

Second Optional Protocol: Signed: 13 February 1990; ratified: 5 September 1991.

Racial Discrimination

Signed: 21 November 1966; ratified: 6 August 1970.
Norway's 15th periodic report is due 5 September 1999.

Norway's 12th, 13th and 14th periodic reports (CERD/C/281/Add.2; CERD/C/320/Add.1) were considered by the Committee at its August 1997 session. Taken together, the reports prepared by the government provide detailed information on policies and measures aimed at the elimination of racial discrimination and reference is made to an amendment to the Constitution related to the incorporation of certain international human rights conventions into domestic legislation. The reports cover a wide range of issues and subjects, including but not limited to: the Plan of Action to Combat Racism and Ethnic Discrimination; the report of the Plan of Action to Tackle Acute Situations of Racial Violence and Harassment in a Local Community (Brununddal Plan of Action); immigration policy and law; training for law enforcement, prison service and armed forces personnel; the Liaison Committee between Immigrants and Norwegian Authorities (KIM); the Sami people, the Finno-ethnic minority and the Roma; immigrant women and children; provisions in the Penal Code related to racial discrimination; the code of ethics of the Norwegian Press Association; measures to eliminate discrimination in areas such as housing, employment, social services, health, education and teaching; the Youth Campaign against Racism, Intolerance and Xenophobia; the White Paper on Immigration and a Multicultural Norway; legal aid to victims of discrimination; and, the activities of the Interdisciplinary Advisory Group on Community Relations and Anti-Racist Work.

The Committee's concluding observations and comments (CERD/C/304/Add.40) welcomed: the overall efforts and measures taken to prevent and combat all forms of racial discrimination; the establishment of a working group mandated to improve the legal aid available to victims of racial discrimination; consideration of the possibility of including resident foreigners on juries; adoption of the "Plan of Action to Tackle Acute Situations of Racial Violence and Harassment in a Local Community"; efforts to protect the culture, language and way of life of minorities; the establishment and work of the Sami Assembly; the policy framework provided by the White Paper on Immigration and a Multicultural Norway (February 1997); the right of foreigners to participate in local and regional elections; the work undertaken by the Interdisciplinary Advisory Group on Community Relations; the addition of racial motivation to the Penal Code as an aggravating circumstance in acts of vandalism; the provision of training in multiculturalism to police, journalists, teachers, customs officers and health and social workers; efforts to give immigrant and minority groups access to education in appropriate languages; and, efforts to translate, when necessary, public information into languages spoken by minority members and immigrants.

The principal subjects of concern addressed by the Committee were: lack of clarity on the extent to which the Convention is self-executing in domestic law; failure to undertake a study to determine the reasons for the recent trend of a decrease in racially motivated offences; the reluctance of

police to institute criminal proceedings in some cases involving racial discrimination; the absence of a sufficiently complete official record of incidents of a racial character; failure to take all appropriate measures to prohibit organizations from promoting and inciting racial discrimination; the fact that a Norwegian political party promotes racial discrimination, for example by stating that the Sami Parliament should be dissolved; the publications of anti-immigrant racist organizations; systematic dissemination of ideas of racial superiority by a radio station; the possibility that foreigners and persons belonging to minorities may not be sufficiently protected, particularly in the areas of labour and housing; statements by the state's health services that immigrants of African descent disproportionately test positive for HIV and that Africans have been obliged to undergo tests for HIV simply because they are Africans; and, reports indicating the unjustified deportation of foreign nationals, including in some cases asylum-seekers and unaccompanied children.

The Committee recommended that the government:

- ▶ clarify in its next report the status of the Convention in domestic law;
- ▶ provide in the next report examples, if any, of court decisions illustrating how the Convention is applied in domestic law;
- ▶ maintain a comprehensive record of all racist acts or incidents;
- ▶ take the necessary measures to facilitate and ensure criminal proceedings related to racist acts and incidents;
- ▶ take all appropriate measures to prohibit all racist organizations;
- ▶ take the necessary measures to prohibit all dissemination of racist propaganda;
- ▶ strengthen efforts to promote understanding and tolerance with regard to immigrants in Norway; and,
- ▶ take all appropriate measures to ensure access to work and housing on a non-discriminatory basis.

Discrimination against Women

Signed: 17 July 1980; ratified: 21 May 1981.
Norway's fifth periodic report is due 3 September 1998.

Torture

Signed: 4 February 1985; ratified: 9 July 1986.
Norway's third periodic report (CAT/C/34/Add.8) has been submitted and is scheduled for consideration by the Committee at its May 1998 session; the fourth periodic report is due 25 June 2000.

Declarations and Reservations: Declarations under articles 21 and 22.

Rights of the Child

Signed: 26 January 1990; ratified: 8 January 1991.
Norway's second periodic report was due 6 February 1998.

THEMATIC REPORTS

Mechanisms of the Commission on Human Rights

Sale of children, child prostitution, child pornography, Special Rapporteur on the: (E/CN.4/1997/95, para. 40)

The report notes that the Norwegian branch of Save the Children established a programme in 1996 to monitor child