Committee has doubts about the adequacy of the assistance given. The eligibility criteria are apparently so rigid as to

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exclude many of the poor, and the amount of financial assistance regularly awarded can reportedly be drastically reduced without notice and without reason. The National Pension Scheme, which is said to have nationwide coverage open to all persons, nevertheless fails to provide for an inordinate proportion of the workforce who are reaching pensionable age but have not been able to contribute into the system for a sufficient number of years.

- Bolivia, ICESCR, E/2002/22 (2001) 52 at paras.265, 268, 272 and 290.

Paragraph 265

The Committee is aware that efforts to introduce legal crops to replace cocaine production in certain rural areas have led to the impoverishment of the small farmers involved.

Paragraph 268

Deep concern is expressed about the extent of poverty in Bolivia. According to UNDP figures, 88.8% of all households in Bolivia have an income below the poverty line. Moreover, 90% of these households live in rural areas. This situation is reflected in indicators such as infant mortality, life expectancy, literacy rate and access to sanitation, potable water and health care services. In this regard, the highly uneven distribution of wealth is deplored.

Paragraph 272

Concern is expressed that the method for determining minimum wage is arbitrary, and that the current level of minimum wage does not secure living in dignity for the affected workers and their families.

Paragraph 290

The State party is urged to ensure that the minimum wage is sufficient to provide an adequate standard of living for the worker and his family.

- Senegal, ICESCR, E/2002/22 (2001) 61 at paras. 341, 345, 349, 353, 355, 358, 368, 371, 376 and 379.

Paragraph 341

Concern is expressed about the *de jure* and *de facto* inequality that exists between men and women in society. For example, article 152 of the Family Code discriminates against women, notably in the fields of taxation, allocation of seeds and family allowances. There is particular concern about the lack of progress made by the State party in eradicating the enduring discriminatory practices against women and girls. Such practices include polygamy, restricted access to land, property, housing and credit facilities, and the inability to inherit land.

Paragraph 345

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The minimum wage is not sufficient to provide a decent standard of living for workers and their families.

Paragraph 349

It is of concern that funds allocated for basic social services through its 20/20 Initiative fall far short of the minimum social expenditure required to cover such services. In this regard, it is noted with regret that more is spent on the military and on servicing the State party's debt than on basic social services.

Paragraph 353

There is concern about the increasing number of street children, especially in Dakar, and about the high incidence of child labour, especially in rural areas, and the exploitation of children engaged in agriculture, domestic work, informal trading and other services. The low remuneration that children receive, which is well below the minimum wage is also of concern.

Paragraph 355

There is concern that in 2000, 30 per cent of the Senegalese people were living in absolute poverty, that 70 per cent of the poor came from the countryside and were women, and that poverty is on the increase.

Paragraph 358

There is concern about the situation of small farmers who are unable to repay their debts and are denied credit facilities at reasonable rates so that they cannot earn a living for themselves and their family.

Paragraph 368

Effective action should be taken to reduce the unemployment rate by providing training for young people in urban areas and by conducting regular reviews of the minimum wage levels in order to enable workers to attain an adequate standard of living for themselves and their families.

Paragraph 371

The State party is urged to allocate more funds for its 20/20 Initiative, designed as a basic social safety net for the disadvantaged and marginalized groups of society.

Paragraph 376

The State party is urged to integrate fully human rights, including economic, social and cultural rights, in the formulation of the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper, which is being prepared. In this regard, the State party is referred to the Statement on poverty and the International Covenant on Economic,

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Social; and Cultural Rights adopted on 4 May 2001 and is encouraged to ensure that the strategy paper is prepared in full consultation with civil society.

Paragraph 379

The State party is called upon to provide credit facilities to small farmers at reasonably low rates so that they may carry out their activities and earn a living for themselves and their families.

- Syrian Arab Republic, ICESCR, E/2002/22 (2001) 67 at paras. 394, 405, 409, 415, 422 and 425.

Paragraph 394

The efforts to improve the enjoyment of economic, social and cultural rights are appreciated. In particular, note is taken of the goals and objectives in the context of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework, which aims at improving living standards by reducing socio-economic and regional disparities and strengthening institutional capacities to meet development challenges.

Paragraph 405

There is concern about the living conditions of refugees and stateless persons.

Paragraph 409

Concern is expressed that the minimum wage has not been adjusted in recent years and that it has therefore become insufficient to provide a basic and adequate standard of living for workers and their families.

Paragraph 415

The incidence of poverty is a matter of concern in the State party, which, according to alternative sources, affects about one third of the population.

Paragraph 422

Legislative and administrative measures should be taken to ensure the enjoyment of economic, social and cultural rights by refugees and stateless persons.

Paragraph 425

The minimum wage should be adjusted from time to time, so that it provides for an adequate standard of living for workers and their families, in conformity with articles 7 and 11 of the Covenant.

- Panama, ICESCR, E/2002/22 (2001) 73 at paras. 450, 451, 456 and 469.

Paragraph 450

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Notwithstanding the absence of legal discrimination and the rights granted to indigenous communities by the Constitution, there is deep concern about the persisting disadvantage faced in practice by members of indigenous communities and, in particular, about the marked disparities in the levels of poverty, literacy, access to water, employment, health, education and other basic social services.

Paragraph 451

It is of concern that the minimum wage is not sufficient to provide for the basic needs of the worker's family and that payment of that minimum wage is generally not respected in practice.

Paragraph 456

The high incidence of poverty is of concern, especially in the rural areas. In this regard, there is concern about the economic and social policies, which are strongly biased in favour of urban and higher income groups and which have reportedly resulted in resource misallocation and wastage and ineffective social programmes for disadvantaged and marginalized groups.

Paragraph 469

The State party is encouraged to act on its stated commitment to develop effective programmes and policies to combat poverty and to achieve the goal of reducing the poverty rate from 37 per cent to 30 per cent of the population by 2003. In this regard, the persistent problem of dramatic income inequality should be addressed. The State should also party review its various initiatives designed to help reduce the high rate of poverty to ensure that they fully integrate human rights, including economic, social and cultural rights, in light of the Statement on poverty and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights adopted on 4 May 2001.

- Ukraine, ICESCR, E/2002/22 (2001) 78 at paras. 487, 489, 490, 495, 500 and 506.

Paragraph 487

The State party's willingness to cooperate with specialized agencies and other international organizations in such areas as poverty reduction, gender equality, integration of the Crimean Tartars, women and children's health, the review of human rights legislation, support for the Authorized Human Rights Representative of the Parliament, and the fight against trafficking of persons, is welcomed.

Paragraph 489

The transition to a market economy has had a negative impact on the implementation of the rights contained in the Covenant.

Paragraph 490

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There is concern about the high level of poverty in the country and the inadequate measures taken to combat it. This is exacerbated by, among other things, privatization policies high unemployment, the low level of pensions and wages, a legal minimum wage which is below the recognized subsistence level, and the scarcity of adequate housing.

Paragraph 495

Concern is expressed about the scale of the arrears in the payment of wages and pensions, depriving the people concerned of the means for survival.

Paragraph 500

The State party should evaluate its economic reform policies with respect to their impact on poverty, and make efforts to adjust its programmes in a manner consistent with safeguarding the economic, social and cultural rights of the most vulnerable segments of society. In this regard, attention is drawn to the Committee's Statement on poverty adopted on 4 May 2001.

Paragraph 506

The State party is called upon to ensure that employees are remunerated in a timely manner and that legislation on minimum wages is fully enforced.

- Nepal, ICESCR, E/2002/22 (2001) 83 at paras. 532, 539, 543, 550, 557, 565 and 576.

Paragraph 532

The Extent of poverty in the State party is of deep concern, particularly in rural areas where poverty and discrimination against women are most pronounced. In this regard, it is noted that the targets set by the Ninth Plan, which aim at the progressive reduction of the poverty rate from 42 per cent to 32 per cent, were not reached. Further, it is noted that the National Poverty Alleviation Commission has not yet been established.

Paragraph 539

It is of concern that the legal minimum wage is not sufficient to provide a decent standard of living for workers and their families, particularly in the agricultural sector.

Paragraph 543

It is noted with regret that 29 per cent of the population has no access to safe water, 90 per cent has no access to health services and 84 per cent has no access to sanitation.

Paragraph 550

The Committee is concerned that under the current national health plan for 1997-2017, the role of the State in the development of a national health care system, consistent with the structural adjustment

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programmes, is minimized. It is further noted that the mental health service is insufficient and that there is no community mental health programme available.

Paragraph 557

The Covenant should be taken into account in policies, programmes and projects on poverty alleviation. Further, the State party should establish the National Poverty Alleviation Commission. In this regard, the State party is referred to the Committee's Statement on Poverty adopted on 4 May 2001.

Paragraph 565

The minimum wage be determined on the basis of criteria for an adequate standard of living, especially for those working in the agricultural sector.

Paragraph 576

Projects involving privatization of water supply should provide for continued, assured and affordable access to water by local communities, indigenous people, and the most disadvantaged and marginalized groups of society.

- Germany, ICESCR, E/2002/22 (2001) 97 at paras. 659, 669, 674, 677 and 687.

Paragraph 659

Despite the great efforts made to narrow the gap between the new and the old Länder, considerable differences continue to exist, particularly in terms of generally lower standards of living, a higher unemployment rate, and lower wages for civil servants in the new Länder.

Paragraph 669

Concern is reiterated that the State party has not yet established a definition of poverty, nor a poverty threshold. Particular concern is expressed about the fact that social assistance provided to the poor and socially excluded, such as single parents, students and disabled pensioners, under the Federal Social Assistance Act, is not commensurate with an adequate standard of living.

Paragraph 674

Institutional arrangements within the public administration should be reviewed to ensure that its obligations under the Covenant are taken into account at an early stage in the formulation of legislation and policy on issues relating to social welfare and assistance, housing, health and education. The introduction of "human rights impact assessments", comparable to environmental impact assessments, is further encouraged to ensure that the provisions of the Covenant are given due attention in all legislative and administrative policy and decision-making processes.

Paragraph 677

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The State party is encouraged to continue undertaking measures to ensure that the differences between new and old Länder in terms of standard of living, employment and wages for civil servants are decreased.

Paragraph 687

A poverty threshold should be established taking into account the parameters used in the State party's first poverty and prosperity report, as well as international definitions of poverty, including the one adopted in the Committee's Statement on poverty and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights adopted by the Committee on 4 May 2001. In particular, social assistance provided under the Federal Social Assistance Act should be commensurate with an adequate standard of living.

CEDAW

- Zambia, CEDAW, A/49/38 (1994) 63 at para. 366.

It is recommended that, although structural adjustment programmes posed difficulties to the State party, women's issues should remain at centre stage even in times of economic distress. It is therefore recommended that women have access to budgetary and policy decision-making positions to mitigate some of the negative effects of the structural adjustment on women's lives.

- Peru, CEDAW, A/50/38 (1995) 79 at para. 441.

Women resorting to small-scale drug trafficking as a means of survival is of concern.

- Russian Federation, CEDAW, A/50/38 (1995) 99 at para. 549.

In the light of the serious consequences of the current economic restructuring during the period of transition, the Government should implement, as a matter of priority, emergency economic measures to alleviate the acute suffering of women.

- Guyana, CEDAW, A/50/38 (1995) 119 at para. 625.

A comprehensive approach to legal reform relating to the family should be pursued. Further assistance should be sought from international agencies or on a bilateral level to improve women's material

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situation in Guyana. In that context, priority should be assigned to enhancing women's economic situation.

- Ethiopia, CEDAW, A/51/38 (1996) 19 at para. 150.

The low representation of women at the higher decision-making levels is noted with concern. The effectiveness of programmes formulated and adopted with the involvement of women at those levels is doubtful. The efficiency of any measures to eradicate poverty as long as the percentage of women in Government remains as low as it is at present is also doubtful.

- Rwanda, CEDAW, A/51/38 (1996) 36 at paras. 320 and 322.

Paragraph 320

The extreme poverty that prevails, the decimated economy, the destruction of economic and social infrastructure and the lack of funding for medical assistance for the survivors of the war are of deep concern.

Paragraph 322

The international community, including all United Nations agencies and Governments, must give massive support for poverty alleviation and education programmes aimed at eliminating human rights violations and rehabilitating Rwanda.

- Israel, CEDAW, A/52/38/Rev.1 part II (1997) 87 at para. 161.

Concern is expressed over the fact that non-Jewish women had worse living conditions than Jewish women. They receive a lower level of education, participate less in the government service and occupy limited decision-making posts.

- Italy, CEDAW, A/52/38/Rev.1 part II (1997) 106 at para. 345.

The feminization of poverty, indicated by data showing that over 60 per cent of families headed by women were under the poverty line, constitutes a serious obstacle to the full implementation of the Convention.

- Azerbaijan, CEDAW, A/53/38/Rev.1 part I (1998) 7 at para. 60.

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The discrepancies that still exist between *de jure* and *de facto* equality, particularly in the context of the implementation of articles 10 and 11 of the Convention, and the great number of highly educated women who are living below the poverty line are noted with concern.

- Czech Republic, CEDAW, A/53/38/Rev.1 part I (1998) 16 at paras. 192 and 204.

Paragraph 192

Concern is expressed over the fact that prostitution and trafficking in women are approached exclusively in the context of combatting organized crime. These crimes are closely related to economic transition and socio-political changes. The adverse effects of such developments as rising unemployment and increasing poverty are acknowledged as factors contributing to prostitution and trafficking in women.

Paragraph 204

Effective policies should be formulated and implemented to combat prostitution and trafficking of women. Measures to combat these crimes should require not only services to victims and sanctions for perpetrators, but the design and implementation of comprehensive national social and economic policies to create new opportunities for women. Therefore, effective action should be taken to combat feminization of poverty and to improve the economic situation of women in order to prevent trafficking and prostitution.

- Bulgaria, CEDAW, A/53/38/Rev.1 part I (1998) 19 at paras. 240 and 257.

Paragraph 240

The overwhelming number of people living below the poverty line in Bulgaria, which the delegation states to be approximately 80 per cent is of concern, as women, and in particular elderly women, are most likely to be adversely affected by poverty.

Paragraph 257

Appropriate measures should be developed to address poverty amongst women, particularly the most vulnerable women, including elderly women, women with children and women with disabilities.

- Indonesia, CEDAW, A/53/38/Rev.1 part I (1998) 24 at paras. 299 and 302.

Paragraph 299

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The extent of unemployment amongst women, particularly those from female-headed households, in the light of the current economic crisis is of serious concern. The wage disparities between female and male workers, job-segregation in the workforce, with women disproportionately occupying low-skilled and low-paying jobs, as well as women's unequal access to social security, employment and health benefits are also of concern.

Paragraph 302

Appropriate measures should be taken to mitigate the negative impact that the current economic crisis may have on women in Indonesia, particularly in the areas of education, health and employment.

- Dominican Republic, CEDAW, A/53/38/Rev.1 part I (1998) 28 at paras. 333, 341 and 343.

Paragraph 333

The economic consequences of women's poverty are of deep concern. Women's migration to urban areas and to foreign countries render them susceptible to sexual exploitation, including trafficking and sex tourism, and prostitution. The lack of creation of jobs for women in growth sectors, including in the tourism industry, contributes to the high percentage of women migrating abroad in search of work. Notwithstanding the high level of poverty among women, and especially of women-headed households, concern is expressed over the fact that no affirmative action measures are being taken to support women's efforts to break the cycle of poverty.

Paragraph 341

The Government is urged to make women a priority in its poverty eradication strategy. Particular emphasis should be placed on the mainstreaming of a gender perspective in all poverty eradication efforts and measures should be taken to ensure to women the enjoyment of their rights in such efforts.

Paragraph 343

The Government should continue to give attention to women heads of households and to conduct further research into their situation with a view to developing sound and effective policies on strengthening their socio-economic situation and the prevention of poverty and to ensure that needed services and support are provided to such households.

- Mexico, CEDAW, A/53/38/Rev.1 part I (1998) 32 at para. 403.

Efforts should be continued to reduce poverty among rural women, particularly indigenous women, and to work together with non-governmental organizations, making special efforts to promote

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education, employment and health programmes conducive to the integration of women into the development process, both as beneficiaries and as protagonists.

- South Africa, CEDAW, A/53/38/Rev.1 part II (1998) 58 at para. 135.

Vulnerable groups of women, especially rural women, require specific measures to empower them to overcome the constraints of poverty, low levels of education and literacy, high unemployment and high fertility rates. The need for rural women's participation in land reform programmes is noted.

- Kyrgyzstan, CEDAW, A/54/38/Rev.1 part I (1999) 15 at paras. 111, 123, 130, 132 and 134

Paragraph 111

The prevailing conditions of poverty and unemployment as well as the negative effects of rapid social and political change on women are major impediments to the implementation of the Convention.

Paragraph 123

The enhancement of comprehensive measures to prevent violence and to support women victims, including gender-sensitization and the training of law enforcement officials is recommended. The introduction of measures aimed at improving the economic status of women, including retraining for income-generating occupations is also recommended, in light of the linkage of violence with poverty.

Paragraph 130

Domestic measures should be launched to combat the negative effects of structural adjustment programmes on women and to provide job opportunities and training to vulnerable women.

Paragraph 132

The gender dimension of poverty should be considered in the design and implementation of all policies and programmes aimed at the elimination of poverty.

Paragraph 134

The introduction of comprehensive measures aimed at the improvement of women's economic status, particularly through a review of the taxation legislation relating to small businesses and the expansion of micro-credit programmes involving commercial and agricultural banks in order to ensure gainful and secure employment for women, is recommended. Steps should be taken to integrate women into all sectors of the national economy.

- Liechtenstein, CEDAW, A/54/38/Rev.1 part I (1999) 18 at para. 169.

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The Government is urged to institute measures to prevent single mothers from facing the financial and social risks of poverty.

- Colombia, CEDAW, A/54/38/Rev.1 part I (1999) 33 at paras. 368 and 380.

Paragraph 368

In the allocation of budgetary resources, priority should be given to the needs of women, especially women of limited means, including access to employment, education and public services, since social investment in women constitutes one of the most effective means of combatting poverty and promoting sustainable development.

Paragraph 380

The needs of street children, especially girls, should be integrated systematically into all poverty-eradication, social-development and anti-violence plans and programmes.

- United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, CEDAW, A/54/38/Rev.1 part II (1999) 71 at para. 315.

The situation of older women should be addressed in a cross-cutting and cross-sectoral manner, with a view to ensuring adequate provision for their physical, mental, economic and social well-being.

- India, CEDAW, A/55/38 part I (2000) 7 at paras. 51, 52, 82 and 83.

Paragraph 51

India has a very large and mainly rural population living in absolute poverty, and the feminization of poverty and growing income disparities prevent the benefits of economic development being transferred to women.

Paragraph 52

Widespread poverty, social practices such as the caste system and son preference, as reflected in a high incidence of violence against women, significant gender disparities and an adverse sex ratio, present major obstacles to the implementation of the Convention.

Paragraph 82

Significant disparities in economic activity rates for men and women are of concern. The practice of debt bondage and the denial of inheritance rights in land result in gross exploitation of women's labour and their impoverishment.

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Paragraph 83

The Government should enforce laws on bonded labour and provide women with self-employment opportunities and minimum wages in home-based production and the non-formal sector. The Government is called upon to review laws on inheritance urgently and to ensure that rural women obtain access to land and credit.

- Jordan, CEDAW, A/55/38 part I (2000) 16 at para. 165.

The country's current socio-economic situation, including the doubling of the population, owing largely to refugee influx, and the scarcity of natural resources, affects the full implementation of the Convention.

- Democratic Republic of the Congo, CEDAW, A/55/38 part I (2000) 21 at para. 209.

One of the main obstacles to the full implementation of the Convention is the current war. The State party has been facing economic, social and political problems related to the war, which have had a negative impact on the whole population, particularly on girls and women, who are often victims of rape and gender-based violence, and on most refugees and displaced persons, who are experiencing great hardship. The situation is also being aggravated by growing inflation, which has eroded the quality of life of millions of women who do not have enough resources to survive.

- Burkina Faso, CEDAW, A/55/38 part I (2000) 25 at paras. 263 and 276.

Paragraph 263

It is noted that the economic difficulties, resulting mainly from the scarcity of State resources and the discriminatory customary and traditional practices, which are still a heavy burden for the women of Burkina Faso, exacerbate the very high illiteracy rate in Burkina Faso and therefore hinder the implementation of the Convention.

Paragraph 276

The access of women to primary health services and drinking water should be facilitated.

- Belarus, CEDAW, A/55/38 part I (2000) 34 at paras. 351, 354, 365-368 and 372.

Paragraph 351

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The Government is commended for recognizing the difficult economic situation women face in Belarus, in particular with regard to women's employment and the incidence of poverty among women. The efforts undertaken by the Government to alleviate the situation are also commended.

Paragraph 354

The negative effects of the ongoing transition of the country to a market-based economy and the resulting levels of women's unemployment and poverty are considered major impediments to the full implementation of the Convention.

Paragraph 365

Concern is expressed at the economic situation of women, which is characterized by poverty and unemployment, displacement of women from the labour market and even from sectors previously dominated by women. Re-employed women hold positions below their levels of education and skills. Concern is also expressed over the fact that women are employed predominantly in low paying jobs and that a wage gap between women and men persists. The economic situation of particularly vulnerable groups of women, such as those with sole responsibility for families, older women and women with disabilities, is an additional matter of concern.

Paragraph 366

The Government is urged to establish a legislative basis that ensures women equal access to the labour market and equal opportunities to work and to create protection against direct and indirect discrimination with regard to access and opportunities. The Government should implement unemployment policies targeted at women. In particular, measures to facilitate women's entry into growth sectors of the economy, rather than into traditionally female-dominated employment, are recommended. The Government should support women's entrepreneurship through the creation of a conducive legislative and regulatory environment and access to loans and credit.

Paragraph 367

That poverty is widespread among women is of concern.

Paragraph 368

The Government should collect data and information on women living in poverty, disaggregated by age and according to urban and rural areas, develop targeted policies and support services, and make efforts to prevent more women from falling below the poverty line.

Paragraph 372

The Government is encouraged to increase its efforts, including through international and cross-border cooperation with recipient and transit countries, to prevent trafficking in women, attack its root causes through poverty alleviation and assist its victims through efforts of counselling and reintegration.

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See also:

- Mongolia, CEDAW, A/56/38 part I (2001) 26 at paras. 251 and 252.
- Cameroon, CEDAW, A/55/38 part II (2000) 53 at paras. 44, 47, 48, 51, 52, 61 and 62.

Paragraph 44

It is recognized that implementation of the structural adjustment programme, coupled with privatization, especially in the health and education sectors, poses serious challenges to the full implementation of the Convention.

Paragraph 47

The inadequate allocation of resources for the advancement of women, with the resultant incomplete execution of programmes and projects, seriously jeopardizes the improvement of women's living conditions.

Paragraph 48

Sufficient resources should be allocated for targeted programmes to promote the advancement of women.

Paragraph 51

It is of concern that because of the increased feminization of poverty, more women and girls are entering prostitution and are thereby exposed to exploitation.

Paragraph 52

Poverty alleviation programmes should be designed and implemented so that women and girls do not have to resort to prostitution for their livelihoods.

Paragraph 61

It is of concern that, despite the important role of rural women in Cameroon and despite the Government's efforts to provide them with education and extension services, these women are disadvantaged and living in difficult circumstances.

Paragraph 62

The Government should pay the utmost attention to the needs of rural women and should ensure that they benefit from the policies and programmes adopted in all areas. It should also ensure that rural women are able to participate, on an equal basis, in the adoption of decisions to guarantee them access to literacy, health services, drinking water and credit.

- Republic of Moldova, CEDAW, A/55/38 part II (2000) 56 at paras. 90 and 104.

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Paragraph 90

The country's ongoing political and economic change and the resulting high level of women's poverty are considered to be major impediments to the full implementation of the Convention.

Paragraph 104

The Government should implement a holistic approach to combat trafficking in women for commercial or sexual purposes. This should include a legislative framework to prosecute and punish traffickers, preventive measures aimed at improving women's economic situation so as to reduce their economic vulnerabilities, and measures to rehabilitate and reintegrate trafficked women where necessary.

- Lithuania, CEDAW, A/55/38 part II (2000) 61 at paras. 137, 146, 147, 160 and 161.

Paragraph 137

The political and economic transition in the last decade has posed serious challenges to the effective implementation of the Convention, as women have been disproportionately affected by the restructuring processes.

Paragraph 146

The increase of poverty among various groups of women, in particular of female-headed households, is a matter of concern.

Paragraph 147

The Government should closely monitor the poverty situation of women of various groups, including those of various ages, and should implement effective poverty alleviation programmes.

Paragraph 160

The Government does not have enough information on the situation of rural women, especially older rural women, as concerns their cash income, health situation, access to free health care services and social and cultural opportunities.

Paragraph 161

The Government should monitor existing programmes and develop additional policies and programmes aimed at the economic empowerment of rural women, ensuring their access to productive resources and capital as well as to health care services and to social and cultural opportunities.

- Iraq, CEDAW, A/55/38 part II (2000) 66 at paras. 178 and 200-202.

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Paragraph 178

The effects of sanctions and embargo are reflected in the difficult economic and social situation prevailing in the country, which has had repercussions on the advancement of women and on their socio-economic well-being. The situation impedes the full implementation of the Convention. Notwithstanding difficulties, the State party remains responsible for implementing its obligations under the Convention in order to ensure elimination of discrimination against women with respect to the rights contained in the Convention.

Paragraph 200

The Government should ensure that women do not bear a disproportionate portion of the economic difficulties facing the country. In particular, non-discriminatory labour legislation should be put in place and be effectively enforced.

Paragraph 201

The fact that sanctions have had a negative impact on women and children in areas such as health care, nutrition, employment and other basic social services, is recognized. Nevertheless, concern is expressed at the failure of the Government to put in place specific and targeted measures to address these problems.

Paragraph 202

The Government should assess the differential impact of sanctions on women and children, especially on particularly vulnerable groups of women, and should put in place measures aimed at countering such a negative impact. In that regard, the Government should use resources available from programmes such as the oil-for-food programme in a manner that directly benefits women, including through diverting resources currently allocated for other purposes.

- Austria, CEDAW, A/55/38 part II (2000) 70 at paras. 227 and 236.

Paragraph 227

The situation of migrant women is of concern. Work permits should be attained by migrant women on an equal basis with migrant men and the conditions needed for their integration into the economic and social life of Austrian society should be established.

Paragraph 236

Concern is expressed over the situation of single women and, in particular, the disadvantages suffered by never-married and divorced elderly women in terms of retirement pensions and social security benefits. Current social trends should be taken into consideration when designing policies so as to meet the needs of the increasing number of single women in the country.

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- Cuba, CEDAW, A/55/38 part II (2000) 73 at paras. 256, 260 and 266-270.

Paragraph 256

The improvements in women's socio-economic situation as a result of the country's sustained economic recovery in recent years are welcomed.

Paragraph 260

The ongoing economic blockade and its particular effects on women and on the full implementation of the Convention is noted. These effects are compounded by the fact that women remain primarily responsible for household work and are clustered in professions that are seriously affected by the blockade.

Paragraph 266

Programmes for women's economic independence should be expanded in such a manner as to attack the causes of prostitution and to eradicate the need for women to enter into prostitution.

Paragraph 267

While the introduction of the option of divorce by consent constitutes a viable alternative to a court-supervised divorce, it may involve inherent risks of disadvantage for women.

Paragraph 268

The implementation of divorce by consent should be monitored carefully, and in particular any negative impact this option might have for women with regard to issues such as alimony payments, custody and maintenance of children and distribution of property.

Paragraph 269

While recognizing the increase since 1996 in women's employment rate in the civil-State sector, it remains of concern that women make up a higher percentage of the unemployed and that obstacles to their full integration in all sectors of the labour market persist, in particular in the joint venture and tourism industries.

Paragraph 270

Temporary special measures targeted at women should be implemented to reduce the level of unemployment and of disparities in access to some sectors of the labour market. Such measures should ensure that women benefit equally from the country's economic recovery. Efforts should be increased to create new opportunities for women in non-traditional and high-growth areas, including in new information and communications areas and in the service sector, and to strengthen efforts to ensure that they can take full advantage of the mixed economy, in accordance with their high levels of education and skills.

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- Romania, CEDAW, A/55/38 part II (2000) 77 at paras. 309, 312, 313, 316 and 317.

Paragraph 309

Further steps should be urgently taken to prevent and eliminate trafficking in women, especially through a firm anchoring of this crime in legislation. The State party should also focus on the causes of trafficking through measures aimed at poverty alleviation and women's economic empowerment. The Government is encouraged to assist victims through counselling and reintegration.

Paragraph 312

The situation of women in the labour market, especially women's higher unemployment rates, the decrease in women's share in the economically active population and the concentration of women particularly in low-paid occupational areas and sectors, are matters of concern. Concern is also expressed over the high percentage of women working as unpaid family workers, especially in rural areas.

Paragraph 313

The Government's labour market and employment policies should explicitly address the situation of women workers in order to ensure that women do not carry a disproportionate share of the burden of the transition to a market-based economy. Urgent targeted measures should be put in place to facilitate women's entry into new growth sectors of the economy, including women's entrepreneurship, and to ensure that women's health and retirement benefits are protected. The Government is encouraged to ensure that women can take full advantage of jobs created by foreign investment, ensuring non-discriminatory protection of their rights. The Government should adopt, as a matter of priority, a forward-looking equal opportunities law that extends to the private sector and includes the creation of a specific office of ombudsman for equal opportunities for women, with powers to receive complaints of violations of the laws on equal opportunities and to investigate discriminatory situations experienced by women.

Paragraph 316

The growing number of elderly women living in poverty is of concern.

Paragraph 317

While the adoption of the law on pensions and the law on assistance for the elderly is appreciated, the proposed Social Security Code, which will include social assistance for persons without pension benefits, mostly elderly women in need, should be adopted.

- Burundi, CEDAW, A/56/38 part I (2001) 7 at paras. 52 and 53.

Paragraph 52

Concern is expressed over the situation of displaced women and girls and their living conditions,

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including in refugee camps.

Paragraph 53

Greater assistance should be given to refugee and displaced women and girls and rehabilitative efforts should be carried out that are directed at these women and girls.

- Kazakhstan, CEDAW, A/56/38 part I (2001) 10 at paras. 101-104.

Paragraph 101

The situation of women in the labour market is of concern, in particular the high level of women's unemployment and discrimination in recruitment and dismissal. It is also of concern that the present structuring of the social benefits system and the protective labour legislation might create additional obstacles to the employment of women in the labour market, especially in the process of transition to a market economy.

Paragraph 102

The State party is urged to enforce appropriate legislation and to ensure equal opportunities for women and men in the public and private sectors of the labour market. The structuring of the social benefits system and of protective legislation should be reviewed with a view to reducing the barriers against the participation of women in the labour market. Also, training and retraining programmes should be designed and implemented for different groups of unemployed women according to their percentage of the unemployed population and their skills and education. Wage increases in female-dominated sectors are further recommended, in order to decrease the wage differentials between those and male-dominated sectors.

Paragraph 103

Concern is expressed over the high increase in poverty among women compared with men, in particular among households headed by females and older rural women.

Paragraph 104

The specific targeting of poor women and, particularly those who are heads of household and older and rural women, with poverty alleviation programmes is recommended.

- Uzbekistan, CEDAW, A/56/38 part I (2001) 18 at paras. 165, 189 and 190.

Paragraph 165

The negative effects of the ongoing economic and political transformation as well as the ecological degradation in the country are considered major impediments to the full implementation of the Convention.

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Paragraph 189

Concern is expressed over the situation of rural women, who comprise 60 per cent of all women in Uzbekistan, including their access to health-care services, education and income-generating activities.

Paragraph 190

Attention should be paid to the specific situation of rural women and special strategies, policies and programmes should be developed that are aimed at the economic empowerment of rural women, ensuring their access to capital and productive resources, as well as to health care services and educational and social opportunities.

See also:

- Kazakhstan, CEDAW, A/56/38 part I (2001) at paras. 109 and 110.

- Jamaica, CEDAW, A/56/38 part I (2001) 22 at paras. 227 and 228.

Paragraph 227

The high incidence of poverty among various groups of women, in particular in households headed by females, is of concern. Those households have been negatively affected by structural adjustment programmes and the changing global situation.

Paragraph 228

The Government should ensure that its policies to eradicate poverty are continuous and do not further marginalize women.

- Mongolia, CEDAW, A/56/38 part I (2001) 26 at paras. 248-250 and 269.

Paragraph 248

The negative effects of the country's ongoing transition to a market economy are considered major impediments to the full implementation of the Convention.

Paragraph 249

The deteriorating situation of women in Mongolia in a period of economic transformation is noted with deep concern. The fact that the Government has failed to prevent the erosion of women's rights to economic advancement, health, education, political participation and personal security is of particular concern.

Paragraph 250

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The Government should protect and promote women's human rights and utilize the development and technical resources available as well as the human resources of the country, including civil society and women's groups, so as to reverse this trend.

Paragraph 269

Concern is expressed over the fact that the responsibility of family and childcare is placed exclusively on women, particularly as the population policy encourages women to have large families. This situation encourages their marginalization in the economy and exacerbates poverty.

- Guyana, CEDAW, A/56/38 part II (2001) 60 at paras. 161, 176 and 177.

Paragraph 161

It is recognized that the implementation of structural adjustment programmes and the increasing debt burden, as well as political instability, have impeded progress in the full realization of women's rights.

Paragraph 176

While the negative effects of structural adjustment programmes on certain groups of women are recognized, there is concern about the high incidence of poverty among women.

Paragraph 177

The Government should ensure that governmental policies to eradicate poverty are continuous and do not further marginalize women.

- Viet Nam, CEDAW, A/56/38 part II (2001) 68 at paras. 246, 248 and 261.

Paragraph 246

The Government is commended for its allocation of resources to achieve economic growth with social equity, thus creating an enabling environment for the implementation of the Convention. The progress achieved and the relatively high ranking of the State party in the UNDP human development index and gender development index is noted. The measures of the Government to eliminate poverty are also noted with appreciation.

Paragraph 248

The country's ongoing economic transformation is considered to pose special challenges to the realization of gender equality - in particular in the areas of women's employment and education of girls and young women - which can undermine the progress achieved in realizing equality between women and men. The Government's social development programme is also considered to be hampered by the 1997 economic crisis in Asia. Continuing poverty poses a significant obstacle to the implementation of the Convention.

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Paragraph 261

Measures aimed at improving the economic situation of women should be adopted in order to reduce their economic vulnerability to traffickers, and comprehensive rehabilitative programmes should be created for women and girls who have been subject to such trafficking.

See also:

- Kazakhstan, CEDAW, A/56/38 part I (2001) 10 at para. 98.
- Nicaragua, CEDAW, A/56/38 part II (2001) 72 at paras. 293, 296 and 297.

Paragraph 293

The high level of poverty in Nicaragua, aggravated by natural disasters, poses a serious obstacle to the implementation of the Convention and women's full enjoyment of their rights.

Paragraph 296

The high incidence of poverty among women is of concern, particularly in rural women and households headed by women.

Paragraph 297

The Government is urged to give priority attention to rural women and women heads of household, including in the allocation of budgetary resources, and to monitor research into their situation, with a view to developing effective policies and programmes to strengthen their socio-economic situation and ensuring that they receive needed services and support. It is emphasized that social investment in women not only ensures their enjoyment of the human rights outlined in the Convention, but also constitutes one of the most effective means of combating poverty and promoting sustainable development.

CAT

- Guatemala, CAT, A/51/44 (1996) 11 at para. 51.

Wide disparity in the distribution of economic wealth creates conditions that may lead to confrontations between the law enforcement organs and those parts of the population which are at the lowest end of the economic and social scale. In this respect, the individual recourse procedure provided for under article 22 of the Convention would constitute a useful preventive

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measure once it has been accepted by the Government.

CRC

- Russian Federation, CRC, CRC/C/16 (1993) 21 at para. 76.

The effects of economic crisis on children are of concern. In this connection, the Committee is particularly concerned as to whether adequate and appropriate measures are being taken to protect children from being the victims of economic reform in the light of articles 3 and 4 of the Convention.

- Peru, CRC, CRC/C/20 (1993) 16 at paras. 60, 64 and 73.

Paragraph 60

Economic factors, including a high level of external debt, have adversely affected the situation of children.

Paragraph 64

The Committee expresses its concern that stringent budgetary measures amounting to decreases in the resources allocated for social expenditures have entailed high social costs and have adversely affected the rights of the child in Peru. Vulnerable groups of children, including children living in areas affected by the internal violence, displaced children, orphans, disabled children, children living in poverty and children living in institutions are particularly disadvantaged in their access to adequate health and educational facilities and are the primary victims of various forms of exploitation, such as child prostitution. Furthermore, the long-term considerations embodied in the structural adjustment policies have not adequately taken into account the specific needs of the children and, accordingly, dramatic cuts have been made in many social expenditures in recent years, to the detriment of children. In this respect, the Committee notes with concern that 47 per cent of the National Plan of Action for Children remains to be financed.

Paragraph 73

All the necessary steps should be taken to minimize the negative impact of the structural adjustment policies on the situation of children. The authorities should undertake all appropriate measures to the maximum extent of their available resources to ensure that sufficient resources are allocated to children. In that regard, particular attention should be paid to the protection of children living in areas affected by internal violence, displaced children, disabled children, children living in poverty and children living in institutions. It is recognized that international assistance will also be needed to address more effectively the challenge of improving the

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situation of these children.

- Costa Rica, CRC, CRC/C/20 (1993) 25 at paras. 127 and 129.

Paragraph 127

Due to economic factors, including pressures resulting from external debt, there has been a restructuring of the Government's budget with the result that fewer resources have been available for social welfare programmes.

Paragraph 129

The impact of economic adjustment policies is of concern. With the cuts in allocations in the social sector, the basic welfare of the children who are most vulnerable, such as abandoned children, children living in extreme poverty and children of disadvantaged groups, may not be adequately protected. As a consequence, many of Costa Rica's past achievements in the areas of health, education, welfare and social stability would appear to be seriously threatened.

- Colombia (preliminary), CRC, CRC/C/24 (1994) 18 at para. 74.

The large proportion of Colombian children who continue to live in extreme poverty despite the fact that Colombia has one of the most favourable economic growth rates and one of the lowest amounts of per capita foreign indebtedness in the region is of grave concern. Many children in Colombia, including a large proportion of rural and indigenous children, have been economically and socially marginalized and have limited or no access to adequate education or health care services.

- Romania, CRC, CRC/C/24 (1994) 21 at para. 94.

The Government should regularly monitor the impact of the structural adjustment programmes on children and take adequate measures for their protection.

- Burkina Faso, CRC, CRC/C/29 (1994) 15 at para. 66.

The negative effects of poverty and structural adjustments on the situation of children, as illustrated by the high rate of infant mortality, malnutrition, as well as the low level of health services and school attendance are of concern.

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- France, CRC, CRC/C/29 (1994) 17 at para. 91.

The need to establish sufficient safeguards against the possible negative social impact of decentralization, for instance, in order to avoid the risk of aggravated disparities between the regions, in regard to the standard of living, and to minimize the possible adverse effects on the enjoyment of economic and social rights by children, especially those belonging to the most vulnerable groups is of concern.

- Philippines, CRC, CRC/C/38 (1995) 12 at para. 58.

The unequal distribution of the national wealth in the country and the disparities in the enjoyment of children's rights, to the detriment of poor urban children, children living in rural areas and children belonging to minorities (or "cultural" communities) are of concern.

- Poland, CRC, CRC/C/38 (1995) 20 at para. 127.

Consideration should be given to the adoption of a National Plan of Action in the field of the rights of the child and that specific programmes should be developed which aim at protecting children and at ensuring that safety nets are established to prevent a deterioration of their rights in the context of economic transition.

- Jamaica, CRC, CRC/C/38 (1995) 25 at para. 158.

All appropriate efforts should be undertaken to ensure, to the maximum extent of available resources and within the framework of international cooperation, that sufficient resources are allocated to children. In this regard, due attention should be given to the needs of particularly vulnerable and poverty-stricken children so as to provide adequate safety nets for such children and their families in order to avoid a further deterioration of their rights.

- Canada, CRC, CRC/C/43 (1995) 16 at para. 80.

The emerging problem of child poverty, especially among vulnerable groups and the increasing number of children who are brought up by single parent families, or in other problematic environments is of concern. The need for special programmes and services to provide the necessary care, especially in terms of education, housing and nutrition, for such children is emphasized.

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- Germany, CRC, CRC/C/46 (1995) 15 at paras. 96 and 109.

Paragraph 96

The goals of equalizing living conditions and establishing comparable structures for child and youth services throughout the country remain to be accomplished. The prevailing disparities in living standards and in the quality of services between the different Länder and about the difficulties faced by particularly vulnerable groups in society, such as children born out of wedlock and single-parent families are of concern.

Paragraph 109

Greater priority should be given to an analysis of the occurrence of child poverty. Such an analysis should be undertaken from a holistic perspective, taking into account the possible linkages between such matters as housing conditions, family support to the child at home and in school, and the risk of dropping out of school. The results of this research could serve as a vehicle for discussion of these matters both in Parliament and with the relevant authorities as well as for the development of a more comprehensive and integrated approach for responding to the problems identified.

- Senegal, CRC, CRC/C/46 (1995) 21 at para. 137.

Particular attention should be paid to the need to ensure budget allocations, to the maximum extent of available resources, to implement economic, social and cultural rights in the light of the principles of non-discrimination and the best interest of the child. Efforts should be pursued to reduce the negative impact on children of policies of structural adjustment.

- Mongolia, CRC, CRC/C/50 (1996) 13 at paras. 56 and 57.

Paragraph 56

The difficulties facing Mongolia in the present period of political transition, social change and deep economic crisis are noted. The situation of many children has worsened as a consequence of growing poverty and increasing unemployment. The geographical and climatological particularities of the State party can, to some extent, affect the daily life of children.

Paragraph 57

The impact on children of the difficult economic situation prevailing in the country is worrisome. Concern is expressed as to whether appropriate measures have been undertaken to protect children, particularly those belonging to the most vulnerable groups, in the light of articles 3 and 4 of the Convention.

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- Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro), CRC, CRC/C/50 (1996) 17 at para. 84.

The consequences of the war on the territory of the former Yugoslavia, combined with the realities of sanctions seem to have led to a worsening of the indicators of the health and education situation of the children of the Federal Republic, including lower immunization coverage, more nutrition-related disorders and illnesses, and an increase in the number of children suffering from mild and serious mental disorders. The sanctions against the Federal Republic may have led to the isolation of professionals dealing with the rights of the child.

- Republic of Korea, CRC, CRC/C/50 (1996) 26 at paras. 156 and 176.

Paragraph 156

The efforts to secure rapid economic growth have not always been matched by an appropriate level of realization of economic, social and cultural rights, in particular in relation to children belonging to the most disadvantaged groups affected by growing poverty. The fact that the country has only recently emerged from a period of military rule has had a negative impact on the enjoyment of the fundamental rights and freedoms of children.

Paragraph 176

The State party is encouraged to adopt further measures to provide assistance for the family to ensure its responsibilities in the upbringing and development of the child, in particular in the light of articles 18 and 27 of the Convention. Special attention should be paid to the prevention of child abandonment, as well as to the prevention of, and appropriate assistance to, child-headed families.

- Croatia, CRC, CRC/C/50 (1996) 31 at para. 195.

Concern is expressed about the impact on children of economic difficulties resulting from the transition to a market economy. The privatization of some social services, which might affect the most vulnerable groups of children, is worrisome.

- Finland, CRC, CRC/C/50 (1996) 35 at paras. 218 and 219.

Paragraph 218

The difficulties facing Finland in the present period of structural change and economic recession are noted. Decentralization and privatization policies, severe unemployment and State budgetary cuts have undoubtedly affected Finnish children, particularly the most vulnerable groups.

Paragraph 219

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The impact of the difficult economic situation prevailing in the country on children, which has resulted in budgetary cuts, and the existing trend towards decentralization and privatization are worrisome. In this connection, it is particularly of concern whether appropriate measures have been undertaken to protect children, particularly those belonging to the most vulnerable groups, in the light of articles 3 and 4 of the Convention.

- Nepal, CRC, CRC/C/54 (1996) 25 at paras. 158 and 179.

Paragraph 158

Nepal is one of the poorest countries of the world. More than half the population lives in absolute poverty, which mainly affects the most vulnerable groups and hampers the enjoyment of children's rights. This reality, added to the foreign debt and debt servicing, represents serious difficulties affecting the degree of fulfilment of the Government's obligations under the Convention.

Paragraph 179

Particular attention should be paid to the need to ensure budget allocations, to the maximum extent of available resources, to implement economic, social and cultural rights in the light of the principles of non-discrimination and the best interests of the child. International cooperation resources should be channelled towards the realization of children's rights and efforts should be pursued to reduce the negative impact of foreign debt and debt servicing on children.

- Guatemala, CRC, CRC/C/54 (1996) 31 at paras. 199 and 206.

Paragraph 199

As recognized by the State party, the root causes of the armed conflict need to be tackled, embedded as they are in socio-economic disparities and uneven land distribution as well as in historical social contrasts within the country. High levels of poverty and illiteracy and discrimination against the indigenous population and those living in poverty contribute to widespread violations of human rights.

Paragraph 206

In view of the historical disparities affecting indigenous children and children belonging to groups living below the poverty line, as well as girls, the Committee is concerned about the adequacy of measures to ensure the effective implementation of the economic, social and cultural rights of children at the national, regional and local levels, in the light of articles 2, 3 and 4 of the Convention.

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- Nigeria, CRC, CRC/C/57 (1996) 12 at paras. 63, 70 and 86.

Paragraph 63

Concern is expressed over the impact of economic policy, as it is presently designed and pursued, which may have led the Government to resort, on a more regular basis, to temporary *ad hoc* funding measures to cover significant shortfalls in income for the realization of particular programmatic objectives. The gap between the country's gross national product and the insufficiency of resources being made available for the implementation of the rights of the child, in particular in the areas of primary health care, primary education and other social services, as well as the protection of the most disadvantaged groups of children is also of concern. Equally, the effectiveness of measures presently in place to give priority to projects for the implementation of the rights of the child, as well as to reduce any disparities between and within regions as regards the availability of resources for the realization of such projects is a cause of concern.

Paragraph 70

In view of the considerable incidence of poverty and the insufficiency of the minimum wage in meeting basic needs, serious concern is expressed over the absence of social support to families, including single-parent families, especially female-headed households

Paragraph 86

The general lack of financial resources cannot be used as a justification for neglecting to establish social security programmes and social safety nets to protect the most vulnerable groups of children. Accordingly, a serious review should be undertaken to determine the consistency of the economic and social policies being developed with the State party's obligations under the Convention, in particular articles 26 and 27, especially with respect to the establishment or improvement of social security programmes and other social protection.

- Panama, CRC, CRC/C/62 (1997) 19 at para. 111.

The insufficient budgetary allocation at all levels for social expenditures, in particular in favour of children belonging to the most disadvantaged groups of the population is of concern. The trend towards the perpetuation of poverty amongst marginalized groups of children in Panama, where 25 per cent of families live in poverty and 20 per cent live in extreme poverty is of great concern. Despite the efforts made in the health and housing sectors, the situation is still precarious.

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- Azerbaijan, CRC, CRC/C/66 (1997) 41 at paras. 281 and 302.

Paragraph 281

The inadequate support given to families living below the poverty line as well as to single-parent families is of concern.

Paragraph 302

New and creative policies and programmes should be considered to adequately support vulnerable families, particularly those living in poverty, or single-parent families.

- Lao People's Democratic Republic, CRC, CRC/C/69 (1997) 8 at paras. 52 and 76.

Paragraph 52

The shortage of physical and psychological rehabilitation programmes and services for unexploded ordnance victims is of concern. The problem of the toxic chemical contamination of soil and water, particularly in the six southern provinces, is also a matter of concern.

Paragraph 76

Long-term external financial assistance is strongly encouraged in order to build national capacity with regard to Unexploded Ordnance (UXO), to establish a sustainable clearing process in each area, to provide continual community awareness programmes, through schools, pagodas and local organizations, and to develop rehabilitation programmes. A study should be undertaken on the effects on children of toxic chemical contamination of soils and water as a result of the armed conflict, and studies on this matter undertaken in neighbouring countries should be consulted.

- Australia, CRC, CRC/C/69 (1997) 16 at para. 95.

The special problems still faced by Aboriginals and Torres Strait Islanders, as well as by children of non-English-speaking backgrounds, with regard to their enjoyment of the same standards of living and levels of services, particularly in education and health are of concern.

- Uganda, CRC, CRC/C/69 (1997) 21 at para. 134.

The high infant and child mortality rates due to poor water supply, hygiene and sanitation practices and endemic malnutrition are of concern.

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- Trinidad and Tobago, CRC, CRC/C/69 (1997) 33 at para. 237.

Poverty alleviation programmes and schemes should be further increased, and the social welfare system should be further strengthened.

- Ireland, CRC, CRC/C/73 (1998) 14 at paras. 83 and 96.

Paragraph 83

The incidence of child poverty and child homelessness is of particular concern. It is encouraged that measures and programmes for the protection of the rights of the most vulnerable children be strengthened.

Paragraph 96

Efforts should be strengthened to ensure that children from vulnerable and disadvantaged groups, including children belonging to the Traveller community, children living in poverty and refugee children, benefit from positive measures aimed at facilitating access to education, housing and health services.

- Hungary, CRC, CRC/C/79 (1998) 7 at para. 52.

It is emphasized that there is a need for immediate steps to be taken in order to address the problem of child poverty and every feasible effort should be made to ensure that all families, particularly single-parent families and Roma families, have adequate resources and facilities. Furthermore, it is recommended that the local governments be encouraged to generate local income for funding social services, in particular for the protection and promotion of children's rights.

- Democratic People's Republic of Korea, CRC, CRC/C/79 (1998) 13 at para. 95.

Particular attention should be given to the impact of environmental pollution on children and a study should be undertaken on this subject. International cooperation in this field should be considered.

- Ecuador, CRC, CRC/C/80 (1998) 9 at paras. 45 and 48.

Paragraph 45

The prevalence of malnutrition, high rates of maternal mortality and the limited access to health

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services in remote rural areas are of concern. The appropriate resources should be allocated and technical assistance should be considered, when needed, to reinforce the State party's efforts to make basic health-care accessible to all children. Concerted efforts are required to combat malnutrition and ensure the adoption and implementation of a national nutritional policy for children. International cooperation for the establishment of programmes such as the WHO/UNICEF "Integrated Management of Childhood Illness" is recommended. In addition, breastfeeding should be promoted in all health facilities and among the public at large.

Paragraph 48

Concern is expressed over widespread poverty and deteriorating living conditions. Comprehensive measures should be taken to establish poverty alleviation programmes with special emphasis on the access to health-care and education of children, in particular the most vulnerable groups of children.

- Bolivia, CRC, CRC/C/80 (1998) 22 at paras. 96, 102 and 104.

Paragraph 96

The persistence of large disparities in income distribution is noted. This problem, which has contributed to long-term hard-core poverty, is still affecting children's exercise of their rights.

Paragraph 102

The State party should continue taking all appropriate measures to the maximum extent of available resources, including international cooperation, to ensure that sufficient budgetary allocations are provided to social services for children and particular attention should be paid to the protection of children belonging to vulnerable and marginalized groups. Children's rights should be taken into consideration in the designing of social policies and programmes. Furthermore, the continuation of efforts to reduce the burden of the State party's external debt, including the measures taken within the framework of the World Bank/ International Monetary Fund's initiative "Highly Indebted Poor Countries" is encouraged.

Paragraph 104

The growing disparities between rural and urban areas, as well as the growing number of the population living in urban poor and marginalized areas, are of concern. Furthermore, the predominance of discrimination on the basis of ethnic origin, gender, social status and disabilities is also a major concern. Measures should be increased to reduce economic and social disparities, including between rural and urban areas, to prevent discrimination against the most disadvantaged groups of children, such as children belonging to indigenous communities, girl children, children with disabilities, children born out of wedlock and children who are living and/or working on the streets.

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- Austria, CRC, CRC/C/84 (1999) 7 at paras. 40 and 52.

Paragraph 40

Consideration should be given to allocating a fixed percentage of the international development cooperation funds to programmes and schemes for children. It is encouraged that the State party also strive to achieve the United Nations target of 0.7 per cent of GDP for international development assistance.

Paragraph 52

That "a large number of children in Austria are living on the edge of poverty," and that the increase in family allowances and tax deductions planned for 1999 and 2000 may not be sufficient to prevent poverty is of concern. All appropriate measures should be taken to prevent poverty (in light of the principles and provisions of the Convention, especially its articles 2, 3, 6, 26, 27).

- Guinea, CRC, CRC/C/84 (1999) 21 at paras. 111 and 114.

Paragraph 111

With regard to the situation of children deprived of family, the insufficient number of alternative care centres and the lack of support to the existing ones supported by non-governmental organizations are of concern. The low quality of living conditions in the existing care centres for children, the lack of adequate monitoring of placement conditions, and the conditions of children living in an informal type of placement, whose situation is not periodically reviewed are also of concern. All appropriate measures should be taken to establish alternative care centres for children deprived of a family environment and/or to provide support to the private ones. Independent monitoring should be set up for public and private care institutions. The conditions of children living in an informal type of placement should be systematically reviewed.

Paragraph 114

The prevalence of malnutrition as well as the limited access to health services, especially in rural areas and the persistence of health problems related to insufficient access to safe water and sanitation are matters of concern. Appropriate resources should be allocated and, when needed, technical assistance should be considered to reinforce efforts to make basic health care accessible to all children. Concerted efforts are needed to combat malnutrition and to ensure the adoption and implementation of a national nutritional policy on children. International cooperation for the establishment of programmes such as the WHO/UNICEF programme Integrated Management of Childhood Illness is recommended.

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- Yemen, CRC, CRC/C/84 (1999) 33 at para. 165.

The adoption of structural adjustment programmes, which might have an adverse effect on the implementation of social programmes, especially those related to children, is of concern. All appropriate measures should be taken to the maximum extent of available resources, including through international cooperation, to continue ensuring that sufficient budgetary allocations are provided to social services for children and that particular attention is paid to the protection of children belonging to vulnerable and marginalized groups.

- Russian Federation, CRC, CRC/C/90 (1999) 18 at paras. 74, 75, 77 and 79.

Paragraph 74

The prolonged financial crisis has had a negative impact on the development of children, leading to a worsening of their living conditions, as well as on the implementation of social investment programmes and, ultimately, on respect for the rights of the child. In particular, the widespread poverty, the weakening of the family structure, the increasing numbers of neglected and homeless children and children living and working in the street, the high numbers of suicides, the extent of drug and alcohol abuse and increases in juvenile delinquency are of serious concern.

Paragraph 75

Efforts to temporarily “target” existing assistance to families with the lowest incomes are recognized, however, that those families and children who will not receive assistance during this interim period will suffer is of particular concern. The non-, or delayed, payment of State benefits, in particular child allowances is also of concern.

Paragraph 77

It is encouraged that additional solutions to budgetary problems, such as retargeting expenditure or prioritizing programmes and increasing the proportion of international assistance used to further the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, be sought.

Paragraph 79

The budgetary allocation policies should be reviewed so as to maximize the available resources allocated to the protection of the most vulnerable groups, and the Committee’s 1993 recommendation regarding careful monitoring of the impact of the economic crisis on the standard of living of children should continue to be implemented.

- Mexico, CRC, CRC/C/90 (1999) 34 at para. 168.

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Widespread poverty and the long-standing economic and social disparities within the State party are still affecting the most vulnerable groups, including children, and hampering the enjoyment of the rights of the child. This situation has been particularly aggravated by severe economic crises and drastic economic reforms.

- India, CRC, CRC/C/94 (2000) 10 at paras. 41 and 84.

Paragraph 41

The existence of traditional customs (i.e. the caste system) and societal attitudes (e.g. towards tribal groups) is an obstacle to efforts to combat discrimination, and compounds, *inter alia*, poverty, illiteracy, child labour, child sexual exploitation and children living and/or working on the streets.

Paragraph 84

Concern is expressed about the high percentage of children living in inadequate housing, including slums, and their inadequate nutrition and access to safe drinking water and sanitation. Concern is expressed about the negative impact on families and the rights of children of structural adjustment projects.

- Sierra Leone, CRC, CRC/C/94 (2000) 24 at paras. 131, 187 and 195.

Paragraph 131

Deeply concerned at the overall situation of children in the State party and the severe damage caused to national infrastructure and the economy by the years of conflict, the Committee is concerned at the State party's limited resources with which to address such a wide array of problems.

Paragraph 187

The indirect effects of the armed conflict are a concern - the destruction of educational and health infrastructures, of water collection, purification and distribution systems, of the national economy, of agricultural production, of communication infrastructure - all of which have contributed to a massive and continuing violation for a majority of children in the State party of many of the rights provided for in the Convention.

Paragraph 195

The increasing incidence of child labour, in particular on the streets of the main towns, is a concern. The number of children engaged in such labour is likely to increase given the current post-conflict situation. The situation of children begging in cities and major towns is a concern.

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- Costa Rica, CRC, CRC/C/94 (2000) 37 at para. 223.

Cuts in social expenditure and their negative impact on health, education and other traditional welfare areas for children are a concern. In the light of articles 2, 3 and 4 of the Convention, the Committee reiterates its recommendation (see CRC/C/15/Add.11, para. 13) and further recommends that the State party take effective measures to allocate the maximum extent of available resources to social services and programmes for children, and particular attention should be paid to the protection of children belonging to vulnerable and marginalized groups.

- The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, CRC, CRC/C/94 (2000) 45 at paras. 250 and 251.

Paragraph 250

The hardship imposed by the current socio-economic difficulties in the State party are recognized. Concern is expressed over the impact that the financial situation may have on children, including, those from poor families. That there are significant regional disparities with regard to the extent to which children benefit from the respect of their rights is a concern.

Paragraph 251

In the light of articles 2, 3 and 6 of the Convention, and with a view to achieving full application of article 4, the State party is urged to make every effort to protect children's rights from the negative effects of the current economic situation, including through the prioritization of budgetary allocations in a manner which ensures the best possible implementation of the Convention and to the maximum extent of the State party's available resources. The State party should give particular attention to the situation of children of poor families and from regions experiencing particular economic difficulties.

- South Africa, CRC, CRC/C/94 (2000) 81 at paras. 422, 436 and 442.

Paragraph 422

The challenges faced by the State party in overcoming the legacy of *apartheid* are noted. This continues to have a negative impact on the situation of children and to impede the full implementation of the Convention. In particular, note is taken of the vast economic and social disparities that continue to exist between various segments of society as well as the relatively high levels of unemployment and poverty which adversely affect the full implementation of the

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Convention and remain challenges for the State party.

Paragraph 436

While legislation has been enacted to provide for the recovery of maintenance for the child, insufficient measures have been taken to ensure the enforcement of maintenance orders. In light of article 27 of the Convention, it is recommended that the State party take effective measures to ensure compliance with maintenance orders and the recovery of maintenance for the child.

Paragraph 442

That health services in the districts and local areas continue to lack adequate resources (both financial and human) is a concern. Concern is also expressed that the survival and development of children within the State party continue to be threatened by early childhood diseases such as acute respiratory infections and diarrhoea. Concern is also expressed about the high incidence of child and infant mortality as well as maternal mortality, the high rate of malnutrition, vitamin A deficiency and stunting; the poor situation of sanitation; and insufficient access to safe drinking water, especially in rural communities. It is recommended that the State party reinforce its efforts to allocate appropriate resources and develop comprehensive policies and programmes to improve the health situation of children, particularly in rural areas. In this context, the State party should facilitate greater access to primary health services; reduce the incidence of maternal, child and infant mortality; prevent and combat malnutrition, especially in vulnerable and disadvantaged groups of children; and increase access to safe drinking water and sanitation.

- Georgia, CRC, CRC/C/97 (2000) 18 at paras. 85, 94, 95, 110, 111, 120, 121, 126, 127, 144 and 145.

Paragraph 85

The economic and social difficulties facing the State party have had a negative impact on the situation of children and have impeded the full implementation of the Convention. The impact of the structural adjustment programme and the high levels of unemployment and poverty are noted. The civil and political unrest which emerged soon after the State party declared its independence in 1991 is also noted. This has slowed the period of transition and prevented the implementation of adequate programmes and services for children, especially those in conflict zones.

Paragraph 94

While it is noted that the civil and political unrest, the economic crisis and the structural adjustment programme have had adverse effects on social investment, concern is expressed that in light of article 4 of the Convention, not enough attention has been paid to allocating budgetary resources in favour of children “to the maximum extent of ... available resources”. Concern is also expressed at the widespread practices of tax evasion and corruption, which are believed to

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have an effect on the level of resources available for the implementation of the Convention.

Paragraph 95

In light of articles 2, 3 and 6 of the Convention, the State party is encouraged to pay particular attention to the full implementation of article 4 of the Convention by prioritizing budgetary allocations to ensure implementation of the economic, social and cultural rights of children, to the maximum extent of available resources and, where needed, within the framework of international cooperation.

Paragraph 110

While the State party's programme of deinstitutionalization is welcomed, the high number of institutionalized children and the poor standard of living and quality of care in institutions are of concern.

Paragraph 111

A code of standards should be established to ensure that children deprived of a family environment receive adequate care and protection. The State party should reinforce its efforts to provide additional training, including in children's rights, for the staff of institutions; ensure the periodic review of placements in institutions; and establish an independent complaint mechanism for children in alternative care institutions. The State party is encouraged to introduce measures to guarantee and protect the human dignity of children living in institutions and to make these institutions more child friendly. The State party is also encouraged to increase the level of resources allocated for the protection and care of children deprived of a family environment. Finally, it is recommended that the State party increase its efforts to prevent institutionalization and pay special attention in that regard to vulnerable families by, for example, providing them with adequate support services.

Paragraph 120

Concern is expressed about the health situation of children which continues to be affected by the poor economic situation within the State party. In particular, note is taken of the limited access to and quality of health services, particularly among children living in conflict zones as well as in the mountainous regions; the increasing cost of basic health care of which the State party covers only 15-20 per cent; the inadequate allocation of funding for health; the high maternal, child and infant mortality rates; the increasing malnutrition rate; and the deteriorating situation of sanitation and safe drinking water. While it is noted that the State party is receiving technical assistance for the immunization campaign, vaccines continue to be unavailable. Negative social attitudes towards vaccinations have resulted in a resurgence of preventable diseases such as diphtheria.

Paragraph 121

Appropriate resources should be allocated for the implementation of the National Health Policy

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and, where appropriate, additional policies and programmes should be developed to improve the health situation of children, especially those living in mountainous regions and conflict zones; facilitate greater access to and quality of primary health services; ensure the availability of vaccines; reduce the incidence of maternal, child and infant mortality; prevent and combat malnutrition, especially in vulnerable and disadvantaged groups of children; and increase access to safe drinking water and sanitation. The State party is encouraged to continue its cooperation with respect to the Integrated Management of Childhood Illnesses initiative.

Paragraph 126

The large percentage of the population living below the poverty line (approximately 43 per cent and mainly in urban centres) is noted with concern. The inability of the social security system to improve the situation of the growing number of poor families is a concern.

Paragraph 127

In accordance with article 27 of the Convention, efforts should be increased to provide material assistance and support to economically disadvantaged families and guarantee the right of children to an adequate standard of living. In this context, the State party is encouraged to promote programmes to discourage and prevent child begging. The State party is encouraged to proceed with the programme, in cooperation with the World Bank, to eradicate poverty, especially among children.

Paragraph 144

Concern is expressed at the increasing number of children in conflict with the law and the limited measures taken by the State party to address their concerns. The poor conditions of juvenile detention facilities are noted, including the lack of adequate food, clothing, heating, educational opportunities and leisure activities for child detainees.

Paragraph 145

The State party should take all appropriate measures to improve the situation of children in juvenile detention facilities, including their access to adequate food, clothing, heating, educational opportunities and leisure activities;

- Jordan, CRC, CRC/C/97 (2000) 31 at paras. 150, 154 and 169.

Paragraph 150

It is noted that economic reforms have had a severe impact on the economy, and especially on the most vulnerable segments of society.

Paragraph 154

It is noted that population pressures coupled with a lack of resources, particularly water, in light

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of the worst drought in decades have severely affected the population.

Paragraph 169

While recognizing the difficult and poor economic conditions, it is emphasized that the implementation of economic, social and cultural rights requires consideration of a range of issues, including the redistribution of existing resources. The State party should develop ways to undertake a systematic assessment of the impact of budgetary allocations on the implementation of children's rights, and to collect and disseminate information in this regard. The State party should ensure the distribution of adequate resources at the national and local levels, where needed within the framework of international cooperation.

- Kyrgyzstan, CRC, CRC/C/97 (2000) 51 at paras. 272, 276, 277, 314, 315 and 322.

Paragraph 272

It is noted that the State party has had to face serious economic, social and political challenges during the past few years posed by the transition to a market economy, including increased unemployment and poverty, which has had a severe impact, especially on the most vulnerable segments of society.

Paragraph 276

Concern is expressed that insufficient attention has been paid to article 4 of the Convention regarding the implementation to the "maximum extent of ... available resources" of economic, social and cultural rights of children.

Paragraph 277

Ways should be developed to establish a systematic assessment of the impact of budgetary allocations on the implementation of children's rights, and to collect and disseminate information in this regard. The State party should ensure the adequate distribution of resources at the national and local levels and, where needed, within the framework of international cooperation.

Paragraph 314

In light of article 24 of the Convention, concern is expressed at problems involving the recycling, collection and disposal of waste in urban areas and poor access to safe water and adequate sanitation in rural areas, which negatively impact upon the health of children. Concern is also expressed about the inadequate measures taken to protect the health of children from the negative impact of dangerous environmental hazards resulting from inappropriate storage of, *inter alia*, radioactive and toxic wastes.

Paragraph 315

In light of article 24 (c) of the Convention, all appropriate measures should be taken, including

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through international cooperation, to prevent and combat the damaging effects of environmental degradation on children, including pollution and contamination of water supplies.

Paragraph 322

The negative effects of the current economic crisis have resulted in an increasing number of children dropping out of school and taking up work and this is of concern. Concern is also expressed about children working in the informal sector, especially children from rural backgrounds who may be at special risk, many of whom are working in hazardous conditions.

See also:

- Jordan, CRC, CRC/C/97 (2000) 31 at paras. 195 and 196.

- Cambodia, CRC, CRC/C/97 (2000) 64 at paras. 338, 347, 348, 375, 380 and 381.

Paragraph 338

It is noted with concern that the State party is facing many difficulties in the implementation of the Convention, in particular owing to the legacy of more than 20 years of genocide, armed conflict and political instability as well as to the isolation suffered by the State party for many years. The State party's very difficult socio-economic situation is affecting the most vulnerable groups, including children, and hampers the enjoyment of their rights.

Paragraph 347

While most of the State party's infrastructure and social services were destroyed as a result of decades of war, concern is expressed about the insufficient attention paid to the provisions of article 4 of the Convention concerning budgetary allocations to the "maximum extent of ... available resources".

Paragraph 348

Priority should be given to ensuring that the maximum available resources are allocated to health, education and social services for children and that particular attention is paid to the protection of children belonging to vulnerable and marginalized groups. In this regard, the State party is encouraged to continue and foster open cooperation with the international community, in particular within the coordinated framework of the donors' Consultative Group on Cambodia.

Paragraph 375

It is recommended that the State party address the issue of childhood morbidity and mortality by taking a multisectoral approach recognizing the critical role of illiteracy, lack of clean water supplies and food insecurity in the current pattern of childhood illnesses. Priority areas must be

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identified on the basis of baseline data collected by careful and comprehensive research.

Paragraph 380

Concern is expressed at children's limited access to health services, due notably to the shortage of medical and public health personnel and the insufficient number of primary health centres, in particular in rural areas. The high cost of health care and medicines, which lead families into debt and greater poverty, is also of concern.

Paragraph 381

Access to health-care services and medicines should be improved and extended in order to guarantee access by children belonging to poor families and other marginalized groups.

- Suriname, CRC, CRC/C/97 (2000) 84 at paras. 491, 492, 497, 498 and 499.

Paragraph 491

The health situation of children, especially those living in the interior, is noted with concern. In particular, note is taken of their limited access to basic health care; the insufficient number of trained medical personnel; the high incidence of malaria; high maternal, child and infant mortality rates, including suicides and accidents; inadequate breastfeeding and weaning practices, high rates of malnutrition, poor sanitation and limited access to safe drinking water, especially in rural areas.

Paragraph 492

The Government should allocate appropriate resources and develop comprehensive policies and programmes to improve the health situation of children, especially those living in the interior; facilitate greater access to primary health services; increase the number of trained medical and other health personnel; take steps to reduce the incidence of maternal, child and infant mortality; promote healthier breastfeeding and weaning practices; prevent and combat malnutrition, especially among vulnerable and disadvantaged groups of children; increase access to safe drinking water and sanitation and reduce the incidence of malaria.

Paragraph 497

The increasingly high number of children living in households below the poverty line is noted with concern. Concern is also expressed about the poor housing situation and living standards of families who fled their homes in the interior during the civil unrest of the 1980s and are currently living in urban squatter communities. Concern is also expressed at the large and increasing number of children living and/or working on the streets.

Paragraph 498

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In accordance with article 27 of the Convention, it is recommended that the State party increase its efforts to provide material assistance and support to economically disadvantaged families and guarantee the right of children to an adequate standard of living. The State party should establish mechanisms to ensure that children living and/or working on the streets are provided with identity documents, food, clothing and housing.

Paragraph 499

The efforts of the State party within the school environment are noted, including the establishment of a school nutrition programme, the introduction of school transportation in some regions of the country, the implementation of a programme that provides allowances for the rental of books and subsidies for school uniforms and other relevant learning materials for economically disadvantaged children; the establishment of a programme that allows teenage mothers to continue their education; and the decision to host a National Education Congress in December 2000.

- Djibouti, CRC, CRC/C/97 (2000) 96 at para. 529.

In light of articles 2, 3 and 6 of the Convention, the State party is encouraged to pay particular attention to the full implementation of article 4 of the Convention by prioritizing budgetary allocations to ensure implementation of the economic, social and cultural rights of children, to the maximum extent of available resources and, where needed, within the framework of international cooperation. The State party is urged to establish a policy on the allocation of resources in favour of children, including resources allocated by international agencies or bilateral assistance, and to determine how these resources will be used in future, ensuring that priority is given to the alleviation of poverty.

- Finland, CRC, CRC/C/100 (2000) 8 at paras. 39, 40, 57 and 58.

Paragraph 39

Concern is expressed that the extent and standard of welfare services provided by local authorities to low-income families or families with children with disabilities is unequal in the various municipalities across the country, partly as a result of significant differences in the financial resources available to the municipal authorities, in the priorities set by those authorities and in the systems used to assess needs and grant assistance. These disparities have the effect of providing either unequal access to or different levels of welfare assistance to children, particularly those with disabilities, depending on where in the country they reside.

Paragraph 40

The State party is urged to consider ways to guarantee all children equal access to the same

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standard of services, irrespective of where they live, for example by establishing nationwide minimum standards and allocations of resources for the implementation of the Convention's provisions, in particular in the areas of health, education and other social welfare services, and in conformity with article 2.

Paragraph 57

Serious concern is expressed about the decrease in the net income of families with children caused by both high unemployment rates and budgetary measures that negatively affect child-related allowances.

Paragraph 58

Taking into account recent improvements in the economy of the State party, it is strongly recommended that the State party allocate more funds to families with children and develop effective measures to provide those families with appropriate support in order to avoid, among other things, the placement of children in foster care or institutions.

See also:

- Norway, CRC, CRC/C/97 (2000) 43 at paras. 225 and 226.
- Burundi, CRC, CRC/C/100 (2000) 17 at paras. 103, 104, 115, 116, 123, 124, 131, 132, 137, 140, 147, 148, 152 and 153.

Paragraph 103

In light of article 4 of the Convention, deep concern is expressed at the low proportion of the national budget invested in health, education and social welfare in contravention of the World Bank's guidelines on minimum spending on these areas, and the high proportion of spending on defence. Resources, whether from State allocations or from direct international assistance, are not distributed evenly among the population according to need. Further, note is taken of the high proportion of the population living in poverty. The impact of this situation on children is a concern.

Paragraph 104

In light of articles 2, 3 and 4 of the Convention, it is recommended that the State party raise the proportion of spending on health, education and social welfare to the maximum of available resources, with a view to ensuring access to these services for all children. The State party should ensure that resources are distributed as evenly as possible according to the needs of vulnerable populations and to all geographical areas. It is recommended that the State party make every effort to ensure that programmes and services for the implementation of the

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Convention are maintained.

Paragraph 115

Deep concern is expressed about the extensive violations of the right to life of children by, *inter alia*, armed conflict, deliberate killings by armed persons including members of the armed forces, State regroupment policies, other forms of population displacement, poor health and sanitation facilities, severe malnutrition and related illnesses, and as a result of the prevailing conflict between groups of the population.

Paragraph 116

The State party is strongly urged to make every effort to reinforce protection of the right to life, survival and development of all children within the State party through policies, programmes and services that target and guarantee protection of this right. The State party is urged to seek as much international assistance as possible in this regard.

Paragraph 123

Concern is expressed about the large number of children in regroupment camps and the extremely poor conditions in which they have to live, constituting, in many cases, cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment and violating numerous minimum standards with respect to children's rights.

Paragraph 124

The State party is urged to complete, without further delay, the process of closing the regroupment camps and, pending closure, to guarantee respect of all the civil rights and freedoms of children and their families living in such camps.

Paragraph 131

Deep concern is expressed at the breakdown in nuclear family structures, at the emergence of a high proportion of single-parent-headed households, child-headed households and grandparent-headed households, and at the immediate and long-term consequences that these weaknesses in the family structure may have on children.

Paragraph 132

Noting the efforts already made in this regard, the State party is encouraged to continue and strengthen support to families, including through assistance with agricultural production and legal and financial assistance in obtaining adequate housing and land and counselling to help resolve problems. The State party is urged to give particular attention to the establishment of psycho-social and parental guidance programmes to strengthen vulnerable family units such as single-parent-, child- and grandparent-headed households.

Paragraph 137

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Noting current efforts, concern is expressed about the situation of children with physical and mental disabilities, and in particular about the limited specialized health care, education and employment possibilities available for them. Poor health conditions and poverty are leading to an increase in the number of children with disabilities.

Paragraph 138

It is recommended that the situation of children with disabilities be reviewed in terms of their access to suitable health care, education services and employment opportunities and that a programme of action be established to address all areas of concern. Note should be taken of the Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities (General Assembly resolution 48/96) and the Committee's recommendations adopted at its day of general discussion on the rights of children with disabilities (see CRC/C/69). The population should be sensitized to the rights of children with disabilities and the difficulties they must face in their daily lives.

Paragraph 139

The low immunization rate, the high levels of malnutrition and micro-nutrition deficiencies and the extremely poor health conditions among children in general, and particularly in camps, are matters of deep concern. Further, the Committee is concerned at high mortality rates among children, high maternal mortality rates, at low investment in health care, the limited number of hospitals and health centres that are operational, the limited drug supply and relatively high cost of medicines, including generic drugs, and the concentration of medical professionals in Bujumbura city.

Paragraph 140

The State party is urged to make significant increases in the health budget, to make every effort to improve public health, including primary health care, and to ensure adequate access for all children to health services, with particular regard to those living in rural communities and in camps.

Paragraph 152

Deep concern is expressed at the very large numbers of persons who have become refugees or internally displaced within the country and at the situation of those displaced children who are unaccompanied. The Committee is disturbed in particular by the massive numbers of people who have been forcibly regrouped within the country and by the very poor, sometimes life-threatening conditions in displaced and regrouped persons camps, and the poor health and education services available to camp populations. It is noted that the State party has publicly promised to end the regroupment policy, but has failed to do so. It is also noted that efforts to trace the families of unaccompanied children have had limited success.

Paragraph 153

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The State party is urged to make every effort to protect the civilian population from displacement and to implement its plans to end regroupment, giving particular attention to the situation of unaccompanied children and the need for effective family tracing. The State party is urged to ensure that all displaced children and their families, including those who have been regrouped, have access to essential health and education services and to consider the need for continued access to such services during the often slow process of return to communities of origin.

- United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (Overseas Territories), CRC, CRC/C/100 (2000) 40 at paras. 249 and 250.

Paragraph 249

Concern is expressed that the standard of living in Montserrat has declined significantly since the volcanic eruption which destroyed two thirds of the island. While it is noted with appreciation that all the families with children have been moved from shelters and provided with homes, concern is expressed about the psychological impact of the disaster on children. It is noted that programmes and services for children have not yet been fully restored since the volcanic eruption. Additionally, concern is expressed that children living in Anguilla, St. Helena and its dependencies, and the Turks and Caicos Islands do not enjoy an equal and adequate standard of living, as compared with children living in the other Overseas Territories.

Paragraph 250

In accordance with article 27 of the Convention, the State party is encouraged to increase its efforts to provide material assistance and support to economically disadvantaged families and to guarantee the right of children to an adequate standard of living, especially those affected by the disaster in Montserrat and those living in Anguilla, St. Helena and its dependencies, and the Turks and Caicos Islands. The State party is encouraged to undertake a study to assess the impact, including the psychological impact, of the disaster on the children of Montserrat, with a view to ensuring adequate support and where necessary, counselling for children and parents.

- Tajikistan, CRC, CRC/C/100 (2000) 53 at paras. 272 and 278.

Paragraph 272

It is noted that the State party has had to face serious economic and social challenges during the past few years posed by the transition to a market economy and the civil war, including increased unemployment, poverty and corruption, which have had an especially severe impact on children belonging to the most vulnerable segments of society.

Paragraph 278

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The State party should develop ways to assess systematically the impact of budgetary allocations on the implementation of child rights. An adequate distribution of resources should be ensured at the national and local levels - where needed, within the framework of international cooperation. The State party's obligations under the Convention should be taken into account in all aspects of its negotiations with international financial institutions and other donors, to ensure that the economic, social and cultural rights of children, particularly children belonging to the most vulnerable groups, are not undermined.

- Colombia, CRC, CRC/C/100 (2000) 64 at paras. 333, 348, 349, 354, 355, 382 and 383.

Paragraph 333

Widespread poverty and long-standing economic and social disparities are still affecting the most vulnerable groups, including children, and hampering the enjoyment of their rights. This situation has been particularly aggravated by severe economic crises and drastic economic reforms.

Paragraph 348

Concern is expressed about the limitations imposed by the current socio-economic crisis and the armed conflict on the full implementation of social programmes for children.

Paragraph 349

The Committee reiterates its recommendation that all measures to implement economic, social and cultural rights should be undertaken "to the maximum extent of ... available resources", in the light of articles 2, 3 and 4 of the Convention, and that particular attention be paid to the protection of children belonging to vulnerable and marginalized groups. A locally based system should be developed to monitor and evaluate the situation of children living in areas of extreme poverty in order to give priority to budget allocations for these groups of children.

Paragraph 354

Concern is expressed at the existing patterns of economic and social disparity, and of gender and racial discrimination; at the marginalization of children belonging to the Afro-Colombian and indigenous populations; and at the precarious situation of children belonging to internally displaced populations, especially regarding their limited access to housing, education and health services.

Paragraph 355

In the light of article 2 and other related articles of the Convention, it is recommended that measures be increased to reduce economic and social disparities, including between urban and rural areas, to prevent discrimination against the most disadvantaged groups of children, such as girls, children with disabilities, children belonging to indigenous and ethnic groups, children

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living in and/or working on the streets, children living in camps for internally displaced populations and children living in rural areas, and to guarantee their full enjoyment of all the rights recognized in the Convention.

Paragraph 382

It is of concern that the State party has one of the largest internally displaced populations in the world, forced to leave their home towns owing to the high level of violence in certain regions of the country. Concern is also expressed about the social deprivation faced by these populations, mainly composed of women and children, especially their limited access to housing, health services and education.

Paragraph 383

The highest priority should be given to the protection of the rights of children belonging to internally displaced groups. In this regard, the Committee endorses the recommendations made in the reports of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Internally Displaced Persons to the Commission on Human Rights on the situation in the State party (see E/CN.4/2000/83/Add.1 and Add. 2), and recommends that the State party, in cooperation with the international community, urgently follow up these recommendations, in particular that on the incorporation of the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement (E/CN.4/1998/53/Add.2) in the State party's legislation and policies on internally displaced persons.

See also:

- Peru, CRC, CRC/C/94 (2000) 64 at paras. 362 and 368.
- Dominican Republic, CRC, CRC/C/103 (2001) 91 at paras. 488 and 497.

- Central African Republic, CRC, CRC/C/100 (2000) 77 at paras. 406, 407, 443, 444, 465 and 466.

Paragraph 406

It is noted that several countries bordering the State party have been involved in armed conflicts, leading to regional instability, refugee movements, including into the State party, and a weakening of the regional economy.

Paragraph 407

Note is taken of the very serious economic problems faced within the State party, the failure of economic reforms, the pressures exerted by structural adjustment programmes and the landlocked situation of the country.

Paragraph 443

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Deep concern is expressed at weaknesses in family structures and unity as a result of poverty and HIV/AIDS.

Paragraph 444

The State party should provide additional support to families in combating the effects of poverty and in compensating for the loss of earnings and other support caused by illness or death from HIV/AIDS among parents.

Paragraph 465

Note is taken of the very low standard of living of a majority of the State party's population, owing in part to increasing poverty and involving no access to drinking water and very poor sanitation conditions.

Paragraph 466

Urgent efforts should be made to raise the standard of living among the population, including in particular the rural population, by improving access to drinking water and sanitation.

- Marshall Islands, CRC, CRC/C/100 (2000) 89 at paras. 527 and 528.

Paragraph 527

The survival and development of children within the State party continues to be threatened by illnesses caused by inadequate sanitation, hygiene and diet, and vitamin A and iodine deficiencies are widespread. Concern is also expressed about the insufficient number of local trained health workers; wide discrepancies in the distribution of health professionals between communities; limited access to health services in the outer island communities; and poor sanitation and limited access to safe drinking water, particularly in recently developed urban areas and the outer islands communities.

Paragraph 528

The State party should allocate appropriate resources and develop comprehensive policies and programmes to improve the health situation of children and facilitate greater access to primary health services. The State party is encouraged to continue its efforts to reduce the incidence of child and infant mortality and to undertake additional measures to increase access to safe drinking water and to improve sanitation. Further, with reference to the lack of trained local health workers and the tendency for these workers to emigrate, the State party should reinforce its efforts to recruit and train more health workers and take appropriate measures to encourage those trained abroad to return after their training and practice in the Marshall Islands, in

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particular in the outer islands.

- Slovakia, CRC, CRC/C/100 (2000) 100 at paras. 549, 562, 563, 582, 583, 586 and 587.

Paragraph 549

The State party has faced difficult economic and social challenges posed by the transition to a market economy, including rising income inequality and unemployment. This has had a negative impact on the population, particularly children belonging to the most vulnerable groups.

Paragraph 562

Children belonging to the Roma minority experience *de facto* discrimination vis-à-vis several provisions of the Convention, particularly the right to the highest attainable health (art. 24), the right to an adequate standard of living (art. 27) and the right to education (art. 28).

Paragraph 563

All necessary measures should be taken to ensure that all children within the jurisdiction enjoy all the rights set out in the Convention without discrimination, in accordance with article 2. The Committee endorses the recommendations made by the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination in its concluding observations (CERD/C/57/CRP.3/Add.4), and its general recommendation XXVII on discrimination against Roma, and recommends that the State party implement them.

Paragraph 582

The high levels of pollution in industrialized areas are of concern, particularly air pollution and water and food contamination caused by nitrates, pesticides and heavy metals.

Paragraph 583

In light of article 24 (c) of the Convention, all appropriate measures should be taken to prevent and combat the dangers and risks to the health of children posed by environmental pollution.

Paragraph 586

It is noted that government social policies, in spite of their comprehensiveness, have resulted in the socio-economic exclusion of certain groups of children such as the Roma and children living in the streets and in institutions.

Paragraph 587

The State party should include NGOs, especially family and children's NGOs, and civil society in general, through dialogue, in the development of social policies in order to better understand the reasons for exclusion and to stimulate new ideas to raise the standard of living of vulnerable groups of children.

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- Comoros, CRC, CRC/C/100 (2000) 110 at paras. 600, 613, 614, 638 and 639.

Paragraph 600

Ongoing peace negotiations with the separatist forces in the island of Anjouan and the embargo imposed on that island are noted. The negative effects of the political instability and the current socio-economic crisis on children are noted with concern, especially regarding the enjoyment of their human rights.

Paragraph 613

The State party is urged to establish, as soon as possible and based on reliable data, a policy for the allocation of resources in favour of children, including resources provided by international agencies or through bilateral assistance, and should also establish how these resources will be used in the future, ensuring that priority is given to the alleviation of poverty.

Paragraph 614

The State party's resource limitations, which constrain its ability to implement the principles and provisions of the Convention, are of deep concern.

Paragraph 638

The problems of environmental degradation in the State party are of concern, including very limited access to drinkable water, and the precarious conditions of housing facilities for families.

Paragraph 639

In the light of article 24 (c) of the Convention, all appropriate measures should be taken, including through international cooperation, to prevent and combat the damaging effects of environmental degradation on children, including pollution and contamination of water supplies. The State party should take effective measures, including through international cooperation, to improve housing facilities for families.

- Latvia, CRC, CRC/C/103 (2001) 9 at paras. 33, 68 and 69.

Paragraph 33

The economic and social difficulties facing the State party, including increased unemployment and poverty, caused mainly by the transition to a market economy, have had a negative impact on the situation of children and have impeded and are still impeding the full implementation of the Convention.

Paragraph 68

Concern is expressed at the high proportion of families, in particular those with three or more

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children, living at the subsistence level and families threatened with eviction because of the effect of the transition to a market economy on the social welfare system as a whole.

Paragraph 69

In light of articles 3, 4, 6, 26 and 27 of the Convention, all appropriate measures should be taken to the maximum extent of available resources, in particular at the local level, to support families in a difficult economic and/or social situation in order to ensure, to the maximum extent possible, the survival and development of all children living in Latvia.

- Ethiopia, CRC, CRC/C/103 (2001) 24 at paras. 156 and 157.

Paragraph 156

While recognizing the State party's ongoing poverty alleviation efforts, concern is expressed that many families are under pressure as a result of population displacement, armed conflict, drought, poverty and illness.

Paragraph 157

The State party should strengthen and fully implement its poverty alleviation programme and develop programmes to strengthen family unity, providing assistance to displaced populations and to very poor communities in particular.

- Egypt, CRC, CRC/C/103 (2001) 36 at paras. 226 and 227.

Paragraph 226

In light of previous concluding observations and taking note of efforts by the State party to combat poverty and its negative effects on children, concern is expressed at the large disparities in the enjoyment of economic and social rights, particularly health and education, by children living in rural areas and regions lagging behind in socio-economic development.

Paragraph 227

The State party should take all necessary measures to ensure that all children within its jurisdiction enjoy all the rights set out in the Convention without discrimination, in accordance with article 2. Resources and social services for children belonging to the most vulnerable groups, especially in areas which lack basic services, should be prioritized and targeted.

- Lithuania, CRC, CRC/C/103 (2001) 47 at paras. 264, 265, 292, 293, 302 and 303.

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Paragraph 264

Concern is expressed that a large number of families with children who live in poverty do not have enough support. Further, it is noted that child-related programmes are not clear priorities in the State budget.

Paragraph 265

In light of article 4 of the Convention, a study should be undertaken on the impact of the Government's budgetary resources allocated for children and their families in order to assess their effectiveness and to develop a comprehensive strategy to ensure the full implementation of the economic, social and cultural rights of children to the maximum extent of available resources, in particular at the local level and with respect to children belonging to the most vulnerable groups in society. The State party should clearly identify its priorities with respect to child rights issues and to identify the amount and proportion of the budget spent on children at the national and local levels in order to evaluate the impact of the expenditures on children.

Paragraph 292

It is of concern that a large number of families, in particular those with three or more children, and single women with children live under the subsistence level. This problem is predominant in rural areas.

Paragraph 293

In light of articles 3, 4, 6, 26 and 27 of the Convention, the State party should take all appropriate measures, such as the adoption and enforcement of the Programme of Assistance to Families Raising Children, to the maximum extent of its available resources and in particular at the local level, to support families in a difficult economic and/or social situation in order to ensure to the maximum extent possible the survival and development of all children living in Lithuania, without discrimination.

Paragraph 302

The number of children living and working in the streets is of concern. It is noted that the programmes and mechanisms established to assist them are not sufficient.

Paragraph 303

The State party should support existing mechanisms to ensure that children living in the streets are provided with food, clothing, housing, health care and education, including vocational and life-skills training.

See also:

- India, CRC, CRC/C/94 (2000) 10 at paras. 86 and 87.

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- Lesotho, CRC, CRC/C/103 (2001) 57 at paras. 318, 345-348, 353, 354, 369 and 370.

Paragraph 318

It is acknowledged that the economic and social difficulties facing the State party and the human rights situation in general have had, and still have, a negative impact on the situation of children and are impeding the full implementation of the Convention. In particular, the impact of the increasing level of poverty, very high unemployment and the emigration of professionals on children are noted.

Paragraph 345

The reported increase in family breakdown is noted with concern. This is related to a combination of factors, including HIV/AIDS, household poverty, the retrenchment of migrant workers from South Africa and increasing unemployment. Concern is expressed that the principle of the best interests of children is not respected by families or customary and civil courts in the course of family breakdown and that children in such situations are more likely to be abandoned or forced to live on the streets. Difficulties experienced by single parents, in particular single mothers, with regard to the enforcement of child maintenance payment orders and the growing number of child-headed households, linked to the spread of HIV/AIDS are matters of concern. It is noted with concern that as a result of poverty and other factors, children experiencing family breakdown do not have access to psycho-social care.

Paragraph 346

The State party should clarify, strengthen and ensure the implementation of its policies and legislation in relation to family breakdown. The enforcement of maintenance orders should be strengthened and special attention should be paid to providing families in need with adequate support, including training and the empowerment of parents, in order to prevent the abandonment of children. The State party should strengthen its support to child-headed households, particularly in the light of the spread of HIV/AIDS.

Paragraph 347

With respect to the situation of children deprived of a family environment, concern is expressed about the insufficient number of alternative care facilities and the insufficient financial support provided to existing ones. Concern is also expressed about the low standard of the living conditions in some alternative care institutions, the inadequate monitoring of placements and the limited number of qualified personnel in this field.

Paragraph 348

Additional programmes should be developed to strengthen alternative care facilities, in particular an adequate and well-supported (e.g. via special grants for foster parents) foster care system.

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Paragraph 353

The poor health situation of children in the State party is noted with concern, particularly the limited access to basic health care for children (especially in rural and mountainous areas), high maternal, child and infant mortality rates, low and decreasing immunization levels, high rates of malnutrition, poor sanitation and limited access to safe drinking water, especially in rural communities. The health risk linked to male circumcision is also a matter of concern. Concern is also expressed about the low and decreasing number of trained health personnel, including mental health and social welfare professionals, which is contributing to the insufficient provision of essential services.

Paragraph 354

It is noted that the State party is currently reviewing its Social Welfare Policy. The State party is urged to pursue its efforts to ensure that the new policy covers all groups of vulnerable children. The State party should ensure that the policy provides an effective basis for addressing the challenges of poverty and HIV/AIDS. Appropriate resources should be allocated and comprehensive policies and programmes should be developed to improve health infrastructure, to increase the number of trained health and welfare, including mental health, professionals, to improve the health situation of children, to facilitate greater access to primary health services, to reduce the incidence of maternal, child and infant mortality, to prevent and combat malnutrition, especially in vulnerable and disadvantaged groups of children, and to improve access to safe drinking water and sanitation.

Paragraph 369

The increasing number of children living and/or working on the streets in Lesotho is noted with concern.

Paragraph 370

The State party should make every effort to identify and address the causes of children living and or working on the streets and should formulate policies and provide assistance addressing their needs and assuring greater respect for their rights.

- Palau, CRC, CRC/C/103 (2001) 79 at paras. 442, 443, 456 and 457.

Paragraph 442

It is noted with concern that budgetary allocations for education and social services have been gradually reduced since independence (1994) and that there is a scarcity of resources for welfare and social services. There is no social welfare system in the State party. Additionally, concern is expressed that in the light of article 4 of the Convention, not enough attention has been paid to allocating budgetary resources, at both the national and community levels, in favour of

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children “to the maximum extent of...available resources”. Insufficient efforts have been made to ensure that an adequate proportion of financing gained through international cooperation is allocated to children’s programmes.

Paragraph 443

In the light of articles 2, 3 and 6 of the Convention, the State party is encouraged to pay particular attention to the full implementation of article 4 of the Convention by prioritizing budgetary allocations to ensure implementation of the economic, social and cultural rights of children, to the maximum extent of available resources, and where possible with international cooperation. In allocating resources, the State party should pay particular attention not only to education and health, but also to social services, especially in the outer islands and among non-Palauan children, to redress the gradual reduction in allocation to these areas. A social welfare system should be established to protect vulnerable children, particularly in the light of the recent trend towards charging fees for social services. Adequate resources should be allocated to strengthen the infrastructure of professionals working with and for children. The State party is encouraged to reinforce its efforts in preparation for the eventual phasing out of the Compact of Free Association by allocating adequate financial and human resources. In this connection greater protection should be guaranteed for the most vulnerable groups of children against the adverse effects of these economic changes.

Paragraph 456

The breakdown of the traditional extended family structure and the increasing number of female-headed households is noted with concern, particularly in the light of the lack of a welfare support system and alternative care facilities, as well as of inadequate early child-care services. Concern is also expressed about the increasing number of children living and/or working on the streets and the lack of policies, programmes and services to provide greater protection and care for these children and to strengthen families.

Paragraph 457

The State party should undertake a needs-assessment study of female-headed households with a view to ensuring adequate availability and accessibility of welfare programmes, alternative care facilities and early child-care services. A study should be undertaken to understand the scope and nature of the increasing phenomenon of children living and/or working on the streets. Mechanisms should be established to ensure that children living and/or working on the streets are provided with nutrition, clothing, housing, health and rehabilitation services, education, and vocational and life-skills training.

- Dominican Republic, CRC, CRC/C/103 (2001) 91 at paras.526 and 527.

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Paragraph 526

The large number of children living and/or working on the streets is of concern.

Paragraph 527

A comprehensive policy should be developed to address this issue, including: adequate access to health care; rehabilitation services for physical, sexual and substance abuse; services for reconciliation with families; and education, as well as vocational and life-skills training. The State party should cooperate and coordinate its efforts with civil society in this regard and provide existing non-governmental programmes with more support.

- Denmark, CRC, CRC/C/108 (2001) 10 at paras. 64 and 65.

Paragraph 64

While it is noted that financial and special assistance programmes for single parents have been established, including at the municipal level, concern remains regarding the vulnerability of children belonging to single-parent families. Concern is also expressed about the situation of children belonging to ethnic minority families.

Paragraph 65

The strengthening of programmes and initiatives in support of single parent and ethnic minority families is recommended.

- Turkey, CRC, CRC/C/108 (2001) 18 at paras. 97 and 98.

Paragraph 97

Although it is noted that budgetary allocations for children have been increasing in recent years, especially in the education and health sectors, concern is nevertheless expressed that the recent economic crisis and related structural adjustment policies could have a negative influence on such allocations. Further, it remains unclear to what extent the most vulnerable groups of children, in particular, benefit from the increase in the budgetary allocations for children.

Paragraph 98

In light of article 4 of the Convention, the State party is encouraged to clearly identify its priorities with respect to child rights issues in order to ensure that funds are allocated to the maximum extent of available resources for the implementation of the rights recognized in the Convention, including the economic, social and cultural rights of children, in particular to local governments and for children belonging to the most vulnerable groups in society. The amount and proportion of the budget spent on children at the national and local levels, including the resources from international aid programmes, should be identified in order to evaluate adequately

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its impact on children.

- Democratic Republic of the Congo, CRC, CRC/C/108 (2001) 31 at paras. 207 and 208.

Paragraph 207

It is of concern that the overall standard of living of many children is very poor, particularly with regard to access to clean water, food, adequate housing and sanitation. It is of further concern that the current social security provisions cover only a very small proportion of the population and that the parents and children most in need of such assistance are not covered by social security.

Paragraph 208

Steps should be taken to improve the standard of living of children, giving particular attention to water, food, housing and sanitation concerns. Consideration should also be given to ways of extending social security coverage to a much broader proportion of the population and to ensuring the access of all children to social welfare assistance.

- Guatemala, CRC, CRC/C/108 (2001) 47 at paras. 241, 242, 267 and 268.

Paragraph 241

Concern is expressed at the fact that budgetary allocations are not sufficient to respond to national and local priorities for the protection and promotion of children's rights and to overcome and remedy existing disparities between the regions and rural/urban areas with respect to services provided to children. It is further noted with concern that 88.9 per cent of the population aged between 0 and 14 live in a state of poverty.

Paragraph 242

In light of article 4 of the Convention, the State party is encouraged to strengthen its efforts to reduce poverty among children and to identify clearly its priorities with respect to child rights issues in order to ensure that funds are allocated "to the maximum extent of... available resources and, where needed, with the framework of international cooperation" for the full implementation of the economic, social and cultural rights of children, in particular with respect to local governments and for children belonging to the most vulnerable groups in society.

Paragraph 267

There is concern that the health standard of the children living in Guatemala is inadequate, especially children living in the rural areas and in poor urban areas. In particular, the high infant mortality rates due to nutritional deficiencies, lack of sanitation facilities and limited access to preventive and curative health services, with wide differences between urban and rural areas and

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between the different ethnic groups, are noted.

Paragraph 268

It is recommended that the State party allocate appropriate resources and develop comprehensive policies and programmes to improve the health situation of all children without discrimination, particularly by focusing more on primary-level care and decentralizing the health care system. In particular, to prevent child mortality and morbidity and to address the high maternal mortality rate, the provision of adequate antenatal and postnatal health care services and the development of campaigns to provide parents with basic knowledge about child health and nutrition, the advantages of breastfeeding, hygiene and environmental sanitation, family planning and reproductive health is recommended. Further, it is recommended that the State party seek technical assistance from, among others, WHO, UNICEF and UNFPA.

- Côte d'Ivoire, CRC, CRC/C/108 (2001) 59 at paras. 325, 326, 335 and 336.

Paragraph 325

While taking note of the 1996 National Plan for Health Development, deep concern is expressed about the extremely high and increasing infant mortality rates and low life expectancy in the State party, as well as at the low rates of breastfeeding. It is also of concern that health services in the districts and local areas continue to lack adequate resources (both financial and human). In addition, the survival and development of children within the State party continue to be threatened by early childhood diseases such as acute respiratory infections and diarrhoea. Concern is also raised by the poor situation of sanitation and the insufficient access to safe drinking water, especially in rural communities.

Paragraph 326

Efforts should be reinforced to allocate appropriate resources and to develop comprehensive policies and programmes to improve the health situation of children, particularly in rural areas. In this context, the State party should facilitate greater access to primary health services; reduce the incidence of maternal, child and infant mortality; prevent and combat malnutrition, especially in vulnerable and disadvantaged groups of children; promote proper breastfeeding practices; and increase access to safe drinking water and sanitation. Additionally, the State party is encouraged to pursue additional avenues of cooperation and assistance for child health improvement with, among others, WHO and UNICEF.

Paragraph 335

The State party's efforts to broaden the coverage of the social security system are acknowledged and the Committee joins the State party in expressing concern at the limited access to such

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assistance. The survey on the negative impact of devaluation on vulnerable populations in Abidjan is also noted.

Paragraph 336

The State party is encouraged to revise its social policy by improving its drug policy and by facilitating access to primary health care. Similarly access to education and adequate housing should be promoted in order to assist poor families and their children to improve their living conditions.

- United Republic of Tanzania, CRC, CRC/C/108 (2001) 71 at paras. 370, 371, 406 and 407.

Paragraph 370

While the Committee is aware of the economic challenges faced by the State party, including increasing poverty levels and high debt payments, it is concerned that in light of article 4 of the Convention, not enough attention has been paid in allocating budgetary resources, at both the national and local levels and in the best interests of children, “to the maximum extent of...available resources”.

Paragraph 371

In light of articles 2, 3, and 6 of the Convention, particular attention should be paid to the full implementation of article 4 of the Convention by prioritizing budgetary allocations to ensure implementation of the economic, social and cultural rights of children, especially economically and geographically disadvantaged groups, to the maximum extent of available resources (at the national and local levels) and, where needed, within the framework of international cooperation.

Paragraph 406

The challenging socio-economic situation is noted, as are the efforts made to improve the standard of living of its people through the introduction of the Tanzania Development Vision 2025 and the Poverty Reduction Strategy Programme. However, concern is expressed about the increasingly high number of children who do not enjoy their right to an adequate standard of living, including children belonging to poor families, AIDS orphans, children living and/or working on the streets and children living in remote rural communities.

Paragraph 407

In accordance with article 27 of the Convention, the State party should reinforce its efforts to provide support and material assistance to economically disadvantaged families and to guarantee the right of children to an adequate standard of living. In this connection, particular attention should be paid to the rights and needs of children in the implementation of the Poverty Reduction Strategy Programme and all other programmes intended to improve the standard of living in the

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country. The State party should also establish mechanisms to ensure that children living and/or working on the streets are provided with nutrition, clothing and housing. Moreover, it should be ensured that these children are provided adequate access to health care; rehabilitation services for physical, sexual and substance abuse; services for reconciliation with their families; and education, including vocational and life-skills training. The State party should cooperate and coordinate its efforts with civil society and local communities.