

## ADEQUATE OR DECENT STANDARD OF LIVING - GENERAL

### III. CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS, CONTINUED

#### CERD

- Costa Rica, CERD, A/57/18 (2002) 21 at paras. 74 and 78.

74. The Committee is concerned at the situation of indigenous people, in particular:

(a) Information according to which indigenous people living in remote regions suffer, *inter alia*, from lack of health care, education, drinking water and electricity;

(b) Problems of ownership of land; that land has reportedly been appropriated by migrants and transnational enterprises;

(c) Difficulties faced by indigenous people in obtaining public funds for the improvement of their living standards;

(d) The fact that infant mortality among indigenous communities is reportedly three times higher than the national average.

The Committee invites the State party to continue to pay due attention to the specific needs of this population. It recommends that the State party undertake the necessary measures to protect indigenous lands from being invaded and to enable the restitution of those lands that have been occupied by non-indigenous persons.

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78. The Committee is also concerned at the living and working conditions of immigrants, most of them from Nicaragua, who may become victims of discrimination in terms of article 5 of the Convention. The Committee recommends that the State party continue its efforts to ensure the rights of the immigrant population as regards discrimination on the grounds of race or ethnic or national origin. In this context, the Committee notes that a new Immigration law is currently being considered by the Legislative Assembly...

- Switzerland, CERD, A/57/18 (2002) 46 at para. 256.

256. The Committee is...concerned about the situation of travellers, including Roma and Jenish, in Switzerland and hopes that efforts will continue to be made to improve their living and working conditions.

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- Botswana, CERD, A/57/18 (2002) 53 at para. 303.

303. The Committee notes with concern that, in spite of the significant economic growth achieved in Botswana, 47 per cent of the population remain below the poverty line and that no special and concrete measures have been taken to ensure the adequate development and protection of marginalized ethnic groups. The Committee recommends that the State party identify further the specific needs of persons belonging to minorities and indigenous peoples and adopt special measures to enhance the equal enjoyment of human rights among the various sectors of the population.

- Mali, CERD, A/57/18 (2002) 66 at para. 398.

398. The Committee notes with concern the social and cultural inequalities that continue to affect rural populations. It regrets that the present report does not provide information on access to development for the various ethnic groups or on the distribution of wealth among those groups, in particular nomadic peoples.

- New Zealand, CERD, A/57/18 (2002) 69 at para. 416.

416. The Committee welcomes acknowledgement of the disadvantaged position in society of minorities, especially Maori, and accordingly appreciates the large number of initiatives, programmes and projects in the areas of health, education, employment, social welfare, housing, language and culture, and correction services, which are designed to address the specific needs of Maori, Pacific Island people and persons from other groups such as refugees and ethnic minorities.

- Côte d'Ivoire, CERD, A/58/18 (2003) 19 at para. 27.

27. Taking note of the conclusions of the Forum on National Reconciliation on the elimination of economic and social disparities between the north and the south of Côte d'Ivoire, the Committee encourages the State party to continue its campaign to reduce regional disparities.

- Ecuador, CERD, A/58/18 (2003) 22 at para. 59.

59. While welcoming the sincerity with which the State party recognizes the existence of *de facto* discrimination against indigenous people, Afro-Ecuadorians and members of other

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minorities, the Committee is concerned that a disproportionately high percentage of persons belonging to ethnic minority groups often do not enjoy equal access to the labour market, land and means of agricultural production, health services, education and other facilities and, accordingly, a disproportionately high percentage of members of these groups live in poverty. The Committee urges the State party to intensify its efforts to raise the living standards of these groups, with a view to ensuring their full enjoyment of the economic, social and cultural rights enumerated in article 5 of the Convention...

- Fiji, CERD, A/58/18 (2003) 25 at para. 85.

85. The Committee notes that despite reports that levels of poverty among all Fijian nationals, including Indo-Fijians and Banabans, have worsened over the years, the State party's affirmative action programmes, as adopted under the Social Justice Act of 2001 and the 50/50 by year 2020 plan, mainly target indigenous Fijians and Rotumans. The Committee strongly recommends that the State party ensure that its poverty alleviation programmes benefit all poor Fijian citizens, irrespective of their ethnic origin, to avoid undue stress on already strained ethnic relations. It also recommends that the adoption of any affirmative action programme be preceded by consultations involving all ethnic communities.

- Saudi Arabia, CERD, A/58/18 (2003) 41 at para. 221.

221. The Committee is concerned about the situation of Iraqi refugees who have lived in the Rafha refugee camp for more than 12 years under very difficult circumstances. The Committee hopes that the State party will find a solution to this problem in the near future.

- Tunisia, CERD, A/58/18 (2003) 47 at para. 251.

251. The Committee welcomes the measures taken in the economic and social sphere, which have resulted in economic growth and a significant reduction of poverty. The Committee notes with interest the establishment of a National Solidarity Fund to combat poverty and marginalization, as well as the creation of a National Solidarity Bank, and appreciates the results they have achieved so far...

- Albania, CERD, A/58/18 (2003) 53 at paras. 302 and 307.

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302. The Committee welcomes the draft national strategy for the improvement of the living conditions of the Roma.

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307. The Committee notes that the State party has a tendency not to regard the particularly unfavourable situation in which certain minority groups in Albania live as one involving racial or ethnic discrimination, believing that the social and economic problems encountered by persons belonging to these minorities are the same as those with which the rest of the population has to deal.

The Committee recommends that the State party reconsider that approach and carry out analyses to determine whether and to what extent the unfavourable situation of some minorities is the result of racial or ethnic discrimination.

- Bolivia, CERD, A/58/18 (2003) 58 at paras. 330 and 341.

330. The Committee notes that, despite the State party's considerable progress and outstanding efforts, Bolivia remains one of the poorest and least developed countries in Latin America. According to the poverty indicators of 2002, 64.3 per cent of the population lives below the poverty line (53.3 per cent of the population of the urban areas and 82.1 per cent of the population of rural areas). The Committee is particularly concerned about this data and underlines that the discrepancy between urban and rural areas especially affects indigenous peoples and their daily living conditions.

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341. The Committee notes the lack of information regarding the Afro-Bolivian community which, according to the information received, accounts for around 31,000 individuals situated at the lower end of the socio-economic scale and who face severe disadvantages in health, life expectancy, education, income, literacy, employment and housing. The Committee further notes that there are no specific provisions making reference to this group in the domestic legislation.

The Committee recommends that the State party adopt measures with a view to ensuring to members of the Afro-Bolivian community the full enjoyment of the rights enumerated in article 5 of the Convention...

- Czech Republic, CERD, A/58/18 (2003) 65 at para. 384.

384. The Committee notes the efforts under way to facilitate access to the labour market by individuals experiencing difficulties in finding employment, including the Roma, asylum applicants and other marginalized groups. However, the unemployment rate among the

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Roma remains disproportionately high and continues to be an issue of concern for the Committee. This concern is compounded by the information relating to the practice of usury and its negative economic and social consequences for the Roma.

The Committee urges the State party to continue and intensify poverty reduction and employment programmes for the Roma, and also to consider establishing a functional loan system for socially weak sections of the population, including the Roma, as an alternative to usury. In this respect, the Committee encourages the State party to take due account of the situation of Roma Women, in accordance with its general recommendation XXVII.

- Islamic Republic of Iran, CERD, A/58/18 (2003) 72 at para. 418.

418. The Committee welcomes the social, economic and cultural measures taken by the State party, in accordance with article 2, paragraph 2, of the Convention, such as the new Economic, Social and Cultural Development Plan, which aims to enhance basic social and infrastructural services in less developed areas inhabited by ethnic minority groups, as well as to improve the living conditions of nomadic groups.

- Republic of Korea, CERD, A/58/18 (2003) 83 at para. 491.

491. The Committee notes with appreciation the progress made in improving the asylum system and the process for determining refugee status, in particular the expansion of the Refugee Recognition Council to include members of civil society and the increased access to social services and the labour market afforded to refugees.

- Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, CERD, A/58/18 (2003) 85 at para. 511.

511. The Committee is concerned that no information has been provided by the State party on the economic, social and cultural situation of minority groups. It is further concerned that persons of Carib ancestry tend to be viewed as the base of the social pyramid and experience discrimination. In general, access to health care and educational opportunities depends on the level of family income.

...The enjoyment of economic, social and cultural rights, including access to public services, must be ensured for all without discrimination, in accordance with article 5 of the Convention.

- United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, CERD, A/58/18 (2003) 88 at para.

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542. The Committee expresses concern about the discrimination faced by Roma/Gypsies/Travellers that is reflected, *inter alia*, in their higher child mortality rate, exclusion from schools, shorter life expectancy, poor housing conditions, lack of available camping sites, high unemployment rate and limited access to health services.

The Committee draws the attention of the State party to its general recommendation XXVII on discrimination against Roma and recommends that the State party develop further appropriate modalities of communication and dialogue between Roma/Gypsy/Traveller communities and central authorities. It also recommends that the State party adopt national strategies and programmes with a view to improving the situation of the Roma/Gypsies/Travellers against discrimination by State bodies, persons or organizations.

- Madagascar, CERD, A/59/18 (2004) 58 at para. 319.

319. The Committee notes with concern that some regions of the country are harder hit than others by the low level of economic development, with lower literacy rates and life expectancy in particular, even if the lack of technical and financial resources objectively contributes to these disparities.

The Committee points out that the principle of non-discrimination is not subject to the availability of resources, and calls on the State party to ensure that existing resources are distributed fairly among the various regions of the country. As indirect discrimination is forbidden under the Convention, the Committee draws the attention of the State party to the ethnic dimension that these inequalities could have, and invites it to adopt special measures that could be necessary under article 2, paragraph 2, of the Convention.

- Mauritania, CERD, A/59/18 (2004) 61 at para. 343.

343. The Committee notes that the information on the adoption of practical measures designed specifically to combat slavery-like practices remains inadequate.

Taking note of the delegation's statement that the anti-poverty programme is helping to eradicate the legacy of slavery, the Committee considers that other actions specifically targeting the populations concerned should be taken. The State party should conduct a study, in cooperation with civil society, to determine the economic and social situation of the descendants of slaves, including how many of them have title to land.

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- Portugal, CERD, A/59/18 (2004) 66 at para. 369.

369. The Committee is concerned about the relative isolation of some groups of immigrants and members of ethnic minorities in marginalized neighbourhoods or areas and their difficult situation in respect of housing conditions.

The Committee encourages the State party to continue taking measures to avoid the marginalization of some groups of immigrants and members of ethnic minorities in ghetto-like neighbourhoods and guarantee the equal enjoyment of the right to adequate housing to all.

- Slovakia, CERD, A/59/18 (2004) 70 at para. 388.

388. The Committee is alarmed at the critical health situation of some Roma communities, which is largely a consequence of their poor living conditions.

The Committee recommends that the State party continue to implement programmes and projects in the field of health for Roma, bearing in mind their disadvantaged situation resulting from extreme poverty and low levels of education; to this end, the Committee encourages the State party to take further measures to address the issues of drinking water supplies and sewage disposal systems in Roma settlements.

- Australia, CERD, A/60/18 (2005) 13 at para. 39.

39. While noting the improvement in the enjoyment by the indigenous peoples of their economic, social and cultural rights, the Committee is concerned over the wide gap that still exists between the indigenous peoples and others, in particular in the areas of employment, housing, health, education and income (art. 5).

The Committee recommends that the State party intensify its efforts to achieve equality in the enjoyment of rights and allocate adequate resources to programmes aimed at the eradication of disparities. It recommends in particular that decisive steps be taken to ensure that a sufficient number of health professionals provide services to indigenous peoples, and that the State party set up benchmarks for monitoring progress in key areas of indigenous disadvantage.

- Azerbaijan, CERD, A/60/18 (2005) 18 at para. 56.

56. The Committee welcomes the adoption of the National Poverty Reduction Strategy for

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2003-2005, which targets internally displaced persons as a vulnerable group.

- Bahrain, CERD, A/60/18 (2005) 22 at para. 86.

86. The Committee notes with concern the reportedly disparate treatment of and discrimination faced by members of some groups, in particular the Shia, that may be distinguishable by virtue of their tribal or national origin, descent, culture or language; the Committee is especially concerned about apparently disparate opportunities that are afforded to such groups.

The Committee recommends that the State party ensure that everyone, without distinction as to race, colour, or national or ethnic origin, enjoys the rights to work and to health and social security, adequate housing and education in accordance with article 5 (e) (i), (iii), (iv) and (v) of the Convention.

- France, CERD, A/60/18 (2005) 26 at para. 110.

110. While it appreciates the State party's oral and written responses to questions relating to the situation of travellers, the Committee remains concerned at delays in the effective application of the Act of 5 July 2000 on the reception and housing of travellers and the persistent difficulties travellers encounter in such fields as education, employment and access to the social security and health system.

The Committee reminds the State party of its general recommendation XXVII on discrimination against Roma and recommends that it should step up its efforts to provide travellers with more parking areas equipped with the necessary facilities and infrastructures and located in clean environments, intensify its efforts in the field of education and combat the phenomena of exclusion of travellers more effectively, including in the fields of employment and access to health services.

- Lao People's Democratic Republic, CERD, A/60/18 (2005) 35 at para. 168.

168. The Committee notes that, as the State party has acknowledged, poverty strikes the ethnic groups in the remotest areas hardest (arts. 2 and 5).

The Committee recalls that the Convention prohibits not only intentional and systematic acts of racial discrimination but also discrimination that is not the direct result of a deliberate effort by the Government to prevent part of its population from enjoying its rights. In the Committee's view, the low level of economic, social and cultural development of certain



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ethnic groups as compared with the rest of the population might be an indication of *de facto* discrimination. It therefore recommends to the State party that it conduct studies with a view to assessing and evaluating in concrete terms the extent to which racial discrimination exists in the country and to ascertain its principal causes...

- Georgia, CERD, A/60/18 (2005) 46 at para. 247.

247. Poverty is a human rights issue and a factor which impedes the full enjoyment by all, including vulnerable minority groups, of those rights. The Committee is concerned about the extreme poverty in which part of the population of the State party lives and its effects on the most vulnerable minority groups for the enjoyment of their human rights and regrets that the State party's programme to reduce poverty and stimulate economic growth has not yet been adopted (art. 5).

The Committee recommends that the State party...adopt all the necessary measures to reduce poverty, especially regarding the most vulnerable minority groups, and stimulate economic growth, including the adoption of a national plan to this effect.

- Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), CERD, A/60/18 (2005) 71 at para. 379.

379. Bearing in mind the State party's efforts, the Committee reiterates its concern at the persistence of profound structural social and economic inequalities which have an impact on the enjoyment of human rights, particularly economic and social rights, and affect Afro-descendants and indigenous peoples.

The Committee encourages the State party to step up its efforts to improve the economic and social rights situation of Afro-descendants and indigenous people, such as the right to housing, the right to health and sanitation services, the right to work and the right to adequate nutrition, in order to combat racial discrimination and eliminate structural inequalities.

## **ICCPR**

- Slovakia, ICCPR, A/58/40 vol. I (2003) 52 at para. 82(16).

(16) The Committee is concerned about discrimination against the Roma. The Committee notes that the delegation has acknowledged the problem and stated that the situation of the Roma is both a short-term and a long-term priority of the Government. The Committee takes note of the measures aimed at improving the situation of Roma in various areas such as employment, health care, housing and education...However, the steps taken by the State

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party to improve the socio-economic condition of the Roma and to change the attitudes of society *vis-à-vis* the Roma do not appear to be sufficient, and *defacto* discrimination persists (arts. 2, 26).

The State party should take all necessary measures to eliminate discrimination against the Roma and to enhance the effective enjoyment of their rights under the Covenant. The State party should also make greater efforts to provide opportunities for Roma to use their language in official communications, to provide readily accessible social services, to provide training to Roma in order to equip them for employment and to create job opportunities for them...

- Russian Federation, ICCPR, A/59/40 vol. I (2003) 20 at para. 64(9).

(9) The Committee reiterates its concern regarding persistent inequality in the enjoyment of Covenant rights by women. In particular, the Committee notes with concern the high level of poverty among women, the prevalence of domestic violence against women, and a marked difference in the wages of men and women for equal work.

The State party should ensure that effective measures are taken to improve the situation of women as to their full enjoyment of Covenant rights (art. 3).

- Colombia, ICCPR, A/59/40 vol. I (2004) 35 at para. 67(19).

(19) Although the Committee has taken note of the information provided by the State party on the reduction in the number of internally displaced persons in 2002 and 2003, it remains concerned about the continued high number of displaced persons in Colombia and the lack of socio-economic assistance provided by the State party to these people, especially in fields such as the education of children and medical care...

The State party should intensify programmes aimed at providing economic and social assistance to internally displaced persons so that they may, in conformity with article 26 of the Covenant, enjoy as many of the benefits provided by State institutions as possible...

- Lithuania, ICCPR, A/59/40 vol. I (2004) 52 at para. 71(8).

(8) While welcoming the adoption of the Programme for Roma Integration into Lithuanian Society and the oral information provided by the delegation on the achievements of the first

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phase of the Programme, the Committee continues to be concerned about the social and economic situation of the Roma minority and its impact on the full enjoyment of their rights under the Covenant. It notes that the Roma continue to suffer from discrimination, poverty and unemployment, and play no part in the public life of the State party (arts. 26 and 27).

The State party should provide the Committee with an assessment of the results of the first phase of the Programme, including detailed information on its outcome and achievements and the extent to which it has improved the social and economic conditions of the Roma minority. The Committee also encourages the State party to take this assessment into account in designing and implementing the second phase of the Programme.

- Serbia and Montenegro, ICCPR, A/59/40 vol. I (2004) 68 at para. 75(24).

(24) The Committee is concerned that widespread discrimination against the Roma persists with regard to all areas of life. The Committee is particularly concerned about the deplorable social and economic situation of the Roma minority, including access to health services, social assistance, education and employment which has a negative impact on the full enjoyment of their rights under the Covenant (arts. 2, 26, 27).

The State party should take all necessary measures to ensure the practical enjoyment by the Roma of their rights under the Covenant, by urgently implementing all strategies and plans to address discrimination and the serious social situation of the Roma in Serbia and Montenegro.

### ***See also:***

- Albania, ICCPR, A/60/40 vol. I (2004) 25 at para. 82(21).

- Slovenia, ICCPR, A/60/40 vol. I (2005) 74 at paras. 93(16) and 93(17).

(16) The Committee is concerned about the difference in the status between the so-called “autochthonous” (indigenous) and “non-autochthonous” (new) Roma communities in the State party (arts. 26 and 27).

The State party should consider eliminating discrimination on the basis of status within the Roma minority and provide to the whole Roma community a status free of discrimination, and improve its living conditions and enhance its participation in public life.

(17) While noting measures undertaken to improve the living conditions of the Roma community, the Committee is concerned that the Roma community continues to suffer prejudice and discrimination, in particular with regard to access to health services, education

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and employment, which has a negative impact on the full enjoyment of their rights under the Covenant (arts. 2, 26 and 27).

The State party should take all necessary measures to ensure the practical enjoyment by the Roma of their rights under the Covenant by implementing and reinforcing effective measures to prevent and address discrimination and the serious social and economic situation of the Roma.

- Thailand, ICCPR, A/60/40 vol. I (2005) 83 at paras. 95(23) and 95(24).

(23) The Committee is concerned about the lack of full protection of the rights of registered and unregistered migrant workers in Thailand, particularly with regard to liberty of movement, access to social services and education, and access to personal documents. The deplorable conditions in which migrants are obliged to live and work indicate serious violations of articles 8 and 26 of the Covenant...

The State party must take measures to effectively implement the existing legislation providing for the rights of migrant workers. Migrant workers should be afforded full and effective access to social services, educational facilities and personal documents, in accordance with the principle of non-discrimination. The State party should consider establishing a governmental mechanism to which migrant workers can report violations of their rights by their employers, including illegal withholding of their personal documents...

(24) The Committee expresses its concern about the structural discrimination by the State party against minority communities, in particular the Highlanders with regard to citizenship, land rights, freedom of movement and the protection of their way of life. The Committee notes with concern the treatment of the Highlanders by law enforcement officials, in particular their forced eviction and relocation in the context of the 1992 Master Plan on Community Development, Environment and Narcotic Crop Control in Highland Areas, which gravely affected their livelihood and way of life...

The State party should guarantee the full enjoyment of the rights of persons belonging to minorities that are set out in the Covenant, in particular with respect to the use of land and natural resources, through effective consultations with local communities...

## **ICESCR**

- Colombia, ICESCR, E/2002/22 (2001) 110 at paras. 765, 771, 772, 786, 792 and 793.

765. The Committee is concerned that the national minimum wage is not sufficient to ensure

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an adequate standard of living for workers and their families. The Committee is also concerned that there is still a large disparity between the wages of men and women, particularly in the commercial sector, and that according to the Presidential Advisory Office on Women's Equity, women's wages in general are 25 per cent lower than men's.

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771. The Committee is deeply concerned about the living conditions of internally displaced persons, in particular women, children, peasants and members of the country's indigenous and Afro-Colombian communities.

772. The Committee is deeply concerned that the State party has not yet undertaken genuine agrarian reform in order to address effectively the problems of poverty and economic disparities in the rural areas.

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786. The Committee calls upon the State party to ensure that the minimum wage enables the workers and their families to have an adequate standard of living. It also urges the State party to adopt a policy of equal pay for work of equal value as provided for in the Covenant to reduce the wage gap between men and women.

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792. The Committee calls upon the State party to take steps to improve the living conditions of internally displaced persons, in particular women and children, peasants and members of the country's indigenous and Afro-Colombian communities.

793. The Committee urges the State party to adopt the necessary measures to carry out genuine agrarian reform.

- Algeria, ICESCR, E/2002/22 (2001) 116 at paras. 821 and 837.

821. The Committee is deeply concerned about the serious problem of poverty, as well as the decline in the standard of living and the increase in poverty-related diseases. The Committee expresses its profound concern about the inadequacy of measures being taken to combat this problem.

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837. The Committee urges the State party to allot a large share of the national budget surplus to the State party's struggle against poverty. The Committee furthermore urges the State party to fully integrate human rights, including economic, social and cultural rights, in the formulation of a national strategy for poverty reduction. In this regard, the Committee refers the State party to the statement on poverty and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, adopted by the Committee on 4 May 2001...

- Croatia, ICESCR, E/2002/22 (2001) 125 at paras. 901 and 914.

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901. The Committee is concerned about the deterioration in the general standard of living in the State party, which has ensued in part from economic instability, high levels of unemployment, non-payment of salaries of many workers, the unrecovered pension payments made by Croatians prior to independence and the destruction during the war of vital infrastructure and settlements that have not yet been reconstructed. The Committee is concerned that some reconstruction efforts appear to have been disproportionately benefiting certain ethnic groups.

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914. The Committee urges the State party to structure its data collection efforts in the future in such a way as to be able to identify clearly the most disadvantaged and marginalized groups of society. It calls on the State party to conduct studies of all its laws, policies and practices with a view to assessing their effects on those groups, especially with regard to those areas that most directly affect their basic living conditions, such as employment, housing restitution, relocation, tenancy rights, health care, naturalization and education. All data should be disaggregated by minority groups, as well as by gender, religion, disability and any other relevant criteria that will help the State party develop targeted programmes to help those most in need.

- Jamaica, ICESCR, E/2002/22 (2001) 130 at para. 938.

938. The Committee is concerned that more than one third of the population lives in poverty despite measures taken by the State party, such as the implementation of a National Poverty Eradication Programme. The Committee has received reports from Jamaican non-governmental organizations that poverty rates are highest among women, particularly women who head single-parent households. The reports also state that while the State party has undertaken significant steps to improve the housing situation, thousands of Jamaicans continue to live in deplorable conditions in wooden and tin shacks with no running water or electricity. The Committee also expresses special concern for farmers who, allegedly owing to free trade agreements, are unable to compete with prices of cheaper imported foods on local markets, which has eroded their ability to provide for their families.

- Czech Republic, ICESCR, E/2003/22 (2002) 25 at paras. 77, 87, 94 and 107.

77. The Committee is concerned that the inadequacy of the social safety nets during the restructuring and privatization process has negatively affected the enjoyment of economic, social and cultural rights, in particular by the most disadvantaged and marginalized groups.

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87. The Committee is...concerned about the inadequacy of measures to ensure a decent life for persons with disabilities, including the mentally ill.

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94. The Committee strongly recommends to the State party to integrate the provisions of the Covenant into its privatization programmes and provide for social safety nets in carrying them out.

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107. The Committee recommends that the State party adopt effective measures to ensure more appropriate living conditions for persons with disabilities...

- Ireland, ICESCR, E/2003/22 (2002) 29 at paras. 131, 133, 142 and 145.

131. The Committee is concerned about the inadequacy of the minimum wage and welfare payment levels set by the State party in relation to its obligations under articles 7, 9 and 11 of the Covenant.

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133. The Committee is concerned that the State party, despite the Committee's recommendation in,<sup>14/</sup> has still not adopted a human rights-based approach to the revised National Anti-Poverty Strategy.

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142. The Committee urges the State party to reconsider its methods of fixing the minimum wage and welfare payment levels so as to ensure they conform to the State party's obligations under articles 7, 9 and 11 of the Covenant.

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145. The Committee urges the State party: (a) to ensure that the Combat Poverty Agency is well-resourced and able to fulfill, in an effective manner, its statutory advisory functions; (b) to give proper attention to the research and recommendations of the Agency; and (c) to integrate human rights into the revised National Anti-Poverty Strategy, in accordance with the Committee's Statement on poverty and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.<sup>16/</sup> In this regard, the Committee reaffirms the State party's obligation to make the Covenant rights enforceable in domestic legislation and confirms that, whether or not the State party takes this step, it still has a legal obligation to integrate economic, social and cultural rights into the National Strategy.

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### Notes

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<sup>14/</sup> [Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2000, Supplement No. 2 (E/2000/22-E/C.12/1999/11 and Corr.1), chap. V,] para. 134.

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<sup>16/</sup> [Official Records of the Economic and Social Council,] 2002, Supplement No. 2

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(E/2002/22-E/C.12/2001/17), annex VII.

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- Benin, ICESCR, E/2003/22 (2002) 34 at paras. 164, 176, 183 and 195.

164. The Committee is concerned at the serious problem of poverty facing the State party. Despite positive economic growth since 1995, a large proportion of the population is living below the poverty line.

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176. The Committee notes with concern the disparities in living standards between urban and rural areas, given that people living in rural areas have considerably less access to drinking water, sanitation and electricity and that the privatization of water and electricity are leading to a rise in costs.

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183. The Committee recommends the State party to step up its efforts to reduce the impact of poverty among the population, in particular through more equitable distribution of resources and better access to services for those in need. It also urges the State party to include economic, social and cultural rights in its poverty reduction strategy document.

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195. The Committee urges the State party to do whatever is necessary to reduce the current disparities between urban and rural areas, by improving access to water, electricity and sanitation in rural areas and ensuring that water and electricity remain affordable.

- United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, ICESCR, E/2003/22 (2002) 40 at paras. 218, 221, 228, 236 and 240.

218. The Committee is concerned that the national minimum wage is not set at a level that provides all workers with an adequate standard of living in accordance with articles 7(a)(ii) and 11 of the Covenant. The Committee is also concerned that the minimum wage protection does not extend to workers under 18 years of age. The Committee considers that the minimum wage scheme is discriminatory on the basis of age, as it affords a smaller proportion of the minimum wage to persons between 18 and 22 years of age.

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221. The Committee reiterates its concern about the persistence of considerable levels of poverty, especially in certain parts of the country, such as Northern Ireland, and among certain sections of the population, such as ethnic minorities, persons with disabilities and older persons. Moreover, despite measures taken by the State party to combat poverty and social exclusion, the gap between the rich and poor in the State party has increased, according to information provided by the State party. The Committee also notes with particular concern the high levels of child poverty among certain groups of society in the



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State party.

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228. The Committee...recommends, recalling its recommendation made in 1997,<sup>23/</sup> that the State party review and strengthen its institutional arrangements, within the government administration, which are designed to ensure that its obligations under the Covenant are taken into account, at an early stage, in the Government's formulation of national legislation and policy on issues such as poverty reduction, social welfare, housing, health and education. Given that its general comments are based upon experience gained over many years, including the examination of numerous States parties' reports, the Committee urges the State party to give careful consideration to its general comments and statements when formulating policies that bear upon economic, social and cultural rights.

...

236. The Committee urges the State party to ensure that the level of the national minimum wage is determined with due regard to the requirements of an adequate standard of living. Moreover, the Committee recommends that the minimum wage protection be extended to workers under 18 years of age and that the scheme be applied in a non-discriminatory manner to persons between 18 and 22 years of age.

...

240. The Committee urges the State party to continue to address the problem of poverty and social exclusion as a matter of high priority, with special focus on the needs of marginalized and vulnerable groups, and particular regions, such as Northern Ireland. When formulating its anti-poverty policies and programmes, the State party is urged to give the most careful attention to the Committee's Statement on poverty and the Covenant.<sup>16/</sup>

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### Notes

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<sup>16/</sup> [Official Records of the Economic and Social Council,] 2002, Supplement No. 2 (E/2002/22-E/C.12/2001/17), annex VII.

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<sup>23/</sup> [See Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1998, Supplement No. 2 (E/1998/22-E/C.12/1997/10) chap. V], para. 316.

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- Trinidad and Tobago, ICESCR, E/2003/22 (2002) 45 at paras. 263, 266, 275, 286, 289 and 298.

263. The Committee is concerned about the lack of facilities for persons with disabilities, who are unable to participate in many occupations owing to physical barriers and lack of equipment.

...

## ADEQUATE OR DECENT STANDARD OF LIVING - GENERAL

266. The Committee is concerned that the minimum wage is not sufficient to provide a decent standard of living for workers and their families.

...

275. The Committee is concerned about the large number of people living below the poverty line, especially women heading single parent households, who receive insufficient protection from the State party in the enjoyment of their economic, social and cultural rights.

...

286. The Committee urges that the State party enact specific legislation and adopt concrete measures to ensure better living conditions for persons with disabilities.

...

289. The Committee recommends that the State party review the minimum wage level in order to enable workers to attain an adequate standard of living for themselves and their families.

...

298. The Committee urges the State party to integrate economic, social and cultural rights into its poverty reduction programmes . In this regard, the State party is urged to give the most careful attention to the Committee's Statement on poverty and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.<sup>16/</sup>

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### Notes

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<sup>16/</sup> [*Official Records of the Economic and Social Council,*] 2002, *Supplement No. 2* (E/2002/22-E/C.12/2001/17), annex VII.

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- Slovakia, ICESCR, E/2003/22 (2002) 50 at paras. 314 and 325-327.

314. The Committee is deeply concerned about discrimination against Roma people in the fields of employment, housing, health care and education. Although the State party acknowledges this fact, the legislative and administrative measures undertaken by the State party to improve the socio-economic conditions of the Roma are still insufficient to address the problem...

...

325. The Committee recommends that the State party take into account its obligations under the Covenant in the formulation of its social welfare, housing, health and education policies.

326. The Committee also recommends to the State party that human rights, including economic, social and cultural rights, be reflected in its official development assistance policy.

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327. The Committee urges the State party to take concrete measures, including the adoption of a comprehensive anti-discrimination law, in accordance with article 2, paragraph 2, of the Covenant, to combat and eliminate discrimination against minority groups, in particular against Roma people.

- Poland, ICESCR, E/2003/22 (2002) 54 at paras. 361, 383 and 390.

361. The Committee is concerned that the minimum wage in Poland is insufficient to provide a worker and his/her family with a decent standard of living.

...

383. The Committee...recommends that the State party regularly evaluate and adjust the minimum wage on the basis of the cost of living so as to ensure that the worker and his/her family are able to have a decent standard of living.

...

390. The Committee recommends that the State party closely monitor the level of poverty...The Committee furthermore urges the State party to fully integrate human rights, including economic, social and cultural rights, in the formulation of a national strategy for poverty reduction. In this respect, the Committee refers the State party to the Committee's Statement on poverty and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.<sup>16/</sup>

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### Notes

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<sup>16/</sup> [Official Records of the Economic and Social Council,] 2002, Supplement No. 2 (E/2002/22-E/C.12/2001/17), annex VII.

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### **See also:**

- Slovakia, ICESCR, E/2003/22 (2002) 50 at paras. 317, 326 and 333.
  - Solomon Islands, ICESCR, E/2003/22 (2002) 65 at para. 472.
  - Estonia, ICESCR, E/2003/22 (2002) at paras. 498, 521 and 527.
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- Georgia, ICESCR, E/2003/22 (2002) 59 at paras. 410, 411, 414, 416, 420, 422, 423, 429, 430, 432, 434, 438, 439 and 441.

410. The Committee is deeply concerned that the State party has not been able to address adequately the widespread and rampant problem of corruption, as it is one of the primary causes of the decrease in, and the inappropriate allocation of, revenue and resources, thus adding to the extremely difficult economic, social and cultural situation in the State party.

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The Committee is particularly concerned about the limited effectiveness of the use of foreign funds received in the context of international cooperation.

411. The Committee expresses deep concern about the deplorable situation of internally displaced persons in the State party. The State party's efforts to provide basic services to this disadvantaged group and special legislation adopted to that end have succeeded only partially in meeting the most basic needs of internally displaced persons, particularly with regard to employment, social security, adequate housing and access to water, electricity, basic health services and education.

...

414. The Committee is...deeply concerned about the extremely low level of salaries in the State party, including the minimum wage which is far below the minimum level of subsistence. Moreover, the Committee reiterates its concern that employees in various sectors of the economy are often not paid on time.

...

416. The Committee is concerned about the extremely low level of the social security benefits, which is far below the minimum level of subsistence, and about the fact that these benefits are often paid in arrears.

...

420. The Committee reiterates its grave concern about the constantly increasing level of poverty in the State party and the inadequacy of the measures undertaken to combat poverty. The Committee also reiterates its previous observations that there seems to be a lack of effective management, transparency and accountability in the policy-making and implementation phases.<sup>30/</sup>

...

422. The Committee expresses concern about the poor living conditions of the majority of the State party's population, including an inadequate supply of water and irregular provision of electricity and heating, which particularly affect the most disadvantaged and marginalized groups of society, such as older persons, persons with disabilities, internally displaced persons, prisoners and persons living in poverty.

423. The Committee expresses deep concern about the insufficiency of material and technical resources, medication, hygienic and sanitary conditions and food in hospitals, as well as about the low wages of the medical staff, resulting in the common practice of charging informal fees for basic health-care services that are formally provided free of charge. A particular negative effect of such informal fees is that it puts basic health care even further beyond the reach of the poorest and most disadvantaged groups of society.

...

429. The Committee strongly urges the State party to take effective measures to combat corruption and, in particular, to increase transparency and consultations at all levels of decision-making and concerning the evaluation of distribution of funds, especially with regard to the determination of the use of aid, the monitoring of fund distribution and the

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evaluation of impact.

430. The Committee strongly recommends that the State party take effective measures, in consultation with relevant civil society organizations, to improve the situation of internally displaced persons, including the adoption of a comprehensive programme of action aiming at ensuring more effectively their rights to adequate housing, food and water, health services and sanitation, employment and education, and the regularization of their status in the State party.

...

432. The Committee strongly recommends that the State party intensify steps to ensure the right to work and the right to just and favourable conditions of work, in particular more timely payment of wages, and to establish the minimum wage at a level adequate for the requirements of the minimum level of subsistence.

...

434. The Committee strongly recommends that the State party undertake reform of the social security system, including the establishment of a clearer relationship between pensions and previous employment; the raising of social security benefits to a level closer to the subsistence minimum; and the payment of benefits in a more timely manner, in particular to those most disadvantaged and marginalized groups that have no other means of subsistence.

...

438. The Committee encourages the State party, in preparing its poverty reduction strategies, in particular the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper for the World Bank, to ensure active and meaningful participation of members of civil society. The State party may also wish to take into account the Committee's Statement on poverty, and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights<sup>16/</sup> and the draft guidelines for the integration of human rights into poverty reduction strategies, proposed by the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights in 2002.

...

439. The Committee urges the State party to continue its efforts to improve the living conditions of its population, in particular by ensuring that the infrastructure for water, energy provision and heating is improved, and by paying priority attention to the needs of the most disadvantaged and marginalized groups of society, such as older persons, persons with disabilities, internally displaced persons, prisoners and persons living in poverty.

...

441. The Committee urges the State party to undertake effective measures to improve the living and working conditions in hospitals, ensure adequate wages for the medical staff, and actively combat the practice of informal fees.

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### Notes

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<sup>16/</sup> [Official Records of the Economic and Social Council,] 2002, Supplement No. 2

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(E/2002/22-E/C.12/2001/17), annex VII.

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30/ [Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2001, Supplement No. 2 (E/2001/22-E/C.12/2000/21), chap. IV], paras. 81 and 82.

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- Solomon Islands, ICESCR, E/2003/22 (2002) 65 at paras. 457 and 470.

457. The Committee is...concerned that the erosion of the traditional social support among relatives and the *wantok* system is not being complemented and supported by some other forms of social assistance.

...

470. The Committee...recommends that the State party take effective measures to address the problem of the erosion of traditional support system and *wantok* communities, particularly in rural areas, and complement and support such a system by some other forms of social assistance.

- Estonia, ICESCR, E/2003/22 (2002) 68 at paras. 500, 505 and 523.

500. The Committee...expresses its concern that unemployment benefits, which are calculated at 50 per cent of the amount earned in a previous job, may in some cases be insufficient to secure a decent standard of living for a worker and his/her family.

...

505. The Committee is concerned that the improved economic situation in the State party has not yet resulted in the reduction of the poverty level and economic inequalities between its populations. In this regard, the Committee notes with regret that it did not receive adequate information on how the national poverty line is defined and on the number of people living below the poverty line.

...

523. The Committee further recommends that the State party undertake the necessary measures to ensure that the lowest level of unemployment benefit is sufficient to secure a decent standard of living for a worker and his/her family.

- Brazil, ICESCR, E/2004/22 (2003) 28 at paras. 124, 138-140, 147, 162, 163 and 168.

124. The Committee notes with concern the persistent and extreme inequalities among the various geographic regions, states and municipalities, and the social injustice prevalent in the State party. The Committee is also concerned about imbalances in the distribution of resources and income and access to basic services in the State party.

## ADEQUATE OR DECENT STANDARD OF LIVING - GENERAL

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138. The Committee notes with concern the high concentration of land in the hands of a minority, and its negative effects on the equitable distribution of wealth.

139. In spite of the efforts taken by the State party to reduce poverty, the Committee is concerned about the persistence of poverty in the State party, especially in the north-east, in rural areas and among Afro-Brazilians and disadvantaged and marginalized groups.

140. The Committee notes with concern that, according to the State party's report, at least 42 per cent of families currently live in inadequate housing facilities without adequate water supply, waste disposal and trash collection. It also notes that 50 per cent of the population of major urban areas lives in informal urban communities (illegal settlements and homes, as stated in paragraph 512 of the State party's report).

...

147. The Committee recommends that the State party take immediate remedial action to reduce the persistent, extreme inequalities and imbalances in the distribution of resources and income and access to basic services among various geographical regions, states and municipalities, including speeding up the process of agrarian reform and of granting land titles.

...

162. The Committee urges the State party to take effective measures to combat the problem of poverty, including the setting up of a national anti-poverty strategy that would include economic, social and cultural rights. In this regard, the Committee refers the State party to its statement on poverty and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.<sup>7/</sup>

163. The Committee urges the State party to give effect to its national housing policy and its federal housing programmes and to adopt nationwide policies in order to ensure that families have adequate housing facilities and amenities. In this respect, the Committee draws the State party's attention to its general comment No. 4 (1991) on the right to adequate housing (art. 11 (1) of the Covenant).

...

168. The Committee urges the State party to undertake appropriate measures to ensure effective realization of agrarian reform.

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### Notes

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<sup>7/</sup> [Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2002, Supplement No. 2 (E/2002/22-E/C.12/2001/17), chap. VII], para. 162.

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## ADEQUATE OR DECENT STANDARD OF LIVING - GENERAL

- New Zealand, ICESCR, E/2004/22 (2003) 35 at paras. 190, 201, 202 and 205.

190. The Committee notes with concern that nearly one in four persons lives in poverty according to the measurement commonly used in the State party, and that clear indicators are lacking to assess the effectiveness of measures to combat poverty.

...

201. While acknowledging the ongoing reform of the social welfare system, the Committee recommends that in targeting assistance more specifically to disadvantaged and marginalized groups, including persons with special needs, single-parent families and homeless persons, concerns to contain costs do not lead to a decrease in the level of effective social protection.

202. Given the complexity of the social welfare system with a range of different social security benefits, assistance measures and entitlement conditions, the Committee recommends that the State party widely disseminate accessible information on the system to all, and especially to those who, owing to language, educational or cultural difficulties, need specific targeted information.

...

205. The Committee recommends that the State party adopt a national plan to combat poverty with clear indicators to assess its impact on the incidence of poverty, in particular among disadvantaged and marginalized groups, the indigenous Maori people and Pacific Islanders. In this respect, the Committee refers the State party to its statement on poverty and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.<sup>7/</sup>

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### Notes

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<sup>7/</sup> *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2002, Supplement No. 2 (E/2002/22-E/C.12/2001/17), annex VII).*

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- Iceland, ICESCR, E/2004/22 (2003) 39 at paras. 227, 228, 237 and 238.

227. The Committee notes with concern that the support provided to single-parent families remains insufficient.

228. The Committee is concerned about the existence of poverty and social exclusion in the State party, in spite of the efforts undertaken to combat the phenomenon.

...

237. The Committee urges the State party to increase its efforts to provide greater support to single-parent families.

238. The Committee reiterates its recommendation made in its earlier concluding



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observations on the poverty situation in Iceland<sup>10/</sup> and urges the State party to pursue efforts to combat poverty and social exclusion, particularly of the disadvantaged and marginalized groups, with the adoption of clear indicators to assess progress achieved...The Committee refers the State party to its statement on poverty and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.<sup>7/</sup>

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### Notes

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<sup>7/</sup> *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2002, Supplement No. 2 (E/2002/22-E/C.12/2001/17), annex VII).*

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<sup>10/</sup> [*Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2000, Supplement No. 2 (E/2000/22-E/C.12/1999/11 and Corr.1), chap. IV], para. 88.*

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- Israel, ICESCR, E/2004/22 (2003) 42 at paras. 259, 262, 270, 275, 278 and 286.

259. The Committee is deeply concerned about the continuing difference in treatment between Jews and non-Jews, in particular Arab and Bedouin communities, with regard to their enjoyment of economic, social and cultural rights in the State party's territory. The Committee reiterates its concern that the excessive emphasis upon the State as a "Jewish State" encourages discrimination and accords a second-class status to its non-Jewish citizens.<sup>15/</sup> This discriminatory attitude is apparent in the continuing lower standard of living of Israeli Arabs as a result, *inter alia*, of higher unemployment rates, restricted access to and participation in trade unions, lack of access to housing, water, electricity and health care and a lower level of education, despite the State party's efforts to close the gap. In this regard, the Committee expresses its concern that the State party's domestic legal order does not enshrine the general principles of equality and non-discrimination.

...

262. The Committee deeply regrets the refusal of the State party to provide in its second periodic report additional information on the living conditions of population groups other than Israeli settlers in the occupied territories as requested in its 2001 concluding observations. The Committee continues to be gravely concerned about the deplorable living conditions of the Palestinians in the occupied territories, who - as a result of the continuing occupation and subsequent measures of closures, extended curfews, roadblocks and security checkpoints - suffer from impingement of their enjoyment of economic, social and cultural rights enshrined in the Covenant, in particular access to work, land, water, health care, education and food.

...

270. The Committee continues to be concerned about the situation of Bedouins residing in Israel, and in particular those living in villages that are still unrecognized.<sup>19/</sup> Despite

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measures by the State party to close the gap between the living conditions of Jews and Bedouins in the Negev, the quality of living and housing conditions of the Bedouins continues to be significantly lower, with limited or no access to water, electricity and sanitation. Moreover, Bedouins continue to be subjected on a regular basis to land confiscations, house demolitions, fines for building “illegally”, destruction of agricultural crops, fields and trees, and systematic harassment and persecution by the Green Patrol, in order to force them to resettle in “townships”. The Committee is also concerned that the present compensation scheme for Bedouins who agree to resettle in “townships” is inadequate.

...

275. The Committee reiterates its recommendation that the State party take steps to ensure equality of treatment of all Israeli citizens in relation to all Covenant rights.<sup>20/</sup>

...

278. ...The Committee...calls upon the State party to give full effect to its Covenant obligations and, as a matter of the highest priority, to undertake to ensure safe passage at checkpoints for Palestinian medical staff and people seeking treatment, the unhampered flow of essential foodstuffs and supplies, free movement to places of employment, and the safe conduct of students and teachers to and from schools.<sup>23/</sup>

...

286. The Committee...urges the State party to recognize all existing Bedouin villages, their property rights and their right to basic services, in particular water, and to desist from the destruction and damaging of agricultural crops and fields, including in unrecognized villages. The Committee further encourages the State party to adopt an adequate compensation scheme for Bedouins who have agreed to resettle in “townships”.

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### Notes

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<sup>15/</sup> [*Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1999, Supplement No. 2 (E/1999/22-E/C.12/1998/26), chap. IV*], para. 236.

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<sup>19/</sup> [*Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1999, Supplement No. 2 (E/1999/22-E/C.12/1998/26), chap. IV*], para. 254.

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<sup>20/</sup> [*Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1999, Supplement No. 2 (E/1999/22-E/C.12/1998/26), chap. IV*], para. 260.

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<sup>23/</sup> [*Official Records of the Economic and Social Council*], 1999, Supplement No. 2 (E/1999/22-E/C.12/1998/26), chap. IV, para. 265.

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- Republic of Moldova, ICESCR, E/2004/22 (2003) 49 at paras. 306, 307, 312, 319, 328, 329,

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334 and 341.

306. The Committee is concerned that the minimum wage in the State party is not sufficient to provide workers with a decent living for themselves and their families in contravention of articles 7 and 11 of the Covenant.

307. The Committee expresses its concern that the current levels of social benefits and pensions are inadequate.

...

312. The Committee is concerned that an estimated 40 per cent of the population live in absolute poverty, and that extreme poverty is especially pronounced in rural areas and among children.

...

319. The Committee is concerned about the high rates of non-attendance and high dropout rates in primary and secondary education. It notes with particular concern that the main reason for non-attendance is acute family poverty. The Committee is also concerned about the lack of pre-school education.

...

328. The Committee urges the State party to increase its efforts to establish a national minimum wage that would be sufficient to ensure an adequate standard of living for workers and their families according to articles 7 and 11 of the Covenant. Moreover, the State party should introduce a mechanism to determine and regularly adjust the minimum wage in proportion to the cost of living as envisaged in the draft legislation on the subsistence level.

329. The Committee urges the State party to ensure that the social security and pension systems under reform give special attention to the needs of the most disadvantaged and vulnerable groups in society...

...

334. The Committee calls upon the State party to strengthen its efforts to combat poverty under the National Poverty Alleviation Programme and to give special attention to the most vulnerable groups, including children and people living in rural areas. It urges the State party to develop a mechanism for measuring the poverty level and to monitor it closely...

...

341. The Committee urges the State party to reinforce its efforts to ensure that children are not prevented from attending school because of poverty in the family. It also recommends that the State party consider establishing new pre-school educational institutions...

- Yemen, ICESCR, E/2004/22 (2003) 55 at paras. 354, 360, 373 and 379.

354. The Committee regrets the absence of a minimum wage.

...

## ADEQUATE OR DECENT STANDARD OF LIVING - GENERAL

360. The Committee is deeply concerned about the persistence of extreme poverty in the State party, especially in rural areas, and among the disadvantaged and marginalized groups.

...

373. The Committee recommends that the State party establish a system of adequate remuneration which is sufficient to ensure a decent living for workers and their families, in accordance with article 7 of the Covenant.

...

379. The Committee...urges the State party to take effective measures to combat the problem of poverty, including the effective implementation of its poverty reduction strategy.

- Guatemala, ICESCR, E/2004/22 (2003) 59 at paras. 414-416 and 432-434.

414. The Committee is concerned about the high level of poverty which affects, according to official statistics, 73.8 per cent of the indigenous population and 40.6 per cent of the non-indigenous populations.

415. The Committee is concerned about the negative effects of the coffee crisis on rural employment and standard of living.

416. The Committee continues to be deeply concerned that the uneven distribution of wealth and land and the high level of social exclusion, in particular among indigenous and rural populations, hinder the full enjoyment of economic, social and cultural rights.

...

432. The Committee recommends that the State party intensify its programmes and activities to combat poverty and improve the living conditions of the population of Guatemala, in particular of the marginalized and vulnerable groups, including indigenous peoples...

433. The Committee encourages the State party to reorient its agricultural policies and to implement its social plan to combat the coffee crisis through measures that ensure access to adequate nutrition, health care, subsidized housing and employment opportunities for those affected by the crisis.

434. The Committee reiterates its previous recommendation<sup>27/</sup> and urges the State party to implement the measures contained in the peace agreements of 1996, in particular those related to the agrarian reform and the devolution of communal indigenous lands.

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### Notes

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<sup>27/</sup> *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1997, Supplement No. 2 (E/1997/22-E/C.12/1996/6)*, chap. IV, para. 137.

## ADEQUATE OR DECENT STANDARD OF LIVING - GENERAL

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- Russian Federation, ICESCR, E/2004/22 (2003) 64 at paras. 452, 460, 464, 467, 480, 488, 492 and 495.

452. The Committee is deeply concerned about the poor living conditions in the Republic of Chechnya and notes with regret that sufficient information was not provided on this problem in the State party's report. While acknowledging the difficulties posed by the ongoing military operations, the Committee is concerned about the problems faced by people in the Republic of Chechnya with regard to the provision of basic services, including health care and education.

...

460. The Committee remains concerned about the low level of wages in the State party, with an estimated 32.8 per cent of workers earning wages equal to or below the subsistence level. The Committee notes that the situation is aggravated by the persistent problem of wage arrears. The low level of the minimum wage is also a cause of concern since it remains well below the minimum subsistence level and is inadequate to provide workers with a decent living for themselves and their families (arts. 7 and 11 of the Covenant).

...

464. The Committee remains concerned about the inadequate amounts paid in pensions and social benefits, while noting that the problem of arrears has been addressed.

...

467. The Committee is concerned that income disparities, which have further increased in the reporting period, affect the standard of living of a considerable part of Russian society, and that, despite economic recovery in the last years, the level of poverty in the State party has still not been brought down to the pre-1998 level. The Committee is also deeply concerned that, according to the most recent figures (2002), an estimated 35.8 million people, or 25 per cent of the population, live on an income below the minimum subsistence level.

...

480. The Committee urges the State party to allocate sufficient funds to reinstate basic services, including the health and education infrastructure, in the Republic of Chechnya.

...

488. The Committee urges the State party to take effective measures to raise wages, prevent wage arrears, and ensure the implementation of article 133 of the Labour Code, which, in line with the Covenant, stipulates that the minimum wage must not be lower than the worker's minimum subsistence level.

...

492. The Committee urges the State party to ensure that under the new pensions system, introduced by the Federal Law of 1 January 2002, the basic component of pensions is raised to the minimum subsistence level. In view of the fact that the realization of this goal may

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take time, owing to limited resources, the Committee urges the State party to give priority to raising minimum pension levels and to ensuring that social benefits are targeted to the families most in need.

...

495. The Committee urges the State party, in order to fulfil its Covenant obligations under article 11, to ensure that the increase in available funds in the State budget is also used to promote an adequate standard of living for all, including through a comprehensive national strategy to combat poverty...

- Democratic People's Republic of Korea, ICESCR, E/2004/22 (2003) 71 at paras. 524, 527, 544 and 547.

524. The Committee is concerned about information according to which citizens of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea who travel abroad without a passport in quest of employment and better living conditions are sent to labour camps upon return to their country.

...

527. The Committee is concerned about information according to which some segments of the population are still suffering hardship because of the period of reconstruction and reform and may be in need of extra support from the public authorities.

...

544. The Committee recommends that the national legislation be reviewed in order to eliminate penalties against persons having travelled abroad in quest of employment and better living conditions.

...

547. The Committee invites the State party to explore the possibility of increasing in due course the budgetary allocations for social expenditure, as well as public assistance for people in need, and of enabling persons looking for employment, particularly women, to find jobs on the territory of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

- Lithuania, ICESCR, E/2005/22 (2004) 18 at paras. 79, 82, 83, 89, 101, 104, 105 and 111.

79. The Committee notes with concern the low level of the minimum wage, which is inadequate to provide workers with a decent living for themselves and their families, and the lack of a system of indexation and regular adjustment of the minimum wage to the cost of living.

...

82. The Committee expresses its concern that basic pensions are insufficient to ensure an adequate standard of living. The absence of a system of indexing basic pensions to the consumer price index and to the minimum subsistence level is also a cause of concern.

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83. The Committee notes with concern the low level of unemployment benefits and that these benefits were granted only to 11.5 per cent of all unemployed persons in 2002 owing to strict eligibility conditions.

...

89. The Committee is concerned about the situation in rural areas of the State party where, as reported in the State party's written replies to the list of issues, lack of agricultural reforms has left nearly a quarter of the Lithuanian population with no economic prospects or hope.

...

101. The Committee urges the State party to work towards ensuring that the minimum wage is sufficient to provide workers and their families with a decent standard of living. Moreover, the State party should introduce a mechanism to regularly index and adjust the minimum wage to the cost of living on a regular basis.

...

104. The Committee urges the State party to put in place a system of indexing the level of basic pensions reflecting changes in the cost of living, and to ensure that basic pensions are sufficient to provide for an adequate standard of living. The Committee encourages the State party to proceed with its plans to ratify ILO Convention No. 102 (1952) concerning Minimum Standards of Social Security and to consider ratifying ILO Convention No. 118 (1962) concerning Equality of Treatment of Nationals and Non-Nationals in Social Security.

105. The Committee recommends that the State party increase the coverage and amount of unemployment benefits, so as to ensure that they are sufficient to secure an adequate standard of living and further loosen the eligibility conditions.

...

111. The Committee calls upon the State party to strengthen programmes aimed at improving living conditions in rural areas. It also recommends that the State party develop a mechanism to measure and monitor levels of poverty...

- Greece, ICESCR, E/2005/22 (2004) 23 at paras. 135, 142, 156 and 164.

135. The Committee is concerned that low income persons, the Roma, and documented and undocumented immigrants and their families may not have access to social services.

...

142. The Committee is deeply concerned that many Roma reportedly live in sub-standard conditions, as their settlements often lack access to running water, electricity, sanitation and other essential services.

...

156. The Committee urges the State party to ensure access of disadvantaged and marginalized persons and families to individual as well as collective social services...

...

## ADEQUATE OR DECENT STANDARD OF LIVING - GENERAL

164. The Committee urges the State party to take measures towards providing for all the Roma, including itinerant and non-Greek Roma, adequate and affordable housing with legal security of tenure, access to safe drinking water, adequate sanitation, electricity and other essential services, and meeting their specific cultural needs. The Committee recommends that the State party ensure the participation of Roma representatives in the assessment of the Integrated Action Plan for the Social Integration of Greek Roma...

- Kuwait, ICESCR, E/2005/22 (2004) 29 at paras. 188 and 207.

188. The Committee notes with concern the absence of a minimum wage in the private sector. It is also concerned that minimum wage in the public sector is not applicable to non-Kuwaiti citizens.

...

207. The Committee urges the State party to establish a minimum wage in the private sector that will enable workers and their families, especially non-Kuwaiti citizens, to enjoy a decent standard of living. The Committee also recommends that the minimum wage in the public sector should apply without discrimination to both Kuwaiti and non-Kuwaiti citizens. The Committee recommends that the State party ratify ILO Convention No. 131 (1970) concerning Minimum Wage Fixing, with Special Reference to Developing Countries.

- Ecuador, ICESCR, E/2005/22 (2004) 39 at paras. 283, 292, 306 and 317.

283. The Committee is particularly concerned that the minimum wage is not sufficient to provide a decent living for workers and their families and that in practice such a minimum wage is not always paid.

...

292. The Committee is deeply concerned about the persistent and growing level of poverty in the State party, affecting primarily women, children, indigenous and Afro-Ecuadorian communities.

...

306. The Committee urges the State party to take the necessary measures in order to ensure that the minimum wage enables workers and their families to enjoy an adequate standard of living and that the minimum wage standard is effectively enforced.

...

317. The Committee encourages the State party to intensify its efforts and activities to combat poverty, including the setting up of an antipoverty strategy to improve the living conditions of the disadvantaged and marginalized groups...In this regard, the Committee refers the State party to its statement adopted on 4 May 2001 on poverty and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.



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- Denmark, ICESCR, E/2005/22 (2004) 49 at paras. 394 and 407.

394. The Committee regrets the absence of disaggregated statistical data on the extent of poverty in the State party's report, particularly among refugees and the immigrant population, and notes that the State party has yet to adopt an official poverty line, which would enable the State party to define the extent of poverty and to monitor and evaluate progress in alleviating poverty.

...

407. The Committee calls upon the State party to strengthen its efforts to combat poverty and social exclusion and to develop a mechanism for measuring the poverty level and monitor it closely. In this respect, the Committee refers the State party to its statement on Poverty and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights...

- Italy, ICESCR, E/2005/22 (2004) 54 at paras. 430, 431, 451 and 452.

430. The Committee is concerned at the continued existence of a large informal economy in the State party which, *inter alia*, infringes upon the enjoyment of the economic, social and cultural rights of those employed therein, including children.

431. The Committee reiterates its concern about the persistent regional inequalities and the considerable levels of poverty, especially in the southern parts of the country. The Committee takes note of the decision by the State party to increase the assessment period for the Minimum Integration Income scheme, which is presently being implemented by 306 municipalities.

...

451. The Committee recommends that the State party increase its efforts to effectively regularize the informal labour sector.

452. The Committee urges the State party to integrate economic, social and cultural rights in its National Action Plan against Poverty and Social Exclusion. In this regard, the Committee refers the State party to the Committee's statement on Poverty and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. The Committee also urges the State party to establish the Minimum Integration Income Scheme at the national level to combat poverty.

- Azerbaijan, ICESCR, E/2005/22 (2004) 59 at paras. 485, 487, 491, 492, 511, 513, 517 and 518.

485. While noting the efforts taken by the State party to increase the minimum wage, the

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Committee is concerned that the current minimum wage is still insufficient to provide a decent standard of living for workers and their families. The Committee is further concerned that in practice the minimum wage is not always enforced, given the large percentage of the population who work in the informal sector.

...

487. The Committee is concerned about the State party's plans to increase the volume of social benefits by decreasing the number of beneficiaries in order to ensure the appropriate level of life.

...

491. In spite of the efforts made by the State party to improve the economic and social conditions of refugees and internally displaced persons, the Committee is concerned at the fact that they still do not enjoy an adequate standard of living.

492. The Committee is deeply concerned that despite the sizeable amount of foreign investment (14.5 billion United States dollars) and efforts by the State party to eliminate poverty, including the State Programme on Poverty Reduction and Economic Development for 2003-2005, poverty is estimated by the World Bank to affect approximately 50 per cent of the population (2003 data).

...

511. The Committee urges the State party to continue to take the necessary measures to ensure that the minimum wage enables workers and their families to enjoy an adequate standard of living and that the minimum wage standard is enforced. The Committee further encourages the State party to establish an effective system of indexation and regular adjustment of the minimum wage to the cost of living.

...

513. The Committee recommends that the State party undertake measures to ensure that social security benefits are adequate. The Committee further recommends that the State party ensure that targeted social assistance depending on family income is guaranteed to all disadvantaged and marginalized persons, including refugees and internally displaced persons, and that such assistance does not fall below the subsistence level. The Committee also encourages the State party to consider ratifying ILO Conventions No. 102 (1952) concerning Minimum Standards of Social Security, No. 117 (1962) concerning Basic Aims and Standards of Social Policy and No. 118 (1962) concerning Equality of Treatment of Nationals and Non-Nationals in Social Security.

...

517. The Committee strongly recommends that the State party continue to take effective measures, including through the allocation of increased resources, to ensure the protection of the fundamental economic, social and cultural rights of refugees and internally displaced persons, in particular with regard to adequate housing, food and water, health services and sanitation.

518. The Committee urges the State party to integrate economic, social and cultural rights

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into its poverty reduction policies and measures, and in this regard refers the State party to the Committee's Statement on Poverty and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. The Committee also recommends that the State party allocate larger portions of its oil revenues to the social sector and continue to seek international technical assistance, as provided for in article 23 of the Covenant. In this connection, the Committee calls upon the State party to ensure that its international human rights obligations are taken fully into account when it enters into technical cooperation and other arrangements with international organizations.

- Chile, ICESCR, E/2005/22 (2004) 67 at paras. 550 and 576.

550. Despite the significant progress made over the past years and measures taken under the Solidarity-Based Social Protection System, which targets families living in extreme poverty, the Committee remains concerned about poverty in the State party, especially among indigenous peoples.

...

576. The Committee recommends that the State party continue to strengthen its efforts to reduce poverty, especially among indigenous peoples, and to integrate economic, social and cultural rights in all its poverty alleviation programmes. In this regard, it refers the State party to the Committee's Statement on Poverty and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. It also recommends that the State party ensure that adequate resources are allocated towards meeting the goals and targets set under the Solidarity-Based Social Protection System and the Chile Barrio programme.

- Zambia, ICESCR, E/2006/22 (2005) 19 at paras. 77, 87, 95, 110, 117 and 118.

77. The Committee welcomes the existence of the Pilot Social Cash Transfer Scheme financed by international assistance to promote a safety net for poor households which are not able to engage in labour-based projects or programmes owing to extreme poverty.

...

87. The Committee is concerned that the current minimum wage is not sufficient to provide an adequate standard of living for workers and their families and that it is available to few workers, given the large proportion of the population working in the informal sector.

...

95. The Committee is deeply concerned that the extent of extreme poverty in the State party has negatively affected the enjoyment of economic, social and cultural rights as enshrined in the Covenant, especially by the most disadvantaged and marginalized groups, including girl children and those afflicted by HIV/AIDS.

...

110. The Committee recommends that the State party take effective actions and measures

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to ensure that the minimum wage enables workers and their families to enjoy an adequate standard of living and that the minimum wage standard is effectively enforced. The Committee further recommends that the State party establish an effective system of indexation by regularly reviewing minimum wage levels in order to enable workers to attain an adequate standard of living for themselves and their families.

...

117. The Committee recommends that the State party undertake all necessary measures to guarantee an adequate standard of living, including through the provision of social safety nets for the most disadvantaged and marginalized groups, in particular those women and children who have been the hardest hit by structural adjustment programmes, privatization and debt servicing... The Committee also refers the State party to its statement adopted on 4 May 2001 on poverty and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights...

118. The Committee recommends that the State party continue to examine ways and means of supporting the Pilot Social Cash Transfer Scheme even after the present international assistance comes to an end. It also recommends that the project be used as a tool for the implementation of the Voluntary Guidelines to Support the Progressive Realization of the Right to Adequate Food in the Context of National Security adopted by the hundred and twenty-seventh session of the FAO Council and transmitted to the Commission on Human Rights at its sixty-first session in connection with item 10 of the agenda (E/CN.4/2005/131, annex).

- China, ICESCR, E/2006/22 (2005) 25 at paras. 137, 145, 154, 156, 159, 167, 176, 183, 185 and 188.

137. The Committee welcomes the State Council's Directive No. 1/2004 to safeguard farmers' rights and interests and Directive No. 1/2005, waiving taxes on animal husbandry for all regions and agricultural tax for 592 counties listed as priority counties for poverty alleviation.

...

145. The Committee is concerned about the reported persistence of discrimination against persons with physical and mental disabilities, especially in terms of employment, social security, education and health.

...

154. The Committee is concerned that the low level of wages, particularly in rural areas and in the west of the country is insufficient to provide a decent standard of living for workers and their families. The Committee notes that the situation is aggravated by the persistent problem of wage arrears, especially in the construction sector.

...

156. The Committee is concerned that many of the reforms in the formal welfare system

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have not been extended to the countryside, where the local authorities of poor regions have a limited capacity to generate the funds necessary to provide welfare and social services. The Committee notes with concern that the means-tested non-contributory social assistance extended to all urban areas starting in 1996 was similarly extended to some, but not all rural areas.

...

159. The Committee is deeply concerned that despite the rapid economic development in recent years, poverty persists in the country, disproportionately affecting the rural population. The Committee is concerned that in spite of the efforts made by the State party to improve the economic and social conditions of rural populations, the disparity in income and in the enjoyment of an adequate standard of living continues to widen between the rich and the poor, in particular those in urban/rural areas, as well as those in coastal provinces/inland provinces. The Committee also regrets the absence of an official poverty line that would enable the State party to define the extent of poverty and to monitor and evaluate progress in alleviating poverty.

...

167. The Committee notes with concern the reports regarding the discrimination of ethnic minorities in the State party, in particular in the field of employment, adequate standard of living, health, education and culture. In this regard, the Committee regrets the insufficient information provided by the State party regarding the enjoyment of economic, social and cultural rights enshrined in the Covenant by populations in the ethnic minority areas. The Committee notes with concern the reports from sources other than the State party relating to the right to the free exercise of religion as a right to take part in cultural life, and the use and teaching of minority languages, history and culture and the Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region and the Tibet Autonomous Region.

...

176. The Committee recommends that the State party adopt effective measures to ensure equal opportunities for persons with disabilities, especially in the fields of employment, social security, education and health, to provide for more appropriate living conditions for persons with disabilities and to allocate adequate resources for improving the treatment of, and care for, persons with disabilities...

...

183. The Committee urges the State party to continue to take necessary measures to ensure that the minimum wage enables workers and their families to enjoy an adequate standard of living and that the minimum wage standard is effectively enforced, particularly in rural areas and in western areas. The Committee further encourages the State party to establish a wage enforcement mechanism that periodically adjusts minimum wages to the cost of living, facilitate the redress of wage claims and take sanctions against employers who owe wages and overtime pay and impose fines and penalties on their workers.

...

185. The Committee recommends that the State party strengthen the redistributive mechanisms between regions and levels of government, so as to ensure that local authorities

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receive additional funds necessary for adequate provision of welfare and social services to their populations. The Committee urges the State party to extend non-contributory social assistance to the rural areas that are presently not covered, as a means to combat poverty among the rural populations.

...

188. The Committee strongly recommends that the State party take immediate measures, *inter alia*, by increasing allocations, for the protection of economic, social and cultural rights of persons living in disadvantaged areas, in particular with regard to adequate housing, food and water, and health services and sanitation. The Committee calls upon the State party to develop a mechanism to measure the poverty level and to monitor it closely, and refers the State party to the Committee's statement on poverty and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights...

- China (Hong Kong Special Administrative Region), ICESCR, E/2006/22 (2005) 34 at paras. 207, 213, 215, 219, 225 and 227.

207. The Committee regrets that the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region has not implemented a number of the recommendations contained in its concluding observations of 2001.<sup>9/</sup> The Committee wishes to reiterate in particular its concern at the following issues:

...

(d) The continuing spread of poverty and lack of effective access to social services, which affects the disadvantaged and marginalized groups;

(e) The exclusion of many individuals, including women who are homemakers, persons with disabilities and older persons, from the Mandatory Provident Fund Scheme, due to their inability to make sufficient voluntary contributions;

...

213. The Committee is seriously concerned that under the existing social security system, and in particular under the Comprehensive Social Security Assistance, the levels of benefit are not sufficient to guarantee a decent standard of living and that many low-income persons, in particular older persons, are not covered by the scheme. The Committee is further concerned that new migrants are unable to apply for Comprehensive Social Security Assistance due to the seven-year residence requirement.

...

215. The Committee notes with regret that the information provided on the extent of poverty and social exclusion in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region was insufficient. The

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Committee is also concerned about reports of increasing poverty among older persons, especially since the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region is facing the problem of a rapidly ageing society.

...

219. The Committee once again urges the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region to implement the Committee's relevant suggestions and recommendations contained in its concluding observations adopted in 2001,<sup>9/</sup> as well as in the current ones, and urges it to undertake whatever relevant concrete measures may be necessary towards their implementation.

...

226. The Committee urges the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region to review the eligibility criteria for the Comprehensive Social Security Assistance so as to ensure that all those in need, including low-income persons and families, older persons and new migrants, are adequately covered by the scheme to enable them to enjoy a decent standard of living.

...

227. The Committee urges the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region to strengthen its efforts to combat poverty and social exclusion, in particular with regard to disadvantaged and marginalized groups and older persons. The Committee also recommends that the State party establish an official poverty line, which would enable the State party to define the extent of poverty and to monitor and evaluate progress in alleviating poverty...

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### Notes

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<sup>9/</sup> *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2002, Supplement No. 2 (E/2002/22-EC.12/2001/17), chap. IV, paras. 189 to 210.*

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- Serbia and Montenegro, ICESCR, E/2006/22 (2005) 41 at paras. 280, 287-290, 307 and 314-317.

280. The Committee is concerned about the very low unemployment benefit coverage in the State party.

...

287. The Committee notes with concern that 10.6 per cent of the Serbian population and 12.2 per cent of the Montenegrin population currently live below the poverty line and that another 25,000 persons in Serbia would fall below the poverty line if it were increased slightly.

288. The Committee is concerned about the extent of poverty among older persons and about the fact that home care is still insufficiently developed.

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289. The Committee notes with concern that poverty among Roma is four to five times higher than among the general population.

290. The Committee is gravely concerned about the poor conditions in which thousands of Roma families live in substandard informal settlements without access to basic services such as electricity, running water, sewage facilities, medical care and schools.

...

307. The Committee recommends that the State party increase unemployment benefit coverage so as to ensure an adequate standard of living for unemployed workers and their families...

...

314. The Committee recommends that the State party ensure the full integration of economic, social and cultural rights into its Poverty Reduction Strategy and allocate sufficient funds for the implementation of the Strategy. In this regard, the State party is referred to the Committee's statement on poverty and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights...

315. The Committee recommends that, in applying its Poverty Reduction Strategy, the State party take special measures to alleviate the extent of poverty among older persons and that priority be given to home care rather than institutionalization of older persons in need of care. The State party should allocate sufficient funds to that effect and strengthen the role of non-profit organizations in the provision of home care and other social services.

316. The Committee recommends that, in applying its Poverty Reduction Strategy and national plans of action for the implementation of the Decade of Roma Inclusion, 2005-2015, the State party take special measures to alleviate the extent of poverty among Roma.

317. The Committee urges the State party to ensure, by legalizing and improving the infrastructure of existing settlements or through social housing programmes, that Roma have access to adequate and affordable housing with legal security of tenure, safe drinking water, adequate sanitation, electricity and other essential services.

- Norway, ICESCR, E/2006/22 (2005) 48 at para. 330.

330. The Committee appreciates the State party's commitment to international cooperation as reflected in the volume of official development assistance, standing at 0.92 per cent of GNP. The Committee also welcomes the importance attached to human rights in the State party's Action Plan for Combating Poverty in the South towards 2015.



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- Fiji, CEDAW, A/57/38 part I (2002) 9 at paras. 60 and 61.

60. The Committee notes with concern that an increase in levels of poverty and adverse economic conditions are undermining Fiji's gains in women's education. These conditions have led to a higher incidence of girls dropping out of school, with connected problems of early marriage, teenage pregnancies and sexual exploitation.

61. The Committee recommends the introduction of targeted policies and programmes to reduce poverty, prevent early marriage, teenage pregnancies and girls dropping out of school.

- Estonia, CEDAW, A/57/38 part I (2002) 13 at paras. 109, 110, 113 and 114.

109. The Committee is concerned at the increase of poverty among various groups of women, in particular of those who are heads of household and those with small children.

110. The Committee recommends that the State party closely monitor the poverty situation of women within the most vulnerable groups and implement effective poverty alleviation programmes, taking into consideration the gender aspects of poverty.

...

113. The Committee expresses its concern that the report does not contain sufficient information on the situation of rural women, including older rural women, including with regard to their cash income, social security, access to free health-care services and social and cultural opportunities. It also expresses concern at the situation of women spouses in family business, whose work is not reflected in official statistics.

114. ...The Committee recommends that the State party monitor existing programmes and develop comprehensive policies and programmes aimed at the economic empowerment of rural women, ensuring their access to training, productive resources and capital, as well as to health-care services, social security and to social and cultural opportunities.

- Trinidad and Tobago, CEDAW, A/57/38 part I (2002) 19 at paras. 155 and 156.

155. The Committee is concerned at the high incidence of poverty among various groups of women, in particular female heads of households. The Committee recognizes that women-headed households have been negatively affected by structural adjustment programmes and the changing global situation.

156. The Committee requests the Government...to ensure that governmental policies to eradicate poverty are continuous, incorporate a gender perspective and do not marginalize

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women.

- Sri Lanka, CEDAW, A/57/38 part I (2002) 31 at paras. 294-297.

294. Noting that the majority of women live in rural areas, the Committee is concerned that economic policies do not incorporate a gender perspective and do not take into account rural women's role as producers.

295. The Committee urges the State party to recognize rural women's contributions to the economy by collecting sex-disaggregated data on rural production and to ensure the incorporation of a gender perspective in all development programmes, with special attention to minority rural women.

296. The Committee is concerned about the high percentage of households headed by women, many of whom are elderly, many illiterate and with meagre means of living.

297. The Committee urges the State party to develop policies and programmes to improve the situation of women-headed households and elderly women, including recognizing women-headed households as equal recipients and beneficiaries of development programmes.

- Russian Federation, CEDAW, A/57/38 part I (2002) 40 at para. 387, 388, 393, 394, 401 and 402.

387. The Committee is concerned at the feminization of poverty and, in particular, that women constitute a large proportion of single-parent families and of the working poor, and at the disproportionate impact of the remaining debt in unpaid back-wages on women in public employment and the poverty of older women.

388. The Committee recommends that, in addition to the measures to reduce poverty in the Programme for Socio-Economic Development of July 2001, the State party collate accurate data on the extent of women's poverty and its causes and, urgently, take special positive measures to alleviate women's poverty as a distinct structural problem.

...

393. The Committee is concerned about reports regarding the great increase in prostitution and, in particular, at the number of girl street children who are exploited as prostitutes. It is concerned that the poverty of women and girls is the major causal factor.

394. Noting the State party's programmes of action to provide street children with shelter, subsistence and education, the Committee urges the State party to continue and extend such

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programmes and to apply them, appropriately modified and strengthened, to women forced into prostitution by poverty. It also urges giving priority to the prosecution of those who exploit prostitutes and of adults involved in the exploitation of child prostitutes, with the introduction of special legislative provisions, if necessary.

...

401. The Committee expresses concern with regard to the situation of rural women and, in particular, their degree of access to income-generating activities.

402. The Committee...recommends that the State party pay greater attention to the situation of rural women and develop special policies and programmes aimed at their economic empowerment, ensuring their access to capital and productive resources.

- Suriname, CEDAW, A/57/38 part II (2002) 82 at paras. 65 and 66.

65. The Committee is concerned about the situation of rural women, in particular the indigenous Amerindians and the Maroons, in the coastal plain and in the interior of Suriname, who are disadvantaged by poor infrastructure, limited markets, obstacles in availability and accessibility of agricultural land and agricultural credit, low literacy rates, ignorance of existing regulations, lack of services and environmental pollution. It notes with concern the serious absence of specific policies in all these areas, including on family planning and preventing the spread of sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV. The Committee is also concerned that women's work in rural areas is not considered productive labour and that they are hardly represented at all in local government bodies...

66. The Committee urges the State party to give full attention to the needs of rural women, including older women, particularly Amerindian and Maroon women, to ensure that they benefit from policies and programmes in all areas, in particular access to health, education, social services and decision-making...

- Tunisia, CEDAW, A/57/38 part II (2002) 102 at para. 187.

187. ...The Committee... notes that rural women are enjoying an overall improvement in the quality of rural life due to a combination of regional development and overall sectoral policies, and that these women are benefiting from technical and financial support through the efforts of the economic and financial authorities in Tunisia.

- Armenia, CEDAW, A/57/38 part III (2002) 150 at paras. 58-61.

58. The Committee expresses concern regarding the situation of rural women, including

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their access to health-care services and income-generating activities.

59. The Committee encourages the State party to develop special policies and programmes aimed at the economic empowerment of rural women and their access to health-care services.

60. The Committee is concerned that the situation of growing economic hardship and extreme poverty in the country, especially the feminization of poverty, negatively impacts on women's enjoyment of their human rights.

61. The Committee urges the States party to develop poverty reduction programmes targeted to women, including for the predominantly female refugee population.

- Uganda, CEDAW, A/57/38 part III (2002) 164 at paras. 149 and 150.

149. Despite the State party's development strategy, the Poverty Eradication Action Plan, for improving the livelihoods of all Ugandans, including women, the Committee is concerned that poverty is widespread among women, *inter alia*, as a consequence of gender-insensitive privatization and the implementation of structural adjustment policies.

150. The Committee urges the State party to continue to intensify the implementation of gender-sensitive poverty reduction programmes in rural and urban areas. The Committee also recommends that the State party continue to develop targeted policies and support services for women aimed at alleviating and reducing poverty.

- Barbados, CEDAW, A/57/38 part III (2002) 177 at paras. 245 and 246.

245. While acknowledging the State party's social policy, which has introduced services and programmes, including the Poverty Eradication Fund, to boost entrepreneurial activities and increase self-employment and create more employment among women and youth, the Committee is concerned at the feminization of poverty and, in particular, that women head approximately 44.4 per cent of households.

246. The Committee recommends that the State party ensure that governmental policies to eradicate poverty are sustainable, incorporate a gender perspective and do not marginalize women.

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- Argentina, CEDAW, A/57/38 part III (2002) 196 at paras. 356, 357 and 368.

356. The Committee is concerned at the situation of women resulting from the growing increase in poverty, and extreme poverty, which has spread to more than half the population, and which can have a disproportionately heavy impact on the female population. Of special concern are women heads of household who are living in poverty and unemployed, with dependent children, and women from rural areas, indigenous populations and the most vulnerable sectors of the population.

357. The Committee recommends that the State party should pay special, ongoing attention to the situation of women and should take the necessary measures to prevent women, especially those from rural areas, indigenous populations and the most vulnerable sectors of the population, from bearing the heaviest burden of the crisis. It also requests the State party to ensure that the Programme for unemployed heads of household with children under 18 or disabled children includes a gender perspective in order that the few resources that are available for social allowances may be distributed without discrimination.

...

368. The Committee recommends that the State party should include and involve women in the process of economic, financial, political and social reconstruction of the country.

- Yemen, CEDAW, A/57/38 part III (2002) 200 at paras. 400 and 401.

400. In view of the fact that rural women constitute the majority of women in Yemen, the Committee notes with concern that the traditional division of labour in agricultural production disadvantages women and that, for cultural and social reasons, women do not control the means of production and face difficulties in obtaining loans...

401. The Committee urges the State party to take special measures to support the integration of rural women in all sectoral policies and programmes and to eliminate discriminatory practices through awareness-raising and educational programmes targeted at women and men...

- Mexico, CEDAW, A/57/38 part III (2002) 205 at paras. 433, 434, 437 and 438.

433. The Committee is concerned that while the State party has implemented poverty reduction strategies, poverty constitutes a serious obstacle to enjoyment of rights by women, who make up the majority of the most vulnerable sectors, especially in rural and indigenous areas.

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434. The Committee calls on the State party to give priority to women in its poverty eradication strategy, with special attention to women in rural and indigenous areas; in this context, measures and specific programmes should be adopted to ensure that women fully enjoy their rights on an equal footing in the areas of education, employment and health, with special emphasis on joint work with non-governmental organizations and on women's participation not only as beneficiaries, but also as agents of change in the development process.

...

437. In view of the growing number of Mexican women emigrating to other countries in search of greater job opportunities, the Committee is concerned that this may make them especially vulnerable to situations of exploitation or trafficking.

438. The Committee urges the State party to focus on the causes of that phenomenon by adopting measures to alleviate poverty and strengthen and promote the economic input of women, as well as fully guarantee the recognition and exercise of their rights...

- Peru, CEDAW, A/57/38 part III (2002) 212 at paras. 474, 475, 494 and 495.

474. Although there is a new poverty relief strategy for 2001-2006, the Committee is concerned about the lack of poverty eradication programmes geared specifically to the female population.

475. The Committee recommends that the State party include a gender perspective in poverty eradication strategies and programmes and, when appropriate, introduce temporary special measures, in conformity with article 4, paragraph 1, of the Convention, with a view to eradicating poverty among women, especially rural women.

...

494. Although the Committee recognizes that the State party is taking action in the Amazon region, through the National Institute for Family Well-Being, primarily for children and adolescents living in situations of risk or abandonment, it is concerned that there are no specific programmes for indigenous women.

495. The Committee recommends that the State party should strengthen the current programme and set up specific programmes for indigenous women in order to improve their economic, social and family situation and develop their economic skills, and to promote respect for their rights on an equal footing with men.

- Albania, CEDAW, A/58/38 part I (2003) 13 at paras. 71, 76 and 77.

71. The Committee...recommends the introduction of measures aimed at improving the

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economic situation of women so as to eliminate their vulnerability to traffickers, education initiatives for vulnerable groups, including teenage girls, and social support, rehabilitation and reintegration measures for women and girls who have been victims of trafficking...

...

76. The Committee is concerned about the situation of rural women, as the majority of the female population, who are discriminated against in practice with respect to owning and inheriting property, and who are disadvantaged by poverty, poor infrastructures, lack of credit, and limited access to education, health-care services and social insurance...

77. The Committee urges the State party to give full attention to the needs of rural women and to develop comprehensive policies and programmes aimed at their economic empowerment, ensuring their access to productive resources, capital and credit, as well as education, health-care services, social insurance and decision-making. The Committee requests the State party to undertake a study of the ownership and inheritance of land by rural women and of their general economic, educational and social situation...

- Switzerland, CEDAW, A/58/38 part I (2003) 20 at paras. 134 and 135.

134. The Committee is deeply concerned that, in spite of the high level of development of the State party, there are groups of women, mainly those who are single heads of household and elderly women, who have been particularly affected by poverty.

135. The Committee recommends that the State party closely monitor the poverty situation of women in the most vulnerable groups and implement effective measures and training programmes that will allow them to fully enjoy the benefits of the State party's development.

- Congo, CEDAW, A/58/38 part I (2003) 29 at paras. 178 and 179.

178. The Committee expresses concern about the situation of rural women, particularly in view of their extreme poverty and lack of access to health, education, credit facilities and community services.

179. The Committee urges the State party to pay special attention to the needs of rural women, ensuring that they participate in decision-making and have full access to education, health services and credit facilities. The Committee also urges the State party to take appropriate measures, including review of legislation, in order to eliminate all forms of discrimination with respect to ownership, co-sharing and inheritance of land.

- El Salvador, CEDAW, A/58/38 part I (2003) 41 at paras. 261, 262, 267 and 268.

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261. The Committee is concerned at the high level of poverty among women, especially rural and indigenous women.

262. The Committee urges the State party to develop a poverty eradication strategy that gives priority attention to rural and indigenous women through the allocation of budgetary resources, and to take appropriate measures to inform itself about their situation with a view to formulating effective specific programmes and policies to improve their socio-economic situation and ensure that they receive the services and support they need.

...

267. The Committee is concerned at the lack of priority given to women in employment policy, which could result in their increased vulnerability in the economic adjustment process taking place in the country, in particular, the insufficient measures taken to enable them to reconcile their family and professional responsibilities and the persistence of wage disparities for work of equal value.

268. The Committee recommends that the necessary measures should be taken to ensure compliance with the provisions of article 11 of the Convention and of the relevant International Labour Organization conventions ratified by El Salvador.

- Canada, CEDAW, A/58/38 part I (2003) 53 at paras. 357, 358, 377 and 378.

357. While appreciating the federal Government's various anti-poverty measures, the Committee is concerned about the high percentage of women living in poverty, in particular elderly women living alone, female lone parents, aboriginal women, older women, women of colour, immigrant women and women with disabilities, for whom poverty persists or even deepens, aggravated by the budgetary adjustments made since 1995 and the resulting cuts in social services. The Committee is also concerned that those strategies are mostly directed towards children and not towards these groups of women.

358. The Committee urges the State party to assess the gender impact of anti-poverty measures and increase its efforts to combat poverty among women in general and the vulnerable groups of women in particular.

...

377. While commending the State party's efforts towards bringing aboriginal women into improved income-generating positions, the Committee is concerned that the focus on entrepreneurs may not lead to aboriginal women's economic independence.

378. The Committee recommends that the State party ensure that income-generating activities for aboriginal women provide for a sustained and adequate income, including all necessary social benefits.



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- Costa Rica, CEDAW, A/58/38 part II (2003) 86 at paras. 66 and 67.

66. The Committee notes with concern that the impact of poverty is greater among women and that the State does not apply the gender perspective in its national activities to combat poverty.

67. The Committee requests the State party to pay specific attention to households headed by women and to groups of women in a vulnerable situation, as well as to rural women, older women, indigenous women and disabled women, in drawing up and implementing programmes to combat poverty, and to seek to ensure their access to production resources, education and technical training.

- Brazil, CEDAW, A/58/38 part II (2003) 93 at paras. 110 and 111.

110. The Committee is concerned about the impact of poverty on Brazilian women of African descent, indigenous women, female heads of household and other socially excluded or marginalized groups of women and about their disadvantaged position with respect to access to education, health, basic sanitation, employment, information and justice.

111. The Committee urges the State party to ensure that its poverty eradication measures give priority attention to Brazilian women of African descent, indigenous women, female heads of household and other socially excluded or marginalized groups of women through adequately funded programmes and policies addressing their specific needs.

- France, CEDAW, A/58/38 part II (2003) 116 at paras. 263 and 264.

263. The Committee expresses concern about actual and potential poverty situations among older women on account of having experienced multiple forms of discrimination throughout their economically active years. It also expresses concern that the structuring of the welfare system might affect older women more negatively than men.

264. The Committee recommends that the State party research the needs of older women and develop measures that adequately address their health, economic and emotional situation in order to avoid poverty and isolation. It also recommends that the State party take women's unpaid and paid employment patterns and family responsibilities into account when altering legal and policy measures in order to avoid discrimination of effect.

- Ecuador, CEDAW, A/58/38 part II (2003) 122 at paras. 307-310.

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307. The Committee is concerned at the high levels of poverty and extreme poverty among women, and notes in particular the situation of rural and indigenous women. Despite the existence of isolated anti-poverty plans, the Committee is concerned at the lack of a general and comprehensive poverty eradication policy specifically targeting rural and indigenous women.

308. The Committee urges the State party to develop a general poverty eradication policy incorporating a gender perspective and focusing particularly on rural and indigenous women.

309. Given the increasing numbers of Ecuadorian women taking refuge in foreign countries to escape from poverty and extreme poverty, the Committee is concerned at the fact that this situation makes it likely that emigrant women will be victims of various forms of violence, exploitation and trafficking. The Committee is likewise concerned at the vulnerability of women whose spouses emigrate to other countries. It is also concerned at the situation of Ecuadorian women living on the Ecuador-Colombia border and that of Colombian women who flee Colombia and take refuge in Ecuador, since they are also victims of violence of all kinds owing to the militarization of the border area and the application of “Plan Colombia”.

310. The Committee urges the State party to focus on the causes of this phenomenon and adopt measures to alleviate poverty and extreme poverty, and to protect migrant women and those who remain in Ecuador when their spouses emigrate, as well as women living on the Ecuador-Colombian border.

- New Zealand, CEDAW, A/58/38 part II (2003) 138 at paras. 421 and 422.

421. While applauding the State party’s progressive disability strategy, the Committee is concerned that discrimination against women with disabilities still exists, particularly in the areas of loans, employment and childcare, and about the situations of economic hardship they may encounter. The Committee is also concerned about the lack of economic independence of married women with disabilities.

422. The Committee recommends that the State party take appropriate measures to ensure that disabled women do not suffer from discrimination, in particular in the areas of employment and access to health care and loans. It also recommends that the State party pay attention to the situation of disabled married women with a view to ensuring their economic independence.

- Kyrgyzstan, CEDAW, A/59/38 part I (2004) 28 at paras. 163 and 164.

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163. The Committee is concerned about the increase in poverty among women.

164. The Committee recommends that the State party closely monitor the poverty situation of women and ensure that all programmes aimed at poverty alleviation take full account of the gender dimensions of poverty.

- Ethiopia, CEDAW, A/59/38 part I (2004) 42 at paras. 259 and 260.

259. The Committee, while welcoming the implementation of the Women's Development Initiative Project and the Ethiopian Women's Development Fund, is concerned that the Fund currently reaches only a small percentage of women, and that poverty among women, in particular rural women, continues to persist at a high level.

260. The Committee urges the State party to expand its specific programmes aimed at enhancing the socio-economic well-being of women and step up its efforts to fully integrate gender perspectives in its sustainable development and poverty reduction programme. It also urges the State party to take measures to ensure that the rights, needs and concerns of rural women are given greater attention and visibility and that rural women participate fully in the formulation, implementation and evaluation of all sectoral policies and programmes. It calls upon the State party to put in place policies to protect women's right to property and to ensure that women have access to land and water resources on an equal basis with men.

- Belarus, CEDAW, A/59/38 part I (2004) 55 at paras. 351-354.

351. The Committee expresses concern about the situation of women in the labour market, which is characterized, in spite of women's high level of education, by high female unemployment, the concentration of women in low-paid sectors of public employment, such as health and education, and the wage gap between women and men, in both the public and private sectors...

352. The Committee urges the State party to ensure equal opportunities for women and men in the labour market through, *inter alia*, temporary special measures, in accordance with article 4, paragraph 1, of the Convention and general recommendation 25. The Committee urges the State party to intensify its efforts to ensure that all job generation and poverty alleviation programmes are gender-sensitive, and that women can fully benefit from all

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programmes to support entrepreneurship...

353. The Committee is concerned about the feminization of poverty, particularly among vulnerable groups of women, such as those heading households, older women and rural women.

354. The Committee requests the State party to ensure that all poverty alleviation programmes fully benefit women, according to their needs...and concerns of rural women are given greater attention and visibility and that rural women participate fully in the formulation, implementation and evaluation of all sectoral policies and programmes. It calls upon the State party to put in place policies to protect women's right to property and to ensure that women have access to land and water resources on an equal basis with men.

- Germany, CEDAW, A/59/38 part I (2004) 62 at paras. 392 and 393.

392. The Committee expresses concern that some aspects of the Federal Government's reform policy, Agenda 2010, might have a particularly negative impact on women.

393. The Committee recommends that the State party study and carefully monitor the impact of its economic and social reforms on women at all stages of planning, implementation and evaluation so as to introduce changes where necessary to counteract possible negative effects.

- Angola, CEDAW, A/59/38 part II (2004) 118 at paras. 148, 149, 156, 157, 164 and 165.

148. While recognizing the efforts undertaken by the State party aimed at the reconstruction of the country and its socio-economic fabric after the long years of armed conflict, including repatriation, rehabilitation and resettlement of refugees and internally displaced persons, the majority of whom are women, the Committee is concerned that the widespread poverty among women and the poor socio-economic conditions are among the causes of the violation of women's human rights and discrimination against them. The Committee is especially concerned about the situation of women in rural areas, women heads of households, women refugees and internally displaced women returning to their places of origin or migrating to the cities, who often lack access to health, education, services and means and opportunities for economic survival.

149. The Committee urges the State party to make the promotion of gender equality an explicit component of all its national development strategies, policies and programmes, in particular those aimed at repatriation, rehabilitation and resettlement, as well as those aimed at poverty alleviation and sustainable development. It urges the State party to pay special

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attention to the needs of rural women, women heads of household, refugee women and internally displaced women, ensuring that they participate in decision-making processes and have access to health, education, services and income-generation projects. The Committee also invites the State party to place emphasis on the promotion and protection of women's human rights in all development cooperation programmes with international organizations and bilateral donors so as to address the socio-economic causes of discrimination against women.

...

156. The Committee is concerned that prostitution continues to thrive, owing to the poverty of women and girls...

157. The Committee urges the State party to pursue a holistic approach in order to provide women and girls with educational and economic alternatives to prostitution, to facilitate the reintegration of prostitutes into society and to provide rehabilitation and economic empowerment programmes to women and girls exploited in prostitution...

...

164. Noting that the majority of women live in the rural areas, the Committee is concerned that many live in extreme poverty and lack access to education and vocational training, health care and income-generation opportunities. It is particularly concerned that the State party's rural development strategy does not seem to include attention to the situation of rural women.

165. The Committee urges the State party to ensure that the rights, needs and concerns of rural women are given greater attention and visibility in the country's rural rehabilitation and development strategy. It also calls on the State party to ensure that rural women can participate fully in decision-making in the formulation and implementation of policies and programmes in rural areas. It urges the State party to ensure that rural women and girls have full access to health-care services, education and vocational training, as well as to income-generation opportunities.

### *See also:*

- Equatorial Guinea, CEDAW, A/59/38 part II (2004) 126 at paras. 203 and 204.
- Equatorial Guinea, CEDAW, A/59/38 part II (2004) 126 at paras. 189 and 190.

189. The Committee is concerned that widespread poverty among women and poor socio-economic conditions are among the causes of the violation of women's human rights and discrimination against women. The Committee is especially concerned about the situation of rural women, particularly in view of their extreme poverty and lack of access to health care, education, credit facilities and community services.

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190. The Committee urges the State party to make the promotion of gender equality an explicit component of its national development plans and policies, and in particular those aimed at poverty alleviation and sustainable development. It urges the State party to pay special attention to the needs of rural women, ensuring that they participate in decision-making processes and have full access to education, health services and credit facilities. The Committee also urges the State party to take appropriate measures to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women with respect to ownership and inheritance of land. The Committee invites the State party to place emphasis on women's human rights in all development cooperation programmes with international organizations and bilateral donors so as to address the socio-economic causes of discrimination against women, including those impacting women in rural areas, through all available sources of support.

- Bangladesh, CEDAW, A/59/38 part II (2004) 134 at paras. 232 and 244.

232. The Committee welcomes progress achieved in the integration of women in the economy of the country, particularly through the introduction of innovative microcredit schemes for women.

...

244. The Committee recommends the formulation of a comprehensive strategy to combat trafficking in women and girls that should include the prosecution and punishment of offenders...It recommends the stepping up of measures aimed at improving the economic situation of women so as to eliminate their vulnerability to traffickers, the introduction of education and employment initiatives for vulnerable groups, including teenage girls, and provide support, rehabilitation and reintegration measures for women and girls who have been victims of trafficking...

- Dominican Republic, CEDAW, A/59/38 part II (2004) 141 at paras. 282 and 283.

282. The Committee views with concern the serious problems the country is experiencing as a result of the economic crisis, which are having adverse effects on the population in general and women in particular, who constitute one of the most vulnerable groups, since they are at a disadvantage in terms of jobs and wages, and head 33 per cent of households.

283. The Committee urges the State party to develop and implement effectively a general policy of poverty eradication that incorporates a gender perspective and accords special attention to households headed by women.

- Argentina, CEDAW, A/59/38 part II (2004) 155 at paras. 367 and 372-377.

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367. The Committee congratulates the State party on the social policies and programmes put in place, particularly in the areas of poverty reduction, job creation and access to education, aimed at repairing the damage done to the social fabric by the serious economic, financial, political and social crisis experienced by the country since 2001.

...

372. While welcoming the adoption and implementation of social and economic policies and programmes aimed at offsetting the impact of the crisis in the country, including the National Plan for Food Security, the National Plan for Local Development and Social Economy, the Family Plan, the Economic Emergency Law, the Emergency Health Law, the National Programme on Food Emergency and the Unemployed Head of Household Programme, the Committee is concerned that women are mainly beneficiaries of these measures rather than being equal participants and actors in their design and implementation. The Committee is concerned that this approach will perpetuate stereotypical views of the role of women and men rather than effectively support women's political and economic empowerment.

373. The Committee recommends that the State party emphasize a women's-empowerment approach and incorporate gender perspectives in all its social and economic policies, programmes and projects so as to ensure that they support the goal of gender equality and women's enjoyment of their human rights. It invites the State party to periodically assess such measures and their impact on women so as to ensure that they do not perpetuate discrimination against women.

374. The Committee is concerned about the poor working conditions women endure in both the formal and informal sectors of the economy. It is particularly concerned about the persistence of wage disparities between women and men, which are discriminatory, and about the lack of social benefits and services for women. The Committee is concerned that in the prevailing situation of economic difficulty and uncertainty, women may face even greater obstacles than usual in claiming their rights and taking steps against discriminatory practices and attitudes in their employment and economic activities.

375. The Committee urges the State party to make all necessary efforts to ensure the enforcement of legislation requiring employers to provide equal pay for equal work, as well as efforts to ensure that women receive adequate social benefits and services. It also calls on the State party to ensure full adherence to existing legislation so that women can use means of redress without fear of reprisals from employers.

376. The Committee is concerned about the situation of rural women, particularly in view of their extreme poverty and lack of access to health care, education, credit facilities and community services.

377. The Committee urges the State party to pay special attention to the needs of rural

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women, ensuring that they participate in decision-making processes and have full access to education, health services and credit facilities.

- Lao People's Democratic Republic, CEDAW, A/60/38 part I (2005) 16 at paras. 92, 93, 106 and 107.

92. While noting that 80 per cent of the population lives in rural areas, the Committee is deeply concerned about the pervasive poverty and underdevelopment of women, especially in rural and ethnic minority communities. The Committee is also concerned that ethnic minority women, having no alternative sources of income, depend on the production of opium poppies for their livelihood. While welcoming the reinvestigation into the matter of land titling, the Committee is concerned that the current reinvestigation and the reissuance of land titles are limited to nine provinces. The Committee is also concerned that, while rural women carry out more than half of total agricultural production in every field, the additional workloads of housework and child-rearing also fall primarily on their shoulders. The Committee is very concerned that rural women are not fully represented in important decision-making regarding development programmes, nor on the village council.

93. The Committee urges the State party to accelerate its plan to eradicate poverty among women, especially rural and ethnic minority women, by more actively seeking international assistance and at the same time by applying gender perspectives in all development programmes and fully integrating women into decision-making on those programmes, as well as in their implementation processes. The Committee also urges the State party to step up its efforts to provide ethnic minority women who depend on opium poppy production with alternative and sustainable means of livelihood. The Committee recommends that the reinvestigation and re-registration of land titles be carried out in all provinces, with the expected result of eradicating discrimination against women...The Committee also recommends that the State party take measures to ease the double burden of women, including by providing new technologies for women farmers and educating men regarding the sharing of family responsibilities. The Committee strongly recommends that the State party ensure the full and equal representation of rural women on the various committees at the village level.

...

106. The Committee is concerned about the situation of women in the employment and labour areas, on which insufficient information was provided, especially about women's ability to take advantage of new economic opportunities and to benefit fully from the State party's reforms towards a market-based economy and its integration into the regional and world economy.

107. The Committee recommends that the State party study the impact of its economic reforms on women, with a view to improving equality between women and men in the labour



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market, including strengthening formal and informal mechanisms for the resolution of labour disputes through appropriate representation of women. It recommends that targeted measures be taken to upgrade and improve women's entrepreneurial skills and their access to technology, and to create opportunities for women in trade and commerce on the basis of equality between women and men. It also calls upon the State party to assess and to take remedial measures regarding any disadvantageous impact of economic reforms on women, including on women in the civil service.

- Gabon, CEDAW, A/60/38 part I (2005) 37 at paras. 247 and 248.

247. The Committee is concerned about the situation of rural women, particularly in view of their geographic isolation and lack of access to adequate nutrition and sanitation, health care, education and income-generating opportunities. This situation leads to multiple forms of discrimination against rural women...

248. The Committee urges the State party to implement, on a priority basis, measures to ensure that rural women have full access to adequate nutrition and sanitation, health-care services, education and income-generating opportunities. The Committee invites the State party, as necessary, to seek assistance from relevant specialized agencies of the United Nations to improve the standard of living of rural women.

- Paraguay, CEDAW, A/60/38 part I (2005) 44 at paras. 289 and 290.

289. The Committee remains concerned about the situation of rural women, who continue to have limited access to land ownership and to credit facilities and extension services, thus perpetuating their poor social and economic conditions, notwithstanding the adoption of the Agrarian Act. It is also concerned about the extensive use of fertilizers and pesticides, which, when improperly used, are harmful to the health of rural women and their families.

290. The Committee urges the State party to address the rights, needs and concerns of rural women through the effective implementation of the Agrarian Act without delay and to implement vocational training programmes for rural women to ensure equal opportunities and access to the labour market. It further encourages the State party to ensure the participation of rural women in the development of policies aimed at benefiting rural areas and to enhance their access to environmentally sound technologies that are not harmful to their health.

- Democratic People's Republic of Korea, CEDAW, A/60/38 part II (2005) 101 at paras. 59

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and 60.

59. In the light of the widespread famine and natural disasters that have affected the country from the mid-1990s, the Committee expresses concern about the insufficient explanation provided with respect to the impact of those phenomena on women, in particular on women from rural areas, on women who are the main providers of the household and on young girls. The Committee is concerned that they may become vulnerable to trafficking and other forms of exploitation, such as prostitution.

60. The Committee urges the State party to introduce specific poverty alleviation measures aimed at improving the situation of women to eliminate their vulnerability. The Committee recommends that the State party seek international assistance in guaranteeing that women, particularly women from rural areas, have equal access to food supplies. It urges the State party to assist women economic returnees who went abroad without valid travel permits to reintegrate into their families and society and to protect them from all forms of violations of their rights. It calls on the State party to train law enforcement officials, migration officials and border police on the causes, consequences and incidence of trafficking and other forms of exploitation so as to enable them to render support to women who might be at risk of becoming victims of trafficking or commercial sexual exploitation. It also recommends that the State party conduct nationwide awareness-raising campaigns on the risks and consequences of trafficking targeted at women and girls. The Committee further urges the State party to evaluate those phenomena and systematically compile information on them with a view to formulating a comprehensive strategy that includes measures of prevention, prosecution and punishment of offenders, as well as measures to rehabilitate and reintegrate victims. The Committee also urges the State party to intensify its efforts to deal with these phenomena through increased international, regional and bilateral cooperation...

- Gambia, CEDAW, A/60/38 part II (2005) 122 at paras. 211 and 212.

211. The Committee is concerned about the situation of rural women, many of whom live in extreme poverty and lack access to health care, education, vocational training, credit facilities and income-generation opportunities. It is particularly concerned that the State has not yet designed a gender-sensitive rural development strategy.

212. The Committee urges the State party to design and implement a gender-sensitive rural development strategy. It calls upon the State party to ensure that rural women can participate fully in the formulation and implementation of policies and programmes in rural areas. It urges the State party to ensure that rural women and girls have full access to health-care services, education and vocational training, as well as credit facilities and income-generating opportunities.

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- Guyana, CEDAW, A/60/38 part II (2005) 136 at paras. 307 and 308.

307. While noting that women are disproportionately affected by poverty, and noting the existence of the National Development Strategy and a poverty reduction strategy paper, the Committee is disappointed that these policies insufficiently address the gender dimensions of poverty and do not target women specifically, notwithstanding the participation of women's groups in consultations for their preparation. The Committee is especially concerned about the consequences of this omission for Amerindian women and women living in rural and hinterland areas.

308. The Committee urges the State party to make the promotion of gender equality an explicit component of its national development strategies, in particular those aimed at poverty alleviation and sustainable development. It encourages the State party to include programmes that target vulnerable groups of women, such as Amerindian women and poor women living in rural and hinterland areas. The Committee invites the State party to strengthen these policies so as to enhance compliance with the Convention, especially article 14 on rural women. It encourages the State party to place emphasis on implementation of the Convention and women's human rights in all development cooperation programmes with international organizations and bilateral donors. It recommends that the State party channel resources available through the highly indebted poor countries initiative towards the empowerment of women, especially Amerindian women and women in rural and hinterland areas...

- Burkina Faso, CEDAW, A/60/38 part II (2005) 144 at para. 347 and 348.

347. The Committee is concerned about the situation of rural women, particularly in view of their extreme poverty and lack of access to adequate nutrition and sanitation, health care, education and income-generating opportunities. This situation leads to multiple forms of discrimination against rural women...

348. The Committee urges the State party to pay special attention to the situation of rural women so as to enhance compliance with article 14 of the Convention. In particular, the Committee calls upon the State party to ensure that rural women have full access to education, health services and credit facilities, and can fully participate in decision-making processes. The Committee also urges the State party to implement provisions of the Agrarian and Land Reform that give women equal access to arable land and housing and provisions of the Individual and Family Code so as to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women with respect to ownership and inheritance of land. It also urges the State party to place emphasis on women's human rights in all development cooperation programmes with international organizations and bilateral donors so as to address the socio-economic causes of discrimination against women and sociocultural causes of poverty of women, especially

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those affecting women in rural areas, through all available sources of support. The Committee urges the State party to put into operation the principle of gender equality as a key factor in eradicating poverty as outlined in the strategic and regional frameworks for poverty reduction...

- Ireland, CEDAW, A/60/38 part II (2005) 151 at paras. 392 and 393.

392. While recognizing that the second National Action Plan against Poverty and Social Exclusion and the National Anti-Poverty Strategy provide for an integrated focus on addressing the needs of specific groups, including women, the Committee is concerned at the situation of vulnerable groups of women who are considered to be at high risk of consistent poverty and social exclusion, including rural women, older women, Traveller women, women who are single parents and women with disabilities. The Committee is particularly concerned at the barriers faced by those vulnerable groups in relation to access to education, employment, health care and other social services.

393. The Committee recommends that the State party closely monitor the situation of poverty and social exclusion of women in the most vulnerable groups and implement effective measures and training programmes that will allow them fully to enjoy the benefits of the State party's prosperity. The Committee also recommends that a gender impact analysis of all social and economic policies and anti-poverty measures be conducted regularly. It further recommends that the State party consider allowing for the Homemaker's Scheme (1994) to be applied retroactively so as to benefit older women.

## **CRC**

- Mauritania, CRC, CRC/C/111 (2001) 8 at paras. 40, 41, 58 and 59.

40. The Committee notes with concern that budgetary allocations for children are insufficient to respond to national and local priorities for the protection and promotion of children's rights and to overcome and remedy existing disparities between rural and urban areas with respect to services provided to children.

41. In light of article 4 of the Convention, the Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) Strengthen its efforts to reduce poverty and its impact on children;

(b) 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" for the implementation

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of the rights recognized in the Convention, including the economic, social and cultural rights of children, in particular at local level and for children belonging to the most vulnerable groups in society; and

(c) Take the necessary measures to identify the amount and proportion of the budget spent on children at the national and local levels, including the resources from international aid programmes, in order to adequately evaluate its impact on children.

...

58. The Committee notes with concern the high number of female-headed families, in particular in the capital, which are particularly vulnerable to poverty.

59. In light of article 18 of the Convention, the Committee recommends that the State party ensure assistance to female-headed families in the performance of their child-rearing responsibilities, in particular with regard to access to health and education, and strengthen its programme of microcredits.

- Kenya, CRC, CRC/C/111 (2001) 21 at paras. 108, 109, 132 and 133.

108. The Committee notes that the State party has established various programmes under the National Programme of Action for Children to ensure the survival and development of children. However, it is concerned that the Programme has not been sufficiently implemented and that the impact of HIV/AIDS, mounting economic challenges and other socio-economic difficulties continue to threaten the right to life, survival and development of children in the State party, especially those living in rural areas and increasingly those living in crowded urban centres.

109. The Committee encourages the State party to reinforce its efforts to provide greater protection and support to children whose right to life, survival and development is unduly threatened by the difficult socio-economic realities of the State party. In this connection, the Committee recommends that the State party take all effective measures to strengthen [its technical cooperation with, *inter alia*, UNICEF, UNAIDS, UNDP and WHO.]

...

132. The Committee is concerned about widespread poverty and the increasingly high numbers of children in the State party who do not enjoy the right to an adequate standard of living, including children belonging to poor families, AIDS orphans, street children, internally displaced children, children of ethnic minorities and children living in remote rural communities.

133. In accordance with article 27 of the Convention, the Committee recommends that the State party 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

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living. In this connection, the Committee recommends that the State party pay particular attention to the rights and needs of children in the implementation of the Poverty Eradication Plan, the Poverty Reduction Strategy and all other programmes intended to improve the standard of living in the country. In this regard, the Committee encourages the State party to coordinate its efforts with civil society and local communities.

### *See also:*

- Gambia, CRC, CRC/C/111 (2001) 89 at paras. 450 and 451.
- Niger, CRC, CRC/C/118 (2002) 37 at paras. 181 and 182.
- Burkina Faso, CRC, CRC/C/121 (2002) 103 at paras. 132 and 133.
  
- Portugal, CRC, CRC/C/111 (2001) 48 at paras. 214, 215, 223, 224, 232 and 233.

214. The Committee notes a trend of increasing resources being allocated to the education, health and social welfare sectors and the significant participation of civil society, including NGOs, in the provision of such services. However, the Committee remains concerned that there is no information indicating that priority is given to the implementation of children's social rights in the budgets of the State party at national, regional and local levels.

215. With a view to achieving full application of article 4 and to eradicate poverty, the Committee urges the State party to consider ways in which respect can be guaranteed for the rights of all children including children from disadvantaged backgrounds and from isolated communities, in particular in the sectors of health, education and other social welfare services and in conformity with article 2.

...

223. The Committee notes the numerous efforts initiated by the State party to address discrimination, including the development of mechanisms, the conduct of surveys and the implementation of policies. The Committee is concerned, however, with regard to *de facto* discrimination in the context of children and families living in poverty in less developed rural and urban areas and against the Roma and their children in particular.

224. The Committee recommends that the State party continue and strengthen its efforts to ensure equal respect for the right to non-discrimination of all children, giving particular attention to children and their families living in poverty, in particular Roma children and children living in less developed areas.

...

232. The Committee welcomes the State party's decision to develop a global plan on family policy, including changes to social welfare and social security and means-tested coverage with particular provisions for families and children and including those persons not paying contributions to the social security system. The Committee also welcomes the definition, in the National Plan of Action against Poverty and Social Exclusion of child protection

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priorities including the provision of support measures for families in order to enable them to fulfil their parental responsibilities. Nevertheless, the Committee remains concerned:

(a) That poverty, poor housing, unemployment, non-contractual work and the high incidence of alcoholism among parents in many families have a negative impact on respect for children's rights;

(b) At the lack of sufficient free pre-school care services, complicating an already difficult situation for poor families.

233. The Committee recommends that the State party make every effort, to the maximum extent of available resources, to support families in their child-rearing responsibilities and to ensure the protection of the rights of all children in the context of the family environment.

- Cameroon, CRC, CRC/C/111 (2001) 71 at paras. 367, 368, 377 and 378.

367. While taking note of the adoption of several national programmes relating to child survival, and the establishment of a sub-department for family health within the Ministry of Public Health, the Committee is deeply concerned at the high and increasing infant and under-five mortality rates and low life expectancy in the State party. The Committee also remains concerned that health services in the districts and local areas continue to lack adequate resources (both financial and human). In addition, the Committee is concerned that the survival and development of children in the State party continue to be threatened by early childhood diseases, such as acute respiratory infections and diarrhoea, and by chronic malnutrition. Concern is also expressed at the poor state of sanitation and at the insufficient access to safe drinking water, especially in rural communities.

368. The Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) Reinforce its efforts to allocate appropriate resources and develop and implement comprehensive policies and programmes to improve the health situation of children, particularly in rural areas;

(b) Facilitate greater access to primary health-care services; reduce the incidence of maternal, child and infant mortality; prevent and combat malnutrition, especially among vulnerable and disadvantaged groups of children; promote proper breastfeeding practices; and increase access to safe drinking water and sanitation;

(c) Pursue additional avenues for cooperation and assistance for child health improvement with, *inter alia*, WHO and UNICEF.

...

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377. The Committee notes the challenging socio-economic situation and the comprehensive debt reduction package recently agreed under the International Monetary Fund/World Bank enhanced heavily indebted poor countries initiative. However, it is concerned 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, street children, children living in remote rural and other under-developed areas, and children belonging to marginalized groups of the population. In addition, while taking note of the State party's intention to improve the coverage of the social security system, it joins the State party in expressing concern at the limited access to such assistance, and the need to reform the social security system.

378. In accordance with article 27 of the Convention, the Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) 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;

(b) Pay particular attention to the rights and needs of children in the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper and in all programmes intended to improve the standard of living in the country;

(c) Cooperate and coordinate its efforts with civil society and local communities;

(d) Reform the social security system, with a view to broadening its coverage after completion of the studies undertaken by the State party to this end.

### *See also:*

- Malawi, CRC, CRC/C/114 (2002) 104 at paras. 432 and 433.
- Burkina Faso, CRC, CRC/C/121 (2002) 103 at paras. 465 and 466.
  
- Gambia, CRC, CRC/C/111 (2001) 89 at paras. 432, 433, 440 and 441.

432. The Committee notes that the Maintenance Act (Cap. 44:03, Laws of the Gambia) obliges parents to provide financial support to children and that the Department of Social Welfare has assisted the parents to obey this Act. While noting the socio-economic challenges within the State party, the Committee expresses concern that the amount allocated for the payment of maintenance for children is generally insufficient and is often decided on *ad hoc* bases.

433. The Committee recommends that the State party take effective measures to review its



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policies, guidelines and procedures for the administration and implementation of the Maintenance Act in order to ensure the adequate and effective recovery of maintenance for children.

...

440. The Committee notes the efforts of the State party to improve health care for children through, *inter alia*, the National Nutrition Policy and the Participatory Health, Population and Nutrition Project. However, the Committee is concerned at the insufficient number of trained medical personnel; the lack of medicines, equipment and support for health workers; the high maternal, child and infant mortality rates; the high rate of malnutrition; the increasing incidence of HIV/AIDS; the high incidence of malaria and acute respiratory infections; poor sanitation and limited access to safe drinking water, especially in rural areas.

441. The Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) Allocate sufficient resources to reinforce its policies and programmes to improve health care for children;

(b) Take all effective measures to increase the number of trained medical and other health personnel, including traditional healers; facilitate cooperation between trained medical personnel and traditional healers, especially midwives; reduce the incidence of maternal, child and infant mortality; increase access to safe drinking water; improve sanitation; prevent and combat malnutrition; and reduce the incidence of malaria and acute respiratory infections;

(c) Take all effective measures to facilitate greater access to health services by, *inter alia*, abolishing or rationalizing cost-sharing in primary health care to reduce the burden on poor families;

(d) Continue its cooperation, through the Integrated Management of Childhood Illnesses and other measures for child health improvement, with, among others, WHO and UNICEF.

- Paraguay, CRC, CRC/C/111 (2001) 103 at paras. 506 and 507.

506. While noting the decrease in the infant and child mortality rates, the Committee is nevertheless concerned at the lack of reliable statistics and at the still high rates of mortality, morbidity and malnutrition affecting especially indigenous children and those who speak only Guaraní...It is also concerned about the unsatisfactory level of the immunization coverage.

507. In light of article 24 of the Convention and in line with its previous recommendation (CRC/C/15/Add. 75, para. 45), the Committee recommends that the State party:

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- (a) Allocate appropriate resources and develop comprehensive policies and programmes to improve the health situation of all children without discrimination, in particular by focusing more on primary health care and decentralizing the health-care system;
  - (b) In order to prevent child mortality and morbidity and address the high maternal mortality rate, provide adequate antenatal and postnatal health-care services and develop campaigns to inform parents about basic child health and nutrition, the advantages of breastfeeding, hygiene and environmental sanitation, family planning and reproductive health;
  - (c) Develop a comprehensive nutritional programme in order to prevent and combat malnutrition, in particular among indigenous children and those who speak only Guaraní;
  - (d) Look to international cooperation for the full and efficient implementation of the immunization programme; and
  - (e) Seek technical assistance from, among others, WHO, UNICEF and UNFPA.
- Uzbekistan, CRC, CRC/C/111 (2001) 117 at paras. 564 and 565.

564. The Committee expresses its concerns that:

A high number of children, especially children with disabilities, are abandoned, or are otherwise deprived of a family environment;

Foster care, or other forms of family-based alternative care, is not sufficiently developed and available, with the result that children are placed in institutions;

Institutions (for example, "infants' homes"), because of lack of resources, provide children with very low quality housing and care;

The location and features of institutions do not facilitate family contact;

Effective mechanisms for children to communicate concerns and complaints about their placement are lacking;

There is no follow-up of children who have left institutional care.

565. The Committee recommends that the State party:

- (a) Take effective measures, including the development of strategies and awareness-raising activities, to reduce and prevent the abandonment of children;

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- (b) Promote the family as the best environment for the child, through counselling and community-based programmes to assist parents to keep children at home;
  - (c) Take effective measures to increase and strengthen foster care, family-type foster homes and other family-based alternative care;
  - (d) Place children in institutions only as a last resort;
  - (e) Take all necessary measures to improve conditions in institutions;
  - (f) Ensure that children living there enjoy all the rights laid down in the Convention, including the right to maintain personal relationships and direct contact with their parents and families on a regular basis;
  - (g) Provide support and training for personnel in institutions, including social workers;
  - (h) Establish effective mechanisms to receive and address complaints from children in care, to monitor standards of care and to establish regular periodic review of placement;
  - (i) Provide adequate follow-up and reintegration services for children who leave institutional care.
- Cape Verde, CRC, CRC/C/111 (2001) 135 at paras. 632 and 633.

632. The Committee is concerned that the family structure, and particularly the care and protection it provides to children in the State party, is weakened by a combination of a lack of resources, poor housing conditions, a lack of free day care for single-parent-headed families, an insufficient social security and welfare system and the *union libre fixe* practice of parental relationships.

633. The Committee recommends that the State party:

    - (a) Give careful consideration to ways of providing improved protection and care of children and their rights in the context of the family, and that subsequent action be taken urgently towards strengthening children's family life;
    - (b) Consider the provision of assistance to families through, *inter alia*, a national plan for families and additional assistance to single-parent families, including with regard to securing child maintenance payments from the parent who is not caring for the child;
    - (c) Study the impact of the *union libre fixe* relationship structure on children and develop

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specific programmes to address problems identified;

(d) Seek assistance from UNICEF in this regard.

- Lebanon, CRC, CRC/C/114 (2002) 11 at paras. 75, 76, 83 and 84.

75. The Committee is concerned that the overall standard of living of many children is very low, as measured by income-related indicators such as access to housing, water, sanitation and education. In particular, it expresses concern at the large regional disparities in living standards, particularly with regard to children living in the governorates of the north, Nabatiyah and Bekaa, and Palestinian children.

76. The Committee recommends that the State party take steps to improve the standard of living of children, giving particular attention to housing, water and sanitation, as well as education. The Committee further recommends the adoption of measures to reduce regional disparities.

...

83. The Committee is concerned about the high rate of Palestinian children living below the poverty line, as well as the lack of adequate access by Palestinian children to many basic rights, including health, education and an adequate standard of living, and about the quality of services provided.

84. The Committee reiterates its recommendation ([CRC/C/15/Add.54], para. 40) that the State party, in cooperation with United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, seek ways of addressing the socio-economic problems among Palestinian children that affect children negatively, including teaching about the Convention in the school and include children in development programmes.

- Greece, CRC, CRC/C/114 (2002) 25 at paras. 140 and 141.

140. The Committee is concerned:

(a) At the high percentage of persons (19.5 per cent) estimated to be living below the poverty line and that, in this regard, the rights of some children, including the right to a family environment, may be violated;

(b) That the system of financial “allowances” provided by the State to assist in the care of children under certain circumstances, such as low family income, are not provided to children themselves but rather to mothers, irrespective of whether they are caring for their children;

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(c) That the amount of such financial allowances is extremely low and, in addition, that many Roma families do not receive these allowances at all.

141. In the light of article 18, the Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) Strengthen its efforts to protect children's right to a family environment, including by reducing the number of persons living in poverty and ensuring access for all children and parents in need to financial assistance, giving particular attention in this regard to children and parents from Roma communities;

(b) Amend the procedures for the disbursement of family allowances to ensure that this financial support is provided to the person(s) currently caring for the children intended to benefit from the allowances;

(c) Consider increasing financial support to families living in poverty to the maximum extent of available resources.

- Gabon, CRC, CRC/C/114 (2002) 47 at paras. 209, 210, 227 and 228.

209. The Committee is concerned at the large number of single-parent families headed by women - many of them are not able to raise their children for financial reasons - and at the existence of polygamy which may, as acknowledged by the State party (para. 178 of its report), negatively affect the upbringing and development of the child.

210. The Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) Take all necessary measures to provide assistance to single-parent families headed by women in order to support them in bringing up their children, in light of article 18 (2) of the Convention;

...

227. The Committee notes the challenging socio-economic situation and the sixth debt-rescheduling deal with the Paris Club (December 2000). However, it is concerned at the poor situation of sanitation and insufficient access to safe drinking water, especially in rural communities and suburban areas, and at 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, street children, and children living in remote rural areas. In addition, the Committee is concerned at the deterioration of the social security system, which no longer ensures free access to health services for children.

228. In accordance with article 27 of the Convention, the Committee recommends that the State party:

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- (a) Reinforce its efforts to provide support and material assistance to economically disadvantaged families, notably in suburban and rural areas, and to guarantee the right of children to an adequate standard of living;
  - (b) Cooperate and coordinate its efforts with civil society and local communities;
  - (c) Provide adequate financial resources to the social security system to restore free access to health services for children; and
  - (d) Provide information to families on their social rights.
- Mozambique, CRC, CRC/C/114 (2002) 65 at paras. 303 and 304.
    - 303. While noting the State party's poverty eradication strategy, the Committee remains concerned that:
      - (a) Absolute poverty continues to affect a very high proportion (around two thirds) of the State party's population;
      - (b) Only a very small proportion of the population has access to electricity, sanitation and clean running water in their homes;
      - (c) Many children have inadequate clothing;
      - (d) The current social security system covers only a very small number of children and their families in need of such protection.
    - 304. The Committee recommends that the State party:
      - (a) Continue and strengthen its efforts to address poverty, including through international cooperation;
      - (b) Consider and implement measures through which a significantly larger number of children and their families may benefit from minimum of social security protection;
      - (c) Continue its efforts to improve housing conditions, including sanitary conditions, in both rural and urban areas, and continue to implement its national water policy;
      - (d) Make every effort to ensure that all children have adequate clothing;
      - (e) Seek assistance in the form of international cooperation in this regard.

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- Chile, CRC, CRC/C/114 (2002) 90 at paras. 357 and 358.

357. The Committee is concerned that the system of assistance to parents and legal guardians in the performance of their child-rearing responsibilities is still insufficient, in particular with respect to single-parent families, and that a significant number of children are put in institutions because of the bad economic situation affecting the family.

358. In light of article 18 of the Convention, the Committee recommends that the State party continue to improve social assistance to families to support them in their child-rearing responsibilities, including through counselling and community-based programmes, as a means of reducing the number of children in institutional care.

- Malawi, CRC, CRC/C/114 (2002) 104 at paras. 406, 407 and 414-417.

406. While welcoming the adoption of the National Programme of Action for the Survival and Development of Children, and noting that the right to life is included in the Constitution, the Committee remains concerned that the programme has not been sufficiently implemented and that the impact of HIV/AIDS, mounting economic challenges and other socio-economic difficulties, as well as traditional practices and witchcraft, continue to threaten the right to life, survival and development of children within the State party.

407. The Committee encourages the State party to reinforce its efforts to provide greater protection and support to children whose right to life, survival and development are unduly threatened by the difficult socio-economic realities of the State. In this connection, the Committee recommends that the State party take the necessary measures to set clear priorities for a new programme of action and take all effective measures to strengthen its technical cooperation with, among others, UNICEF, UNAIDS, UNDP and WHO.

...

414. The Committee is concerned that a large number of families are headed by single parents, mostly women, many of them facing financial and other kinds of difficulties which negatively affect the upbringing and development of the child. The Committee is concerned at the lack of involvement of fathers in the upbringing and development of children.

415. The Committee recommends that the State party:

- (a) Take all necessary measures to provide assistance to single-parent families in order to support them in bringing up their children, in light of article 18 (2) of the Convention;
- (b) Take the necessary measures for the promotion of higher levels of involvement of fathers in the upbringing and development of their children.

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416. While domestic legislation includes provisions for maintenance allowance (Affiliation Act (cap. 26:02); Maintenance Orders Enforcement Act and the Divorce Act (cap. 25:04)), the Committee is concerned at the lack of implementation of these provisions mainly because of widespread ignorance of the law, limited enforcement of maintenance orders and the small amounts of the orders which cannot cover the basic needs of the child.

417. The Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) Make widely known the provisions of domestic legislation concerning maintenance allowance, especially among mothers who are illiterate, and to support them if necessary in understanding legal actions;

(b) Ensure that professional groups dealing with this issue are adequately trained and courts more strictly implement the provisions regarding the recovery of allowances, particularly in case of solvent parents who refuse to pay; and

(c) Take the necessary measures to ensure, to the extent possible, that the maintenance ordered covers the basic needs of the child.

- Guinea-Bissau, CRC, CRC/C/118 (2002) 12 at paras. 64 and 65.

64. The Committee is deeply concerned at:

(a) The limited access to, capacity and quality of health-care services, including in terms of distance between people's homes and health facilities, cost and the insufficient number of hospital beds and the limited availability of affordable and appropriate medication;

(b) The high rates of infant and maternal mortality, malnutrition, inadequate immunization and high mortality from malaria;

(c) The limited proportion of the population with access to safe water and adequate sanitation, including in schools, and related cholera and meningitis epidemics;

(d) Low levels of health education within communities.

65. The Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) Significantly increase its expenditure on health;

(b) Significantly improve children's access to health services and to medication including by strengthening the quality and capacity of the health infrastructure, providing financial



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assistance or free medical care to children in need of such support and their families and addressing the access concerns of those children living in isolated rural communities;

(c) Take action to address specific concerns, including infant and maternal mortality, malnutrition, inadequate immunization, malaria rates and cholera and meningitis epidemics;

(d) Take action to ensure that all children have access to drinking water and adequate sanitation, including in schools, and to ensure adequate waste disposal arrangements;

(e) Seek assistance through international cooperation in this regard.

- Niger, CRC, CRC/C/118 (2002) 37 at paras. 155, 156, 161 and 162.

155. The Committee is concerned at the incidence of infanticide committed by mothers in the State party and at the impact of mounting economic challenges and other socio-economic difficulties, as well as traditional practices which continue to threaten the right to life, survival and development of children in the State party.

156. The Committee encourages the State party to pursue its efforts to provide greater protection and support to children whose right to life, survival and development are unduly threatened by traditional practices and the difficult socio-economic realities of the State party. In this connection, the Committee recommends that the State party strengthen its technical cooperation with, *inter alia*, UNICEF, UNAIDS, UNDP and WHO.

...

161. The Committee is concerned at the breakdown of family structures, notably in suburban areas, due to large families, the existence of polygamy, and lack of education, poverty and unemployment which negatively affect the upbringing and development of the child, particularly in the many larger families.

162. The Committee recommends that the State party take all necessary measures to reinforce the capacities of families, especially families in the most precarious situation, in order to support them in bringing up their children, in the light of article 18.2 of the Convention, and to emphasize the role of fathers in that regard. In addition, the Committee recommends that the State party raise awareness in society at large concerning forced marriage and undertake a study to assess the effect of polygamy on the upbringing and development of the child.

- Switzerland, CRC, CRC/C/118 (2002) 78 at paras. 348-351.

348. The Committee takes note of the ongoing reform of the social security system but

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remains concerned that the cost of social insurance and health is very high, which may affect low-income families.

349. The Committee endorses the concluding observations of the Committee on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (E/C.12/1/Add.30, para. 36) and recommends that the State party review its health insurance systems in order to lower the cost of health services, for example, by reducing premiums.

350. While noting the economic wealth and high standard of living in the State party, the Committee is concerned that 5.6 per cent of the population is affected by poverty, and that, according to information provided by the State party (*Eléments d'une politique suisse de l'enfance et de la jeunesse*), young families, single-parent families and families with many children are the most affected. In addition, the Committee is concerned that the family allowances or benefits vary according to canton and depend on the recipients being gainfully employed.

351. The Committee recommends that the State party take all appropriate measures to prevent poverty in light of the principles and provisions of the Convention, especially its articles 2, 3, 6, 26 and 27, and that it review its system of family allowances and benefits, taking due account of the means- testing system, especially for families without gainful employment and self-employed families.

- Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, CRC, CRC/C/118 (2002) 101 at paras. 441 and 442.

441. Noting the assistance provided to families, *inter alia*, by the Public Assistance Board under the Ministry of Social Development and through the Ministries of Education and Health, the Committee remains concerned that:

- (a) A large proportion of Vincentian families are living in poverty;
- (b) The difficult domestic employment situation has obliged many parents, and sometimes both parents, to migrate, leaving children in the care of grandparents or under the responsibility of an older child;
- (c) Almost half of all families are headed by women single parents and their related poverty places children in these families at particular risk of violations of their rights;
- (d) Mothers are only able to claim child maintenance for a child aged over 5 if the claim process was initiated before the child reached the age of 5, and there are disparities between the child maintenance awards made to the children of unmarried mothers (domestic court) and married mothers (magistrates court).

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442. The Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) Make every effort to provide support to children within the context of the family and consider, *inter alia*, means of improving employment prospects within the State party for parents;

(b) Give particular attention to the situation of children in single parent families, especially families headed by mothers, and to grandparent and child-headed families;

(c) Strengthen its efforts to secure child maintenance payments in adequate amounts, ensuring also that there are no disparities between those accorded to the children of married and unmarried mothers;

(d) Implement the recommendations made in paragraphs 238 to 240 of the State party's report;

(e) Consider ratifying the 1973 Hague Convention No. 23 on the Recognition and Enforcement of Decisions relating to Maintenance Obligations.

- The Netherlands (Antilles), CRC, CRC/C/118 (2002) 129 at paras. 561 and 562.

561. The Committee is concerned that as noted by the State party, "an increasing number of families on the Netherlands Antilles are finding it extremely difficult to fulfil their basic role of educating and raising their children" (CRC/C/6/Add.4, para. 98), and at the large number of single-parent families, mostly headed by women, and the inadequate assistance provided to them. The Committee is further concerned at the disparities in the availability and accessibility of day-care services between islands.

562. The Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) Take steps to ensure that parents and families understand and fulfil their obligations towards children and give consideration to means of providing families with additional support, including through the implementation of the 1997 government memorandum on the family;

(b) Establish an effective mechanism for the provision of adequate social welfare;

(c) Introduce a national policy on day-care services with a view to ensuring uniformity across all islands.

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- Argentina, CRC, CRC/C/121 (2002) 8 at paras. 44, 45, 79 and 80.

44. The Committee expresses its concern that budgetary allocations for children are still insufficient to respond to federal, provincial and local priorities for the protection and promotion of children's rights and to overcome and remedy existing disparities between rural and urban areas, as well as within urban areas, in particular Buenos Aires, with respect to public services provided to children. It notes with deep concern that, according to recent statistics mentioned by the State party in its reply to the list of issues, 69.2 per cent of children in Argentina live in poverty, of whom 35.4 per cent live in extreme poverty.

45. In light of article 4 of the Convention, the Committee encourages the State party:

(a) To review economic and social policies and the allocation of resources in the budget with a view to ensuring that the maximum amount of available resources is allocated to promoting and protecting the rights of the child at the federal, regional and local levels, especially in the fields of health, education, social welfare and security, as previously recommended ([CRC/C/15/Add.36], para. 16);

(b) To identify the amount and proportion of resources spent on children at the national and local levels in order to evaluate the impact of expenditures on children.

...

79. The Committee notes with concern that the recent economic, political and social crises have caused increased poverty, particularly among children and vulnerable groups.

80. The Committee recommends that the State party continue its efforts to prevent, including through a comprehensive poverty reduction strategy which incorporates human rights principles, a decline in living standards of families, in particular among vulnerable groups.

- United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, CRC, CRC/C/121 (2002) 23 at paras. 137 and 138.

137. The Committee is extremely concerned at the high proportion of children living in poverty in the State party, which limits their enjoyment of many rights under the Convention and leads to a higher incidence among those children of death, accidents, pregnancy, poor housing and homelessness, malnutrition, educational failure and suicide. The Committee welcomes the State party's commitment to eliminate child poverty and the initiatives taken in this regard, but notes the lack of an effective and coordinated poverty eradication strategy across the State party.

138. The Committee urges the State party:

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(a) To take all necessary measures to the “maximum extent of ... available resources” to accelerate the elimination of child poverty;

(b) To better coordinate and reinforce its efforts to address the causes of youth homelessness and its consequences;

(c) To review its legislation and policies concerning benefits and social security allowances for 16- to 18-year-olds.

- Seychelles, CRC, CRC/C/121 (2002) 41 at paras. 201 and 202.

201. While acknowledging the State party’s strong commitment to child and maternal health, the Committee is concerned at the limited access to safe drinking water and sanitation on some islands...

202. The Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) Enforce existing environmental regulations so as to ensure universal access to safe drinking water and sanitation;

...

- Sudan, CRC, CRC/C/121 (2002) 53 at paras. 231, 232, 256 and 257.

231. The Committee is concerned that insufficient attention has been paid to article 4 of the Convention regarding the implementation to the “maximum extent of ... available resources” of the economic, social and cultural rights of children. Moreover, while appreciating that decentralization of services, particularly in the areas of health and education, allows authorities to respond better to local needs, the Committee is concerned that this delegation of responsibility without adequate resource allocation would result in serious deficiencies in the provision of these services for children, especially in the poorer areas. It emphasizes that the State party is responsible for ensuring that resources reach the most vulnerable groups during the period of economic reform and structural adjustment.

232. The Committee recommends that the State party:

...

(b) Identify the amount and proportion of the national and local budgets spent on children through public and private services, non-governmental organizations and international development aid, and evaluate the impact and effects of the expenditures and of

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privatization;

(c) Study the impact of structural adjustment on the cost, quality, accessibility and effectiveness of services.

...

256. The Committee is concerned that:

(a) Widespread and severe poverty, and the disruption of family life by war, famine and related population displacement have seriously weakened the family environment of massive numbers of children within the State party;

...

257. The Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) Assess the scope of problems faced by children in the realization of their right to a family environment and take urgent action to strengthen its support to the family;

...

- Ukraine, CRC, CRC/C/121 (2002) 70 at paras. 310, 311, 331, 333, 336 and 337.

310. The Committee notes the priority accorded by the State party to health and education and the information that the budget has been increased for 2000-2001. However, the Committee remains concerned about the low level of resources in general for social services, health and education, which has a negative impact on the quality and accessibility of services, especially affecting families with children living in poverty...The Committee is further concerned that readjustment programmes may have a disproportionately negative affect on children if not appropriately addressed in the planning and budgeting of social services.

311. In light of articles 2, 3 and 6 of the Convention, the Committee recommends that the State party pay particular attention to the full implementation of article 4 of the Convention by:

(a) Further continuing to increase the budget for the implementation of the Convention and prioritizing budgetary allocations to ensure implementation of economic, social and cultural rights of children to the maximum extent of available resources, in particular to socially marginalized groups, taking into account the decentralization of the provision of social services and of public finances;

(b) Strengthening its efforts to implement the poverty reduction strategy (2001);

...

(d) Identifying the amount and proportion of the State budget spent on children through

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public and private institutions or organizations in order to evaluate the impact of the expenditures and also, in view of the costs, the accessibility, the quality and the effectiveness of the services for children in the different sectors.

...

331. ...The Committee is...concerned at the growing percentage of families living below the poverty line, and regrets that its previous recommendation that the State party take further steps to strengthen the system of assistance to both parents in the performance of their child-rearing responsibilities has not been followed-up, ([CRC/C/15/Add. 42], para. 25). Moreover, financial assistance to families has decreased.

...

333. In light of article 18, the Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) Strengthen its efforts to protect children's right to a secure family environment and ensure, through a comprehensive new Children's Act, effective protection of children and access by all children and parents in need to financial assistance in this regard;

(b) Take action on the recently drafted social assistance bill designed to restructure the system of social security benefits;

(c) Improve social assistance and support to families through advice and education so as to promote positive child-parent relationships;

...

(e) Strengthen preventive measures, such as supporting the role of families and communities, in order to help eliminate the social conditions leading to such problems as delinquency, crime and drug addiction;

(f) Consider increasing financial support for families with children living in poverty under the Poverty Reduction Strategy 2001 at the national, regional and local levels.

...

336. The Committee is concerned that State assistance to single parents is inadequate and that the system for recovering child maintenance is inefficient and allows for delays in payments, sometimes lasting several years.

337. The Committee recommends that the State party establish a mechanism that will implement and monitor more proactive, timely and effective policy for collecting maintenance from the parent responsible for paying it.

- Republic of Moldova, CRC, CRC/C/121 (2002) 89 at paras. 410 and 411.

410. The Committee welcomes the adoption of the Preliminary Poverty Reduction Strategy in April 2002 and other efforts to support families, but remains concerned at the

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deteriorating living standards affecting in particular families with children, the inadequate social security system and the large number of parents migrating abroad to find work.

411. The Committee recommends that the State party:

...

(b) Fully implement the Preliminary Poverty Reduction Strategy, *inter alia* with a view to providing an adequate level of food security and social protection for children at risk and to improving and making transparent the payments of allowances to families with children.

- Burkina Faso, CRC, CRC/C/121 (2002) 103 at paras. 442 and 443.

442. The Committee welcomes the priority given to the allocation of resources to health and education, especially in the State budget for 2002, and notes with concern the chronic budget deficits in spite of aid plans established through international cooperation, the World Bank, United Nations agencies and bilateral donors.

443. While recognizing the difficult economic conditions, the Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) Make every effort to increase the proportion of the budget allocated to the realization of children's rights to the "maximum extent ... of available resources" and, in this context, to ensure the provision, including through international cooperation, of appropriate human resources and to guarantee that the implementation of policies relating to social services provided to children remain a priority;

...

(c) Undertake a study on the impact of structural adjustment programmes on the right of children to social services.

- Poland, CRC, CRC/C/121 (2002) 120 at paras. 543 and 544.

543. ...[T]he Committee is concerned that not all juvenile detention centres guarantee the child's right to maintain contact with his or her family or provide adequate living standards.

544. The Committee recommends that the State party:

...

(c) Use deprivation of liberty only as a measure of last resort and protect the rights of children deprived of their liberty, including those pertaining to conditions of detention.

- Israel, CRC, CRC/C/121 (2002) 131 at paras. 568, 569, 598 and 599.



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568. Against the backdrop of a declining economy, the Committee is concerned that the proposed budget cuts in social spending will negatively affect the economic, social and cultural rights of children belonging to the most vulnerable groups.

569. The Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) Ensure the economic, social and cultural rights of all children, to the maximum extent of available resources;

(b) Continue to prioritize and target budgetary allocation for children belonging to the most vulnerable groups (e.g. Israeli Arab children, Bedouins, children of foreign workers);

(c) Systematically assess the impact of budgetary allocations on the implementation of child rights.

...

598. The Committee notes the State party's activities to improve support for vulnerable families (e.g. single-parent families), but is concerned at the recent cuts in the budget for social welfare and at the very high percentage of children living in poverty, particularly those living in large families, single-parent families and Arab families.

599. The Committee recommends that the State party develop and implement a comprehensive strategy for the eradication of poverty, and provide it with adequate financial and human resources.

- Estonia, CRC, CRC/C/124 (2003) 9 at paras 25, 45, 46, 54 and 55.

25. The Committee welcomes:

...

(b) The system of family benefits and child allowances supporting parents and children in general and providing extra support for especially vulnerable families such as single-parent families, and families with many children and/or with unemployed parents;

...

(d) The introduction of comprehensive health-care insurance;

...

45. The Committee is concerned that the current discriminatory attitudes towards linguistic minority communities (e.g. the Russian-speaking community), non-citizens, especially those without legal status, and other disadvantaged groups may restrict, directly or indirectly, the rights guaranteed under the Convention to children belonging to those groups. In particular, the Committee is concerned:

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...

(b) That there is no legislation at present prohibiting discrimination in housing, and access to education and public services;

...

(d) That large minority groups (e.g. the Russian-speaking community, which accounts for approximately 30 per cent of the population) are disproportionately overrepresented among low-income and unemployed households, and underrepresented in the public service.

46. The Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) Take effective measures, including enacting or rescinding legislation where necessary, to ensure that all children enjoy all the rights set out in the Convention without discrimination, in accordance with article 2;

(b) Study the effectiveness of the measures taken to counter all forms of discrimination;

...

54. The Committee welcomes the priorities as described in the State party's report to support the family structure, but remains concerned that there is a high number of children in institutions and that:

(a) According to the report submitted by the State party, 27.6 per cent (1999) of children in shelters are placed there because of their difficult economic conditions;

(b) Conditions in institutions are poor and the system of periodic review of placement does not adequately take into account the views and best interests of the child by providing appropriate counselling and support or finding forms of alternative care;

...

55. The Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) Undertake a comprehensive study on the phenomenon of institutionalization of children;

(b) Promote the family as the best environment for the child, through counselling and community-based programmes as well as financial support to assist parents in raising children at home;

...

(e) Take all necessary measures to improve standards and conditions in institutions;

...

(h) Establish effective mechanisms for complaints from children in care and for monitoring standards of care and establish efficient regular periodic review of placement, taking into account the best interests of the child;

(i) Provide adequate follow-up and reintegration services for children who leave

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institutional care.

- Italy, CRC, CRC/124 (2003) 36 at para. 161.

161. The Committee notes the establishment of several observatories on discrimination in the State party as well as the provisions on discrimination contained in Law 40/98 (Regulations on Immigration and Rules on the Conditions of the Foreigner). Nonetheless, the Committee is concerned at racist incidents involving minorities, the use of hate speech in public presentations, and the disparities in the enjoyment of economic and social rights, particularly in the fields of health, social welfare, education and housing, experienced by poor children, Roma children, non-Italian children, including unaccompanied minors, and disabled children.

- Romania, CRC, CRC/124 (2003) 49 at paras. 211, 234, 235, 254 and 255.

211. The Committee is concerned that budget allocations for health and education remain low and that children living in rural areas may be disproportionately affected. In particular, it notes that some counties and communities are economically disadvantaged *vis-à-vis* others and are therefore unable to provide their children with an adequate level of services.

...

234. The Committee notes the information provided by the State party, including the adoption of a government strategy for 2001-2004 focusing on providing support to families, the National Anti-Poverty Plan for Strengthening Social Inclusion, and the disbursement of numerous financial benefits for children and families. However, widespread poverty continues to be a major challenge for the State party, affecting all sectors of society, in particular urban households with many children. The Committee notes with concern that poverty is a contributing factor to family breakdowns, the growing number of single-parent families, parental abuse and neglect, and the phenomenon of children being placed in institutional care or abandoned by parents with no adequate means to raise them.

235. The Committee recommends that the State party:

- (a) Develop a comprehensive child-centred family policy;
- (b) Strengthen its efforts to comprehensively protect children's right to a secure family environment and ensure, through a comprehensive new children's act, effective protection of children and access by all children and parents to financial assistance, having due regard to article 18, paragraph 2, of the Convention;
- (c) Improve social assistance and support to families through advice and education to

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promote positive child-parent relationships;

(d) Take effective measures, including the development of strategies and awareness-raising activities, to prevent and reduce the abandonment of children;

...

(f) Provide support to families and young pregnant girls;

(g) Undertake campaigns to reinforce the responsibilities of fathers for their children.

...

254. The Committee is encouraged by the ongoing efforts of the State party, in cooperation with ILO and others, aimed at addressing the problem of child labour in Romania. However, the Committee is concerned that the number of children working in the city streets, in rural areas and in households is still high, and that:

(a) As a means of overcoming poverty many children as young as 6 years are engaged in regular work;

...

255. The Committee recommends that the State party, in accordance with article 32 of the Convention and ILO Conventions Nos. 138 concerning the Minimum Age for Admission to Employment and 182 concerning the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour, which the State party has ratified:

...

(b) Continue its cooperation with IPEC, as well as strengthen its cooperation with and support for NGOs working in this area.

- Viet Nam, CRC, CRC/C/124 (2003) 67 at paras. 300, 301, 306 and 307.

300. The Committee notes with deep concern that, as recognized in the State party's report, family disintegration, including divorce, is on the rise and contributes to the increasing numbers of children in conflict with the law and of those living on the street and abusing drugs. The Committee is further concerned at the growing gap between rich and poor families, and that poverty puts children at greater risk of exploitation and abuse.

301. The Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) Strengthen its efforts to develop a comprehensive family policy;

(b) Improve social assistance and support to vulnerable families by establishing a professionalized system of social workers within communities to provide counselling and assistance;

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(c) Consider increasing financial support for economically disadvantaged families, particularly within development and poverty reduction plans for rural and remote areas.

...

306. The Committee is concerned at the poor environmental health conditions, in particular the low percentage of the population with access to safe drinking water and sanitation facilities, in particular in rural and mountainous areas, as well as the after-effects of Agent Orange and other chemical defoliants.

307. The Committee recommends that the State party prioritize the construction and expansion of water and sanitation infrastructure in rural and mountainous regions and ensure that all vulnerable groups have equal access to safe drinking water and sanitation. It also recommends that the State party continue its efforts to prevent and combat the damaging effects of environmental pollution, such as chemical defoliants, on children, including through international cooperation.

- Czech Republic, CRC, CRC/C/124 (2003) 78 at paras. 363, 364, 373 and 374.

363. The Committee welcomes the information on the Policy Statement on measures to be taken relating to child and family welfare and on the preparation of a national programme of support to families with children. The Committee is concerned at the insufficient assistance and guidance given to parents in their child-rearing responsibilities for the upbringing and development of the child (art. 18), resulting in numerous cases of custody procedures or in alternative care in institutions. The Committee is further concerned that preventive efforts and family counselling are inadequate and that placement in an institution may be a solution to social problems and crisis situations in the family.

364. The Committee recommends that the State party:

...

(b) Undertake a comprehensive review of all legislation, policies and administrative decisions related to children within the family in order to assess their impact on the family as a whole with a view to the adoption of a family policy. The Committee further encourages the State party to adopt a family policy including a minimum of social security for the child and the family, housing and social services, provision for managing both parents' work and their childcare responsibilities, women's and single parents' status, child maintenance, maternity and paternity leave and other family-related issues;

(c) Adopt and implement international and domestic legislation to address these concerns, including the 1973 Hague Convention on the Law Applicable to Maintenance Obligations.

...

373. The Committee notes that new financial benefits were introduced in 1995 under Act No. 117/1995 Coll. regulating contributions and additional social care payments and that the

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Elimination of Poverty and Social Exclusion Strategy is being implemented. However, the Committee shares the concerns of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights ([E/C.12/1/Add.76], para. 10) that the inadequacy of the social safety nets during the restructuring and privatization process has negatively affected the enjoyment of economic, social and cultural rights, disproportionately affecting the most disadvantaged and marginalized groups.

374. The Committee recommends that the State party ensure that the provisions of the Convention are taken into account in the privatization process and that all children residing on the territory of the State party equally enjoy social benefits.

- Eritrea, CRC, CRC/C/132 (2003) 8 at paras. 63, 64, 73 and 74.

63. The Committee notes with appreciation the State party's programme to extend health services which has increased access from 10 to 70 per cent of the population since independence in 1991, as well as its programme of cooperation with UNICEF in the area of health and health services. However, the Committee is concerned at the high rate of child and infant mortality due to acute respiratory infections, diarrhoeal diseases, malaria and malnutrition. It is further concerned that a considerable number of families lack access to safe drinking water and sanitation facilities, which contributes to the spread of communicable diseases.

64. The Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) Continue to expand access to health services, in particular in rural areas, and increase the skills of health personnel with a view to reducing infant mortality rates;

(b) Continue to strengthen the implementation of existing health policies and programmes, in particular the National Policy on Breastfeeding and Weaning Practices (1995) and the Eritrean Rural Water Supply and Environmental Sanitation Programme;

(c) Expedite the adoption of the draft Marketing of Infant and Young Child Foods Act.

...

73. The Committee is concerned at the inadequate standard of living which hampers the respect for and fulfilment of the rights of children and the ability of their families to provide them with adequate protection.

74. The Committee recommends that the State party formulate a national strategy to combat poverty, with due emphasis on monitoring the impact on the rights of children, and that it allocate sufficient human and financial resources, including through international assistance, to ensure the implementation of its strategy.

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- Zambia, CRC, CRC/C/132 (2003) 32 at paras. 185, 186, 205 and 206.

185. The Committee is concerned that a large number of families are headed by single parents, mostly women, and/or AIDS orphans, many of them facing financial and other kinds of difficulties...

186. The Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) Take all necessary measures to provide assistance to single-parent and child-headed families in order to support them in bringing up their children and siblings, in light of article 18 (2) of the Convention;

...

205. The Committee is concerned about the widespread poverty, especially among female-headed households, in the State party and the increasingly high number of children who do not enjoy the right to an adequate standard of living, including access to clean drinking water, adequate housing and latrines.

206. The Committee takes note of the efforts undertaken by the State party and recommends that, in accordance with article 27 of the Convention, the State party strengthen its efforts to provide support and material assistance to economically disadvantaged families, notably female-headed households, and to guarantee the right of children to an adequate standard of living. In this connection, the Committee recommends that the State party pay particular attention to the rights and needs of children when implementing its poverty reduction strategy and all other programmes intended to improve the standard of living in the country.

- Sri Lanka, CRC, CRC/C/132 (2003) 48 at paras. 271, 272 and 277.

271. Almost 20 years of civil conflict has had an extremely negative impact on the implementation of the Convention in the State party. While recognizing that children will greatly benefit from the peace process, the Committee is concerned that during the transition to peace and the reconstruction process, children who have been affected by the conflict remain a particularly vulnerable group.

272. The Committee recommends that the State party implement the plan of action for the respect of the rights of children during the reconstruction process (2003). In particular, the Committee recommends that the State party:

...

(c) Take effective measures to ensure that children affected by conflict can be reintegrated into the education system, including through the provision of non-formal education programmes and by prioritizing the rehabilitation of school buildings and facilities and the

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provision of water, sanitation and electricity in conflict-affected areas;

(d) Seek in this regard technical assistance from, among others, UNICEF.

...

277. The Committee recommends that the State party continue its efforts to eliminate child labour, in particular by addressing the root causes of child economic exploitation through poverty eradication and access to education, as well as by developing a comprehensive child labour monitoring system in collaboration with NGOs [non-governmental organizations], community-based organizations, law enforcement personnel, labour inspectors and ILO/IPEC.

- Solomon Islands, CRC, CRC/C/132 (2003) 58 at paras. 327, 328, 335 and 336.

327. The Committee is concerned that:

(a) Only a limited number of families are eligible for health insurance coverage plans and other social insurance policies;

(b) Only a very small proportion of the population have access to electricity, sanitation and clean running water in their homes;

(c) Levels of poverty are rising and affect a very high proportion of children.

328. The Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) Strengthen its efforts to address poverty, including through a poverty reduction strategy and international cooperation;

(b) Develop and implement measures through which children and their families may benefit from a minimum of social security protection;

(c) Continue its efforts to improve housing and sanitary conditions in both remote and urban areas.

...

335. The Committee is concerned that:

(a) Many children under 15 are working, often in very poor conditions and for long hours;

(b) In order to overcome extreme poverty, many parents and families require children to work, as illustrated by the prevalence of young girls working as domestics, sometimes within the extended family;



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(c) The prevalence of child labour prevents many children from attending school.

336. The Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) Ensure the implementation and enforcement of all domestic and international legal protection for children in this regard, in close collaboration with ILO/IPEC;

(b) Make greater efforts to reduce the number of children working in the formal and informal sectors, with particular emphasis on younger children;

(c) Make every effort, including taking preventive measures, to ensure that those children who do work do so in accordance with international standards, do not work under conditions which are harmful to them, receive appropriate wages and other work-related benefits and continue to have access to formal education;

...

- Jamaica, CRC, CRC/C/132 (2003) 86 at paras. 428, 429, 434, 435, 440 and 441.

428. While noting the work done, *inter alia* within the Poverty Eradication Programme, and the growing number of family counselling services and parental education programmes, the Committee nevertheless remains concerned about:

(a) The large proportion of Jamaican families living in poverty, especially in rural and inner-city communities;

(b) The difficult domestic employment situation and its negative impact on the family situation, e.g. the practice of “child shifting” and situations where one or both parents migrate, leaving the children behind;

(c) The fact that almost half of all families are headed by female single parents and that their related poverty places children of these families at particular risk of violations of their rights;

(d) The ongoing difficulties in the field of guidance concerning parental responsibilities.

429. The Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) Make every effort to provide support to children within the context of the family and consider, *inter alia*, means of improving employment prospects for parents within the State party;

(b) Give particular support to children in single-parent families;

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(c) Increase its attention to parenting education and needs-based counselling services, especially for fathers, and strengthen support to NGOs working to improve parenting styles. The Committee recommends that the State party seek assistance in establishing targeted programmes from, for example, UNICEF.

...

434. The Committee notes with appreciation the State party's considerable achievements in the area of health care and its awareness of and intention to further improve the health situation among children through, *inter alia*, the adoption of the National Health Services Act, the expansion of health programmes and campaigns and the establishment of a quality assurance programme for the training of health personnel. However, the Committee remains concerned about:

(a) The insufficient number of health personnel, medicines and supplies to meet the needs of sick children;

(b) The problems of environmental degradation within the State party, including air pollution and difficulties accessing safe, clean water in a number of rural and inner-city areas;

...

435. The Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) Continue taking all appropriate measures to improve the health infrastructure, including through international cooperation, in order to ensure access to basic health care and services adequately stocked with appropriate basic medicines for all children, as well as by paying attention to the mental health of children and young people;

(b) Intensify its efforts to address environmental health concerns, particularly with regard to air pollution and solid waste management, and increase access to safe drinking water and sanitation;

...

440. Noting the intention to reform the social safety net for the poor, the Committee, in the light of its earlier concern about the large number of families living in poverty (CRC/C/15/Add.32, para. 20), wishes to stress that the situation is made more difficult by the lack of an efficient social security policy. The Committee is also concerned that the existing standard of living hampers children's physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social development.

441. The Committee therefore recommends that the State party strengthen its efforts to revise and/or establish a social security policy along with a clear and coherent family policy, as well as effective strategies for using the social safety net benefits to further the rights of children. Furthermore, the Committee recommends that the State party develop and implement a poverty reduction strategy and seek assistance from the international community, including United Nations agencies and other competent bodies, in that effort.

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- Morocco, CRC, CRC/C/132 (2003) 100 at paras. 506 and 507.

506. The Committee notes the efforts undertaken by the State party, notably through the National Five-Year Plan for Social and Economic Development (2000-2004), but remains concerned about the large number of children who do not enjoy their right to an adequate standard of living, including children belonging to poor families, children living in remote rural areas and street children. In addition, the Committee is concerned that not many children benefit from the social security system.

507. In accordance with article 27 of the Convention, the Committee recommends that the State party:

- (a) Strengthen its efforts to provide support and material assistance to economically disadvantaged families, including single-parent families, and to guarantee the right of children to an adequate standard of living;
- (b) Extend further and strengthen the social security coverage;
- (c) Consider preparing a poverty reduction strategy with special emphasis on vulnerable children and their families;
- (d) Seek assistance from United Nations agencies and donors.

- Syrian Arab Republic, CRC, CRC/C/132 (2003) 116 at paras. 566 and 567.

566. The Committee welcomes the adoption of the Integrated Management of Childhood Illnesses strategy and the State party's support for various initiatives, such as the Community School Initiative and "healthy villages" and notes the achievements in child and maternal health, as indicated in recent multiple indicator cluster surveys. But it is still concerned:

...

(c) That there is a significant gap in the quality of care between public and private health services, and that private services are inaccessible to most people because they do not have insurance;

...

(e) Only about 60 per cent of households consume iodized salt;

(f) About the inadequate access to safe drinking water and sanitation in rural areas.

567. The Committee recommends that the State party:

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(a) Ensure that its commitment to public primary health care is matched by adequate allocations of human and financial resources and that all children, especially in rural areas, have access to health care;

...

(d) Continue to support and expand the Community School Initiative and “healthy villages”;

(e) Continue to cooperate with and seek assistance from, among others, UNICEF and WHO.

- Kazakhstan, CRC, CRC/C/132 (2003) 129 at paras. 621 and 622.

621. The Committee welcomes the information contained in the State party’s report that principles of legislation governing the family have been brought into line with the principles and provisions of the Convention; it also welcomes the expansion in recent years of advice centres for families. The Committee shares the serious concern of the State party relating to the extremely large number of abandoned children becoming *de facto* orphans because of the rising number of families experiencing difficulties due to socio-economic circumstances. In addition, the Committee is also concerned that limiting the duration of maternity leave, abolishing family leave, as well as abolishing or failing to pay many benefits to women with small children, put additional strain on families.

622. In light of article 18, the Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) Take all effective measures, including the development of strategies and awareness-raising activities, to reduce and prevent the abandonment of children;

(b) Promote the family as the best environment for the child and provide counselling and community-based programmes to assist parents to keep children at home;

(c) Improve social assistance and support to families through advice and parenting education to promote positive child-parent relationships and increase financial support and other benefits for families with children, in particular for those living in poverty.

- Canada, CRC, CRC/C/133 (2003) 34 at paras. 66-68 and 91-93.

66. The Committee welcomes the information provided in the report relating to the Government’s contribution to the fulfilment of the rights of the child through allocating resources to a number of initiatives and programmes, notably the National Child Benefit (NCB) system aimed at improving the well-being of Canadian children living at risk by reducing and preventing child poverty. However, the Committee reiterates concerns expressed by the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (E/C.12/1/Add.31,

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para. 22) and the Human Rights Committee (CCPR/C/79/Add.105, paras. 18, 20) relating to modalities of implementing NCB in some provinces.

67. The Committee invites the State party to use its regular evaluation of the impact of the National Child Benefit system and its implementation in the provinces and territories to review the system with a view to eliminating any negative or discriminatory effects it may have on certain groups of children.

68. The Committee recommends that the State party pay particular attention to the full implementation of article 4 of the Convention by prioritizing budgetary allocations so as to ensure implementation of the economic, social and cultural rights of children, in particular those belonging to marginalized and economically disadvantaged groups, “to the maximum extent of ... available resources”. The Committee further encourages the State party to state clearly every year its priorities with respect to child rights issues and to identify the amount and proportion of the budget spent on children, especially on marginalized groups, at the federal, provincial and territorial levels in order to be able to evaluate the impact of the expenditures on children and their effective utilization. The Committee encourages the State party to continue to take measures to prevent children from being disproportionately affected by future economic changes and to continue its support to non-governmental organizations working on the dissemination of the Convention.

...

91. The Committee reiterates its previous concern relating to the emerging problem of child poverty and shares the concerns expressed by the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) relating to economic and structural changes and deepening poverty among women, which particularly affects single mothers and other vulnerable groups, and the ensuing impact this may have on children.

92. The Committee recommends that further research be carried out to identify the causes of the spread of homelessness, particularly among children, and any links between homelessness and child abuse, child prostitution, child pornography and trafficking in children. The Committee encourages the State party to further strengthen the support services it provides to homeless children while taking measures to reduce and prevent the occurrence of this phenomenon.

93. The Committee recommends that the State party continue to address the factors responsible for the increasing number of children living in poverty and that it develop programmes and policies to ensure that all families have adequate resources and facilities, paying due attention to the situation of single mothers, as suggested by CEDAW (A/52/38/Rev.1, para. 336), and other vulnerable groups.

- New Zealand, CRC, CRC/C/133 (2003) 27 at paras. 153 and 154.

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153. The Committee is concerned that a significant proportion of children in the State party live in poverty and that single-parent families headed by women, as well as Maori and Pacific Island families, are disproportionately affected.

154. In accordance with article 27, paragraph 3, of the Convention, the Committee recommends that the State party take appropriate measures to assist parents, in particular single parents, and others responsible for the child to implement the child's right to an adequate standard of living. In this regard, the Committee recommends that the State party ensure that assistance provided to Maori and Pacific Island families respects and supports their traditional extended family structures.

- Pakistan, CRC, CRC/C/133 (2003) 37 at paras. 224 and 225.

224. The Committee is very concerned at the high number of children living in poverty, the shortage of adequate housing, clean water, adequate sanitation and sewage and the problem of air pollution, all of which have a serious negative impact on the living conditions of children in the State party, causing injuries, sickness and death.

225. In accordance with article 27 of the Convention, the Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) 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;

(b) Pay particular attention to the rights and needs of children in its poverty reduction strategy paper and in all programmes intended to improve the standard of living in the country, including access to clean water and unpolluted air;

(c) Strengthen the social security system to broaden its coverage so as to include non-working parents.

- Madagascar, CRC, CRC/C/133 (2003) 56 at paras. 291, 292, 306 and 307.

291. The Committee shares the State party's concern at the immediate and long-term consequences on children of the weakening of the family structure.

292. The Committee recommends that the State party continue and strengthen its support to families, including through legal and financial assistance in obtaining adequate housing,

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basic social services and counselling to help resolve problems. The Committee urges the State party to give particular attention to the establishment of psychosocial and parental guidance programmes to strengthen vulnerable family units such as single-parent households.

...

306. The Committee notes the challenging socio-economic situation and the adoption, in 2003, of a chapter on special protection in the poverty reduction strategy paper. However, it is concerned 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, street children and children living in remote rural areas.

307. In accordance with article 27 of the Convention, the Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) Strengthen 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 particular, access to drinking water, health, housing and hygiene;

(b) Pay particular attention to the rights and needs of children in the poverty reduction strategy paper and in all programmes intended to improve the standard of living in the country;

(c) Cooperate and coordinate its efforts with civil society and local communities.

- Bangladesh, CRC, CRC/C/133 (2003) 93 at paras. 485, 486, 499, 500 and 502.

485. The Committee welcomes the adoption of the National Policy for Safe Water Supply and Sanitation. However, the Committee is concerned, despite the measures taken by the State party, about the extent of water contamination, specifically with arsenic, air pollution and the low availability of sanitation facilities which have serious negative consequences for children's health and development.

486. The Committee urges the State party:

(a) To continue and strengthen its efforts to reduce contamination and pollution of air and water as well as improve sanitation facilities, including by strengthening the implementation of the National Policy for Safe Water Supply and Sanitation;

(b) To intensify awareness-raising campaigns and educational programmes in order to inform children and adults about appropriate behaviours protecting them against risks.

...

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499. The Committee is very concerned about the difficult conditions under which some refugee children, especially children belonging to the Rohingya population from Myanmar, are living...

500. The Committee recommends that the State party:

...

(c) In collaboration with and with support from international agencies, undertake effective measures to improve the living conditions of refugee families and children, particularly with regard to educational and health-care services;

(d) Provide unaccompanied refugee children with adequate care, education and protection;

...

502. The Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) Continue and strengthen its efforts to eradicate child labour, including in the informal sector, in particular by addressing its root causes through poverty reduction programmes and strengthening of the children's component in the new Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper, and facilitation of access to education;

...

- Georgia, CRC, CRC/C/133 (2003) 111 at paras. 550, 551 and 566-569.

550. The Committee, while welcoming the State party's activities to reduce institutionalization, shares the concern of the State party about the poor standard of living of children in institutions and the fact that the Government does not allocate sufficient funds for these institutions. The Committee is deeply concerned that many of these children are placed in institutions owing primarily to economic hardship of the families, especially when they are in need of special care...

551. The Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) Continue measures to strengthen support for families to enable them to care for their children at home by developing a comprehensive child-centred family policy;

(b) Improve social assistance and support to families through advice and education to promote positive child-parent relationships;

...

(f) Strengthen and intensify the programme of de-institutionalization while taking all the necessary measures to improve living conditions in institutions and ensure that children living there for the shortest period possible are provided with adequate health care, education and food;



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...

566. The Committee notes that a government commission was set up to facilitate development of programmes to overcome poverty and promote economic growth. However, it also notes the recommendation made by the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights which encouraged the State party to reform its social security system and accord attention in particular to the most disadvantaged and marginalized groups. In addition, the Committee regrets that social benefits for children with disabilities are discontinued when they reach 16 years.

567. The Committee encourages the State party to pursue efforts to reform its social security system, as recommended by the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights as this relates to children. Furthermore, it urges the State party to extend payment benefits to all children with disabilities, including those between 16 and 18 years of age.

568. The Committee, while noting that the primary responsibility of securing the necessary living conditions for the child lies with the parents, shares the concerns of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights about the increasing level of poverty, the poor living conditions of the majority of the population, the high unemployment rate, the low level of salaries and of social security benefits, and the rampant problem of corruption. The Committee is concerned that such a situation adversely affects the physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social development of children. Furthermore, the Committee notes that certain benefits are limited to children and families residing in the capital, Tbilisi.

569. The Committee encourages the State party to implement fully the Poverty Reduction Programme and to take measures to assist parents and others responsible for children by intensifying efforts to combat poverty with a view to improving the standard of living of children and providing material assistance and support programmes, without discrimination based on place of residence, in accordance with article 27 of the Convention.

- Guyana, CRC, CRC/C/137 (2004) 26 at paras. 137, 138, 166, 167, 172 and 173.

137. The Committee is concerned that, as noted by the State party, societal discrimination persists against girls and vulnerable groups of children, including children living in poverty, Amerindian children and children with disabilities, and that the Constitution does not prohibit discrimination on the grounds of disability.

138. The Committee recommends that the State party increase its efforts to adopt appropriate legislation, to ensure implementation of existing laws guaranteeing the principle of non-discrimination and full compliance with article 2 of the Convention, and to adopt a proactive and comprehensive strategy to eliminate discrimination on any grounds and against all vulnerable groups.

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...

166. While noting the study with UNICEF on street children and the State party's awareness of the phenomenon of increasing numbers of street children, the Committee remains concerned at the situation of street children and at the lack of adequate and sufficient measures to address this situation.

167. The Committee recommends that the State party continue and strengthen its efforts to assist street children, including reintegration into their families as well as taking preventive measures. It also recommends that the State party continue to seek international assistance from, *inter alia*, UNICEF and ILO in this regard.

...

172. The Committee is concerned at the living conditions of Amerindian children with regard to the full enjoyment of all rights enshrined in the Convention, especially the degradation of their natural environment and the fact that they are not taught in their own languages.

173. In light of articles 2 and 30 of the Convention and the recommendations adopted by the Committee at its day of general discussion on the rights of indigenous children in September 2003, the Committee recommends that the State party take all necessary measures to protect Amerindian children against discrimination and to guarantee their enjoyment of all the rights recognized in the Convention...

- Armenia, CRC, CRC/C/137 (2004) 36 at paras. 212, 213, 228 and 229.

212. The Committee reiterates its concern about the high number of children living in institutions (including boarding schools). In particular, the Committee notes with concern the rising numbers of *de facto* orphans in the State party, due to the protracted social and economic crisis in the country where an increasing number of parents find themselves without the means to maintain their children...

213. The Committee urges the State party to ensure the effective implementation of the State Strategic Programme for the Reform of Institutions Involved in the Care and Maintenance of Children, with a view to reducing the number of children placed in institutions, improving their quality of life and facilitating their integration into society... The Committee encourages the State party to consider expanding the pilot project envisaged for 2004 of supporting children's return to their families or placement in foster care. It also encourages the State party to implement plans to offer one-room apartments free of charge for a period of 10 years to children discharged from children's homes.

...

228. While acknowledging the efforts made by the State party to address the high level of poverty, including the Strategic Programme to Overcome Poverty approved in 2003 and the

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increase of benefits and allowances for poor families and children, the Committee remains deeply concerned about the large number of children living below the absolute poverty line.

229. The Committee recommends that the State party continue and strengthen its efforts to support poor families and provide the necessary resources for the full implementation of the Strategic Programme to Overcome Poverty.

- Germany, CRC, CRC/C/137 (2004) 51 at paras. 301 and 302.

301. The Committee notes the change in policy from financial transfers to an emphasis on building appropriate infrastructure for poor families. It also welcomes the first national report on poverty (2001) and notes the increase in child allowances over the past years as well as the income tax reform which provides for measures to help families with children, but remains concerned at the prevalence of poverty, mainly affecting large families, single-parent families, families of foreign origin and disproportionately families from the eastern part of the State party, as indicated in the eleventh Youth Report.

302. The Committee, in line with its previous recommendations ([CRC/C/15/Add.43], para. 31) recommends that the State party:

(a) Take all necessary measures to the “maximum extent of ...available resources” to accelerate the elimination of child poverty, notably to eliminate the disparities between the eastern and western parts of the country;

(b) Continue to provide material assistance and support to economically disadvantaged families, notably single-parent families and families of foreign origin, to guarantee the right of children to an adequate standard of living;

(c) Evaluate appropriately the changes in social policies.

- India, CRC, CRC/C/137 (2004) 75 at paras. 440 and 441.

440. In spite of the growth of the gross domestic product, the Committee is concerned about the widespread poverty in the State party and the still high number of children who do not enjoy the right to an adequate standard of living, including access to clean drinking water, adequate housing and latrines. The Committee is further concerned at the negative consequences of displacement and rehabilitation projects which intend to improve living conditions but which remove children from their habitat to a new environment often not prepared for children’s needs.

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441. In accordance with article 27 of the Convention, the Committee recommends that the State 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 light of its previous recommendations (CRC/C/15/Add.115, para. 53), the Committee further recommends that the State party prevent any occurrence of forced relocation, displacement and other types of involuntary population movements.

- Slovenia, CRC, CRC/C/137 (2004) 104 at paras. 579 and 580.

579. While welcoming measures undertaken to fight poverty, including the Action Programme against Poverty and Social Exclusion, adopted in 2000, the Committee is concerned about the incidence of poverty in the State party, particularly among Roma and single-parent families.

580. The Committee recommends that the State party continue and further strengthen measures to combat poverty, including special measures targeted at single-parent families and the Roma community.

- Panama, CRC, CRC/C/140 (2004)23 at paras. 142 and 143.

142. The Committee notes with concern the persistent high rate of poverty in the State party, especially in rural areas, and the growing disparities between rich and poor.

143. The Committee recommends that the State party formulate a comprehensive national strategy to reduce poverty, targeting the most disadvantaged regions and groups and ensuring that the needs of all children are met, seeking international cooperation and assistance whenever necessary.

- Rwanda, CRC, CRC/C/140 (2004)36 at paras. 197-200, 213, 214, 234 and 235.

197. The Committee is concerned that a large number of single-parent and child-headed families, notably families headed by girls, face financial and other kinds of difficulties. The Committee is also seriously concerned that parents can request that a child whose conduct is not satisfactory be interned.

198. The Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) Take all necessary measures to implement the National Policy for Orphans and Other Vulnerable Children effectively and provide assistance to single-parent and child-headed

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families in order to support them in bringing up their children and siblings, in the light of article 18, paragraph 2, of the Convention; and

(b) Take the necessary measures to prohibit the internment of children because of their behaviour or for economic reasons.

199. The Committee is deeply concerned that one third of the children in the State party are orphans. The Committee remains deeply concerned at the weakness of family links, at the large numbers of children who have been deprived of a family environment and, in particular at reports regarding the abandonment of children by parents mainly for economic reasons...

200. The Committee recommends that the State party strengthen and increase its programmes, in collaboration with relevant NGOs, to support families in need, in particular single-parent families and those in difficult socio-economic or other circumstances. The Committee urges the State party to make every effort to increase support, including training, for parents in order to discourage the abandonment of children...

...

213. The Committee is very concerned about the widespread poverty in the State party and the increasingly high numbers of children who do not enjoy the right to an adequate standard of living.

214. The Committee recommends that, in accordance with article 27 of the Convention, the State party reinforce its efforts to provide support and material assistance to economically disadvantaged families, child heads of household and abandoned and orphan children and to guarantee the right of children to an adequate standard of living. In this connection, the Committee recommends that the State party pay particular attention to the rights and needs of children when implementing its PRSP [Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper] and all other programmes intended to improve the standard of living in the country.

...

234. The Committee is concerned at the situation of children belonging to minorities, including Batwa children, in particular their limited access to basic social services, including health care, immunization and education, and the violation of their rights to survival and development, to enjoy their own culture and to be protected from discrimination.

235. In line with its recommendations adopted at its day of general discussion on the rights of indigenous children (CRC/C/133, para. 624), the Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) Undertake a study to assess the situation and the needs of Batwa children and to elaborate a plan of action involving leaders of the Batwa community to protect the rights of those children and ensure their social services; and

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(b) Seek adequate means and measures to ensure birth registration, health care, etc.

- Sao Tome and Principe, CRC, CRC/C/140 (2004) 54 at paras. 254, 255, 283 and 284.

254. The Committee welcomes the information about debt relief obtained through the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative and about the expected revenues from oil exploitation. However, the Committee is concerned by the worsening of the economic situation and by reports of allegations of poor management, including corruption, which have a negative impact on the level of resources available for the implementation of the Convention.

255. In light of articles 2, 3, and 6 of the Convention, the Committee encourages the State party 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. In particular, the Committee recommends that the State party undertake all appropriate measures to improve transparency and the quality of management. Finally, the Committee urges the State party to do everything possible to use the income generated by the relief of external debt and by oil exploitation to increase the resources allocated for the full implementation of the Convention, in particular for the improvement of health-care services, and the education and protection of vulnerable groups of children.

...

283. ...[T]he Committee is concerned at the lack of access to safe drinking water and sanitation, which is the main cause of the prevalence of diarrhoeal diseases and worms...

284. The Committee recommends that the State party:

...

(c) Prioritize the provision of drinking water and sanitation services;

...

- Myanmar, CRC, CRC/C/140 (2004)81 at paras. 428 and 429.

428. In spite of the progress achieved regarding access to drinking water and safe excreta disposal, as indicated in the Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys held in 2000, the Committee is concerned that a large number of children, notably those living in rural areas, still do not enjoy adequate access to clean drinking water and sanitation systems.

429. The Committee recommends that the State party take all necessary measures to ensure access by all children, in particular those in remote and rural areas, to safe drinking water

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and adequate sanitation systems.

- Dominica, CRC, CRC/C/140 (2004)101 at paras. 495, 496, 506 and 507.

495. While taking note of the positive measures undertaken by the State party to address the issues related to health services, the Committee remains concerned at the poor availability of drinking water and adequate sanitation facilities in certain areas of the country and specifically in the Carib Territory.

496. The Committee recommends that the State party take all necessary measures to ensure access to drinking water and adequate sanitation facilities throughout the country.

...

506. The Committee acknowledges the various measures undertaken with regard to the Carib Indian children. However, the Committee is concerned about the limited enjoyment of their rights; particularly with regard to their access to education and health owing to widespread poverty.

507. The Committee recommends that the State party continue and strengthen its efforts to improve the enjoyment of the rights of Carib Indian children, in particular by effective measures to reduce poverty in the Carib Indian Territory.

- France, CRC, CRC/C/140 (2004) 124 at paras. 625 and 626.

625. The Committee, while noting that the primary responsibility of securing the necessary living conditions for the child lies with the parents, shares the concerns of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights at the increasing levels of poverty (E/C.12/1/Add.72). The Committee is concerned that such a situation adversely affects the physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social development of children. The Committee is also concerned at the existence of restrictions in access to family allocations of certain groups of children.

626. The Committee encourages the State party to take measures to assist parents and others responsible for children by strengthening efforts to improve the standard of living of all children and providing material assistance and support programmes in accordance with article 27 of the Convention. Allocations to families should not be subject to the modalities of entry of the child onto the territory of France.

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- Brazil, CRC, CRC/C/143 (2004) 10 at paras. 81, 82, 96 and 97.

81. While taking into account the high priority given by the State party in implementing policies and programmes with a view to fighting hunger and poverty, the Committee notes that Brazil is a country with a relatively high level of development, and shares the concerns of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights related to the persistent and extreme inequalities and imbalances in the distribution of wealth and resources (E/C.12/1/Add.87, para. 17). The Committee is concerned that the lives of a great number of children are marked by poverty, difficult access to, and deficient quality of, public services.

82. The Committee highly recommends that the State party:

(a) Continue to strengthen its policies and programmes to combat the factors responsible for the increasing number of children living in extreme poverty;

(b) Take measures in order to effectively reach the poorest segment of the population, by offering equal access to health, education, housing and other social services;

(c) Develop programmes and policies to ensure that all families have adequate resources and facilities.

...

96. ...[T]he Committee is deeply concerned by the low standard of living of indigenous children, low educational opportunities and quality of health services, and malnutrition.

97. The Committee urges the State party to pursue measures to effectively address the gap in life opportunities of indigenous children. Training and awareness-raising activities should be provided to break social prejudice, in order to revert the historical logic of colonization, which jeopardizes any chance of attaining genuinely equal treatment.

- Croatia, CRC, CRC/C/143 (2004) 36 at paras. 222 and 223.

222. The Committee notes the measures undertaken by the State party to increase economic growth, but remains concerned at the widespread prevalence of poverty in Croatian society, which affect in particular families with more than one child, families headed by women and minority families, including Roma families and families of foreign origin, and in areas that were affected by armed conflict.

223. The Committee, in line with its previous recommendations ([CRC/C/15/Add.52,] para. 31) recommends that the State party:



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(a) Take all necessary measures to the “maximum extent of...available resources” to accelerate the elimination of child poverty, notably to eliminate the disparities between the different regions of the country;

(b) Continue to provide material assistance and support to economically disadvantaged families, notably Roma families and families of foreign origin, in order to guarantee the right of children to an adequate standard of living;

(c) To include in the poverty reduction strategy specific programmes addressing the particular difficulties faced by poor children.

- Equatorial Guinea, CRC, CRC/C/143 (2004) 64 at paras. 357, 358, 363 and 364.

357. The Committee notes with appreciation the efforts undertaken by the State party to extend the coverage of the health and basic sanitation services. However, the Committee is...concerned at the high incidence of malnutrition and that significant numbers of poor families lack access to services, including safe drinking water and sanitation facilities, which contributes to the spread of communicable diseases...

358. The Committee recommends that the State party:

...

(b) Strengthen the implementation and coordination of existing health policies and programmes, in particular the National Action Plan (1992-2000), the Expanded Programme of Immunization, and the Drinking Water and Environmental Health programmes;

...

(d) Ensure the provision of adequate financial and human resources for the effective implementation of the health programmes.

...

363. Given the significant growth rate of the gross domestic product in the State party, the Committee is deeply concerned about the persistence of widespread poverty and the still large number of children who do not enjoy the right to an adequate standard of living, including adequate housing and other basic services.

364. In accordance with article 27 of the Convention, the Committee recommends that the State party develop and implement, as a matter of high priority, an effective national plan for the reduction of poverty, including the provision of support and material assistance to economically disadvantaged families, and guarantee the right of the child to an adequate standard of living. The Committee also recommends that the State party seek international cooperation and assistance whenever necessary.

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- Angola, CRC, CRC/C/143 (2004) 78 at paras. 427, 428, 435 and 436.

427. The Committee expresses its concern at the high and increasing number of children living in poverty and extreme poverty in the State party, especially in rural areas. It notes with particular concern the very poor living conditions of many internally displaced children and children living in so-called informal settlements.

428. The Committee recommends that the State party strengthen its efforts to provide acceptable living conditions for children and their families, in particular in view of the child's right to protection, health and education. Such efforts should include target measures to improve the living conditions of those children and families most in need.

...

435. The Committee notes with appreciation the many efforts undertaken by the State party to address the various problems resulting from massive internal and cross-border displacements. Despite the good results achieved in returning people to their places of origin, the Committee is concerned about the vulnerable situation of internally displaced and refugee families and children in the State party. It is also concerned that the returnees are facing many problems, particularly due to the lack of basic services, and that many children have still not been reunited with their parents.

436. The Committee urges the State party to give priority attention to the vulnerable situation of displaced families and children and ensure that adequate support is given to the reintegration of families and children who have returned to their places of origin after the end of the armed conflict. The State party should, in this regard, ensure compliance with the Norms on the Resettlement of Displaced Populations (Decree 1/01 of 5 January 2001) which provides, *inter alia*, for the voluntary nature of resettlement, the security of resettlement sites, the allocation of adequate land and the provision of certain basic amenities and services, such as water, sanitation, schools and health facilities.

- Antigua and Barbuda, CRC, CRC/C/143 (2004) 93 at paras. 507 and 508.

507. In view of the increasing number of children living in poverty, the Committee notes with regret the scarcity of information concerning the right of the child to benefit from social security, and expresses concern at the lack of a comprehensive legislative and regulatory social security system that is in full compliance with article 26 of the Convention.

508. The Committee therefore recommends that the State party make efforts to revise and/or establish a social security policy along with a clear and coherent family policy within the framework of its poverty reduction strategy, as well as effective strategies for using social safety net benefits to further the rights of children.

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- Albania, CRC, CRC/C/146 (2005) 19 at paras. 133 and 134.

133. The Committee notes the efforts that the State party is making to improve the living standards of families in poverty and of children in institutional care, orphans or other children with special needs. However, the Committee is concerned that a large number of children live in poverty, or in extreme poverty, and that many children do not receive child support maintenance following divorce of their parents, or as the case may be, the amount is largely insufficient.

134. The Committee encourages the State party to pursue measures to assist parents and others responsible for children by strengthening efforts to improve the standard of living of all children and providing material assistance and support programmes in accordance with article 27 of the Convention. Economic growth should be used to improve the living conditions of families. In addition, the State party is encouraged to consider ratifying the Hague Conventions No. 23 on the Recognition and Enforcement of Decisions relating to Maintenance Obligations and No. 24 on the Law Applicable to Maintenance Obligations.

- Austria, CRC, CRC/C/146 (2005) 47 at paras. 267 and 268.

267. The Committee notes with appreciation the various measures adopted by the State party to combat poverty, including the adoption of family-related benefits and an increase in child allowances to help families with children. However, the Committee remains concerned at the high rate of poverty, mainly affecting single-parent families, large families and families of foreign origin.

268. The Committee recommends that the State party take all necessary measures to further reduce and eliminate family poverty, which affects children. It also recommends that the State party continue to provide well-coordinated financial assistance to provide support to economically disadvantaged families, in particular single-parent families and families of foreign origin, so as to guarantee the right of a child to an adequate standard of living. In this regard, efforts should be increased to support, in particular, single mothers re-entering the labour market and to extend good quality and affordable child day-care facilities.

- Belize, CRC, CRC/C/146 (2005) 59 at paras. 350, 351, 364 and 365.

350. The Committee is concerned at the persistent high rate of children living in poverty, especially in rural areas. It notes the development and implementation of the National Poverty Reduction Strategy. The Committee also notes with appreciation the State party's efforts to facilitate access to nutrition, including through implementing a Food and Nutrition Security Policy for Belize and the feeding programmes of primary schools.

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351. The Committee recommends that the State party take all necessary measures to provide support and material assistance to economically disadvantaged families and to guarantee the right of children to an adequate standard of living. The Committee also recommends that the State party evaluate the impact of the Poverty Reduction Strategy on children and adolescents. The Committee further recommends that the State party increase its efforts to develop and implement the Food and Nutrition Security Policy for Belize and continue to implement the feeding programmes in primary schools.

...

364. With regard to children belonging to minorities and indigenous peoples, such as Maya and Garifuna children, the Committee is concerned about the widespread poverty among them and the limited enjoyment of their rights, particularly concerning their access to social and health services and education...

365. The Committee recommends that the State party strengthen its efforts to improve the equal enjoyment of all rights of children belonging to minorities and indigenous peoples, in particular, by prioritizing effective measures to reduce poverty among them...

- Bolivia, CRC, CRC/C/146 (2005) 121 at paras. 644 and 645.

644. While welcoming the formulation of Bolivia's poverty reduction strategy, which sets out a national plan of action up to 2015, the Committee notes with concern the persistent high rate of poverty in the State party, especially in rural areas.

645. The Committee recommends that the State party take the necessary measures to ensure the continuing implementation of the national poverty reduction strategy, targeting the most disadvantaged regions and groups and ensuring that the needs of all children are met and their rights duly protected. The State party is encouraged to seek international cooperation and assistance whenever necessary.

- Nigeria, CRC, CRC/C/146 (2005) 135 at paras. 723 and 724.

723. In view of the high proportion of children living in poverty in the State party, the Committee notes with concern the lack of reliable information regarding the coverage of the social security plans in place *vis-à-vis* the needs of children and their families. The Committee reiterates that such data is crucial for the monitoring and evaluation of progress achieved and impact assessment of policies with respect to children. The Committee is also concerned that the social security system currently in place in the State party is not in full compliance with article 26 of the Convention.

724. The Committee recommends that the State party:

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- (a) Upgrade its system of data collection on the coverage of the social security plans currently in place, and ensure that all data and indicators are used to evaluate and revise these plans whenever necessary; and

(b) Make efforts to revise or/and establish a social security policy along with a clear and coherent family policy in the framework of poverty reduction strategy, as well as effective strategies for using the social safety net benefits to further the rights of children.
- Philippines, CRC, CRC/C/150 (2005) 24 at paras. 163, 164, 169, 170, 195 and 196.

163. The Committee is concerned, despite the legislative and other measures taken by the State party, about environmental problems, such as air and water pollution and environmental degradation which have serious consequences for children's health and development. As regards access to safe drinking water and sanitation, the Committee is concerned about the regional disparities. Furthermore, poor knowledge of hygienic practices both among children and their parents give cause for concern.

164. The Committee recommends that the State party:

  - (a) Continue to strengthen its efforts to reduce pollution and environmental degradation by strengthening the implementation of domestic environmental laws, including Ecological Solid Waste Management Act (Republic Act No. 9003) and the Clean Air Act (Republic Act No. 8749);
  - (b) Increase children's knowledge of environmental health issues by introducing environmental health education programmes in schools;
  - (c) Take effective measures to improve access to safe drinking water and sanitation facilities, particularly in the remote areas of the country, as well as raise awareness on hygiene among children and their parents.

...

169. The Committee notes with concern the high number of children living in households below the national poverty line and the wide disparities in wealth between different regions. The Committee is deeply concerned about difficulties faced by children living in poverty, as to the enjoyment of their human rights, including access to social and health services and education. The Committee is also concerned about the poor housing situation in the State party and families living, for example in urban slums and squatter communities without adequate infrastructure.

170. In accordance with article 27 of the Convention, the Committee recommends that the State party take urgent efforts to raise the standard of living among its rural and urban

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population living in poverty, *inter alia*, through implementing a poverty reduction strategy and community development, including the participation of children. The Committee requests the State party to increase its efforts to provide material assistance and support to economically disadvantaged children and their families. Moreover, the State party should ensure that children living in poverty are provided with access to social and health services, education and adequate housing.

...

195. While noting the provisions of the Indigenous Peoples Rights Act (Republic Act No. 8371) as well as programmes and projects for children belonging to minorities and indigenous peoples, such as an alternative system of education for children belonging to indigenous cultural communities, the Childcare Development Programme and the Lingua Franca Project, the Committee is concerned about the widespread poverty among minorities and indigenous peoples and the limited enjoyment of their human rights, in particular, concerning their access to social and health services and education...

196. The Committee recalls the obligations of the State party under articles 2 and 30 of the Convention and recommends that the State party ensure that indigenous children and children belonging to minorities fully enjoy all of their human rights equally and without discrimination. In this respect the Committee recommends that the State party strengthen its efforts to implement the Indigenous Peoples Rights Act (Republic Act No. 8371) and develop and implement policies and programmes in order to ensure equal access for indigenous and minority children to culturally appropriate services, including social and health services and education. Furthermore, the Committee recommends that the State party strengthen its mechanisms for data collection on minority and indigenous children so as to identify existing gaps and barriers to the enjoyment of their human rights and with a view to developing legislation, policies and programmes to address such gaps and barriers.

- Bosnia and Herzegovina, CRC, CRC/C/150 (2005) 49 at paras. 256 and 257.

256. The Committee notes that, as a result of the war, slow economic recovery, low salaries and unemployment, many families live in economic hardship and about 20 per cent below the official poverty line. Most children who have lost their parents live in harsh poverty. The Committee is concerned that poor living conditions seriously limit children's enjoyment of their rights in the family, schools and in peer and cultural activities.

257. The Committee recommends that the State party take all necessary measures to provide support and material assistance to economically disadvantaged families, including targeted programmes with regard to the most needy groups of families, in order to guarantee the right of all children to an adequate standard of living.

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- Nepal, CRC, CRC/C/150 (2005) 66 at paras. 332, 333 and 352-355.

332. The Committee is concerned about the significant number of children who are living in adult prisons with their parents, often in poor conditions that fall short of international standards.

333. The Committee recommends to the State party that it review the current practice of children living with their parents in prison, with a view to limiting the stay to instances in which it is in his/her best interest, and to ensuring that the living conditions are suitable for his/her needs for the harmonious development of his/her personality. The Committee also recommends that children of parents in prison should be provided with adequate alternative care, for instance, within the extended family and be allowed regular contact with their parents.

...

352. The Committee expresses concern about the high level of prevailing poverty in the State party, which hampers the respect for, and fulfilment of, the rights of children, particularly those living in rural areas, those living in slums and squats, and among the lower castes and ethnic minorities, and the ability of their families to provide them with adequate protection.

353. In view of the significant proportion of children living in poverty, the Committee notes with regret the paucity of information concerning the rights of the child to benefit from social security, and expresses concern at the absence of a comprehensive legislative and regulatory social security system that is in full compliance with article 26 of the Convention.

354. In accordance with articles 26 and 27 of the Convention, the Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) Strengthen its strategy to combat poverty, with due emphasis on monitoring the impact on the rights of children and that it allocate sufficient human and financial resources, including through international assistance, to ensure the implementation of its strategy;

(b) Reinforce its efforts to provide support and material assistance to economically disadvantaged families, notably those living in rural areas, slums and squats and to guarantee the right of children to an adequate standard of living;

(c) Establish poverty indicators and an official poverty line, which will enable the State party to define the extent of poverty and to monitor and evaluate progress in alleviating poverty and improving the standard of living for children in the State party;

(d) Establish a social security policy along with a clear and coherent family policy, as well as effective strategies for using the social safety net benefits to further the rights of children

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and provide adequate financial resources to the social security system.

355. The Committee therefore recommends that the State party make efforts to revise and/or establish a social security policy along with a clear and coherent family policy in the framework of poverty reduction strategy, as well as effective strategies for using the social safety net benefits to further the rights of children.

- Ecuador, CRC, CRC/C/150 (2005) 91 at paras. 406, 407, 429, 430, 443, 444, 459 and 460.

406. The Committee notes with deep concern that the resources allocated for social services, particularly with regard to the promotion and protection of children's rights are relatively low and this seems to a large extent to be caused by considerable expenditure (more than 35 per cent of the national budget) on debt servicing. In addition, the Committee is concerned that the free trade agreements, currently being negotiated, may also negatively impact the allocation of budgets for social services.

407. The Committee urges the State party to increase budget allocations for the promotion and implementation of the rights of children in accordance with article 4 of the Convention and pay particular attention to investment for the implementation and protection of the rights of children belonging to vulnerable groups, including indigenous and Afro-Ecuadorian children, children living in poverty and those in remote areas. The Committee also recommends that the State party undertake maximum efforts to negotiate the rescheduling of payments on external and internal debts with a view to investing more in poverty reduction programmes including investment in the implementation of rights of children to, *inter alia*, education, the highest attainable standard of health and adequate standard of living and calls on the international and private financial institutions and bilateral and multilateral partners to support these efforts. The Committee finally recommends that the State party ensure that free trade agreements do not negatively affect the rights of children, *inter alia*, in terms of access to affordable medicines, including generic ones. In this regard, the Committee reiterates the recommendations made by the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (E/C.12/1/Add.100).

...

429. The Committee notes with concern the increasing number of children deprived of their natural family environment due to, *inter alia*, poverty, unemployment and the increasing number of parents migrating to other countries in search of better opportunities, thereby leaving their children behind without proper care and in the custody of relatives or institutions.

430. The Committee recommends that the State party undertake measures to strengthen the family through the provision of adequate financial resources and to the reinforcement of community-based structures for children deprived of their family environment and into line



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with article 25 of the Convention, conduct periodic reviews of the placement of children, and ensure institutionalization is a last resort.

...

443. The Committee joins the concern expressed by the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (see E/C.12/1/Add.100, para. 26) with regard to the persistent and growing level of poverty in the State party, particularly affecting children, including indigenous and Afro-Ecuadorian children.

444. The Committee recommends that the State party increase its effort to provide vulnerable and marginalized children, including indigenous and Afro-Ecuadorian children, with material assistance and support programmes, particularly with regard to nutrition, clothing and housing in accordance with article 27 of the Convention.

...

459. The Committee takes note of the various measures undertaken by the State party with regard to indigenous children, including the implementation of the bilingual intercultural education system. However, the Committee remains concerned about the limited enjoyment of rights by indigenous children, particularly with regard to access to education and health due to widespread poverty...

460. The Committee recommends that the State party take all necessary measures to protect the rights of indigenous children against discrimination and to guarantee their enjoyment of the rights enshrined in domestic law and in the Convention. In this regard, the Committee refers the State party to its recommendations adopted following its day of general discussion on the rights of indigenous children at its thirty-fourth session in 2003...

- Norway, CRC, CRC/C/150 (2005) 105 at paras. 501 and 502.

501. The Committee notes with concern the high proportion of immigrant children living in households with a persistently low income.

502. The Committee recommends that the State party ensure that the needs of all children are met and take all necessary measures to ensure that no group of children lives below the poverty line.

- Mongolia, CRC, CRC/C/150 (2005) 113 at paras. 546, 547, 564 and 565.

546. The Committee is concerned at the increasing number of families headed by a single parent and the socio-economic difficulties faced by them, and the often limited degree to which fathers generally assume their parental responsibilities.

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547. The Committee recommends that the State party take all necessary measures to provide parents and families with the necessary financial and other support to the extent possible, paying attention to single-parent families and families living in particularly difficult circumstances. With regard to the principle that both parents have responsibilities for the upbringing and development of the child, the Committee endorses the recommendation adopted by the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women in 2001 (A/56/38, paras. 269-270) urging the State party to develop laws, policies and educational programmes that support and promote the idea of joint parental responsibility.

...

564. The Committee is deeply concerned at the persistent high rate of poverty in the State party. The Committee notes that, as a consequence of increasing migration from rural areas, poverty is becoming more urbanized and this change has created a range of new social issues, such as children living on the streets. While noting, *inter alia*, the adoption in 2004, of the “Money for hope” benefit system for children living in families with a minimum income and the State party’s efforts to implement its poverty-reduction plan, programmes and projects, the Committee reiterates its concern at the high number of children who do not enjoy the right to an adequate standard of living, including adequate housing and other basic services, both in urban and rural areas of the country.

565. In accordance with article 27 of the Convention, the Committee recommends that the State party continue to implement, as a matter of high priority, its national plan and programmes for poverty reduction, paying particular attention to economically disadvantaged families in need of support and material assistance, and to guarantee the rights of the child to an adequate standard of living.

- Nicaragua, CRC, CRC/C/150 (2005) 132 at paras. 617, 618, 637-639, 656 and 657.

617. The Committee is concerned that the country’s adult-centred culture and the high poverty levels, concentrated especially in rural, indigenous and Caribbean areas, prevent the full enjoyment of rights by children belonging to vulnerable groups, such as children with disabilities, indigenous children and children living in rural or remote areas.

618. The Committee recommends that the State party increase its efforts to ensure implementation of existing laws guaranteeing the principle of non-discrimination and full compliance with article 2 of the Convention, and adopt a proactive and comprehensive strategy to eliminate discrimination on any grounds and against all vulnerable groups throughout the country.

...

637. The Committee is extremely concerned about the persistence of a high degree of poverty in the State party, especially in the Caribbean/Atlantic region and in rural areas, which create grievous gaps in access to health and health services between rural and urban

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zones and the Caribbean/Atlantic region. Serious concern is expressed at the State party's information that about 2.38 million people (out of a total of about 5.37 million) are in a condition of poverty, while 15.1 per cent of the population is in a situation of extreme poverty.

638. Furthermore, the Committee is concerned that:

(a) Only about two thirds of the population have access to clean drinking water and that there is a huge discrepancy between the rates of urban and rural population having access to clean drinking water;

(b) One out of every three children suffers some degree of chronic malnutrition and that about 10 per cent of them are said to suffer from severe malnutrition;

...

639. The Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) Take all possible actions to reduce poverty and equalize living conditions throughout the country, and ensure access to basic goods and services, such as clean drinking water, especially in remote and rural areas;

(b) Ensure basic health care and services to all children throughout the country and urgently address the problem of malnutrition, with special emphasis on rural and remote areas;

...

656. The Committee is concerned at the growing number of street children living in the State party, especially in Managua, as well as at the increasing emergence of street youth gangs (*pandillas*) in the country, of which over 100 are believed to operate in the capital.

657. The Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) Carry out a comprehensive study to assess the scope, nature and causes of the presence of street children and youth gangs (*pandillas*) in the country in order to develop a comprehensive policy for their prevention and reduction;

(b) Provide street children with recovery and social reintegration services and provide them with adequate nutrition, housing, necessary health care and educational opportunities; and

(c) Seek assistance from, *inter alia*, UNICEF.

- Costa Rica, CRC, CRC/C/150 (2005) 149 at paras. 687 and 688.

687. The Committee welcomes the elaboration of the first National Development Plan for

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Costa Rica's Indigenous People, the translation into indigenous languages of the Childhood and Adolescence Code, the Law against Domestic Violence and the Law on Responsible Paternity, as well as the incorporation of the rights of indigenous people into the National Plan for Children and Adolescents. The Committee is concerned however at the limited access of indigenous children, migrant children and those living in rural areas, to basic education and health services, and at their low standard of living...

688. The Committee encourages the State party to continue to pay due attention to the needs of indigenous people by taking appropriate measures to address the high rate of infant mortality among the indigenous communities, and to substantially increase their level of education and standard of living, and endorses the recommendation of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination in that regard (CERD/C/60/CO/3, para. 11)...

- Yemen, CRC, CRC/C/150 (2005) 161 at paras. 791 and 792.

791. The Committee is very concerned at the high number of children living in poverty in the State party.

792. In accordance with article 27 of the Convention, the Committee recommends that the State party:

- (a) 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;
- (b) Pay particular attention to the rights and needs of children in the Poverty Reduction Strategy Programme and in all programmes intended to improve the standard of living in the country;
- (c) Reform the social security system, with a view to broadening its coverage.