

ISRAEL

Special Action or Decisions Taken Re: Reporting

CESCR E/1997/22

Chapter VI

Review of Methods of Work of the Committee

B. Decisions adopted by the Committee at its fifteenth session

...

Matters for special attention

391. The Committee took note of a wide range of correspondence, documentation and other materials provided to it by various sources in relation to its work and decided that letters should be sent by its Chairperson to the Governments of ... Israel ... in relation to those matters identified by the Committee as warranting special attention.

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Israel

576. The Committee, having considered the information provided to it by the Permanent Mission of Israel to the Office of the United Nations and its Specialized Agencies at Geneva, in its note verbal dated 3 November 2000, in a letter dated 1 December 2000 and addressed to the Permanent Representative of Israel (annex X below), reminded the State party that its concluding observations requested the submission of additional information in time for the Committee's twenty-fourth session. Further, the Committee emphasized that some of the additional information, especially the material concerning the occupied territories, was requested "in order to complete the State party's initial report and thereby ensure full compliance with its reporting obligations".

577. In the light of all the circumstances, its concluding observations and the current crisis in Israel and the occupied territories, the Committee resolved at its twenty-fourth session to consider the situation in the occupied Palestinian territory at its twenty-fifth session, with a view to assisting the State party conform to its obligations under the Covenant. Accordingly, the Committee urged Israel to submit by 1 March 2001 up-to-date information on economic, social and cultural rights in the occupied Palestinian territory. This information should give particular attention to the issues concerning the occupied Palestinian territory that were identified in the concluding observations, as well as those mentioned in the Committee's letter. The Committee decided to consider the additional information, and any other reliable material with which it is provided, on 4 May 2001. The Committee invited the State party to participate in this discussion.

Annex X

Letter dated 1 December 2000 from the Chairperson of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights addressed to Mr. Yaakov Levy, Permanent Representative of Israel to the United Nations Office and the Specialized Agencies in Geneva

The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights acknowledges receipt of the note verbale dated 3 November 2000 from the Permanent Mission of Israel to the United Nations Office at Geneva and notes that Israel's second periodic report, including issues referred to and information requested by the Committee in its concluding observations dated 4 December 1998,^a will be ready for submission no later than March 2001.

The Committee reminds the State party, however, that the concluding observations requested the submission of additional information in time for the Committee's twenty-fourth session (13 November to 1 December 2000). Further, the Committee wishes to emphasize that some of the additional information, especially the material concerning the occupied territories, was requested "in order to complete the State party's initial report and thereby ensure full compliance with its reporting obligations" (para. 258). Given the current crisis in Israel and the occupied territories, it is particularly unfortunate that Israel did not provide the additional information by the time requested.

In this regard, the Committee notes the report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on her recent visit to the region (8-16 November 2000) (E/CN.4/2001/114) and is deeply concerned by accounts that Israel's recent actions in the occupied territories in violation of the international humanitarian law, have also resulted in the widespread and gross violations of Palestinians' economic, social and cultural rights.

Among the reports that are of grave concern to the Committee, the following are highlighted:

- Israeli military and security forces, both inside Israel and in the occupied Palestinian territory, have prevented medical aid and personnel from reaching injured Palestinians and has attacked clearly marked medical vehicles and personnel;
- Children travelling to and from school have come under Israeli fire and many schools in the occupied Palestinian territory have been forced to close;
- Israeli forces have destroyed many acres of Palestinian agricultural land in the occupied Palestinian territory;
- Unemployment in the occupied Palestinian territory has tripled during the crisis, causing severe economic hardship especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged groups in the population;

^a See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1999, Supplement No. 3* (E/1999/22-E/C.12/1998/26), chap. IV, paras. 228-272.

- The incidence of house demolition and land confiscation in the occupied Palestinian territory has increased, including the destruction of civilian homes through the use of heavy weapons;

- The Israeli authorities have imposed widespread restrictions on the movement of people and goods, including food, medical supplies and fuel.

In light of all the circumstances, its concluding observations and the current crisis in Israel and the occupied territories, the Committee resolved at its twenty-fourth session to consider at its next session the situation in the occupied Palestinian territory, with a view to assisting the State party conform to its obligations under the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

Accordingly, the Committee urges Israel to submit up-to-date information on economic, social and cultural rights in the occupied territories by 1 March 2001. This information should give particular attention to the issues concerning the occupied territories that were identified in the concluding observations, as well as those mentioned in this letter. The Committee will consider the additional information, and any other reliable material with which it is provided, on 4 May 2001 (between 3 and 6 p.m.). The Committee invites the State party to participate in this discussion.

To avoid any doubt, the Committee confirms that Israel should also separately submit its comprehensive second periodic report no later than 31 March 2001, as indicated in the State party's recent note verbale. The meeting on the afternoon of 4 May 2001, however, will focus on economic, social and cultural rights in the occupied territories.

In the meantime, the Committee urges Israel to comply fully with its obligations under the Covenant and looks forward to engaging in a constructive dialogue with the State party at its twenty-fifth session.

Chairperson
Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

(Signed) Virginia Bonoan-Dandan