

also noted cultural stereotypes which overemphasize the traditional role of women as mothers in a protective and restrictive way.

The principal areas of concern identified by the Committee were: the absence of specific national machinery for the advancement of women and for the elimination of discrimination against women; the failure of the government to acknowledge and address violence against women; the high rate of unemployment (over 60 per cent), the occupational segregation of women in low-paying sectors, and the small number of women in positions at the senior management level; the absence of policies and programmes to guarantee security and social benefits to women who work in the informal sector; the paternalistic restrictions imposed by labour laws aimed at protecting maternity and resulting in legally limiting women's employment opportunities and choices; increasing prostitution as a reflection of the limited economic options for women in Armenia; the fact that women engaged in prostitution lack access to appropriate health services, including services for the prevention of HIV/AIDS and the treatment of persons infected; and, the government's plan to consider proposals for privatization of the health system, noting the adverse effects this can have for women and other vulnerable groups.

The Committee recommended that the government:

- ▶ establish a national machinery for the advancement of women, fully staffed and resourced, so as to integrate the perspective of women's human rights and gender analysis into all ongoing policy making and strategic development planning activities;
- ▶ take temporary special measures to create employment opportunities for women, including special credit and loan programmes for women entrepreneurs;
- ▶ adopt temporary special measures to remedy the serious decrease in the political representation of women since independence, in order to increase their participation in all areas of public life;
- ▶ give due attention to the subject of violence against women by encouraging a public discussion of its various forms; initiating appropriate legislation; training law enforcement officers, judges and health professionals (including adequate numbers of female personnel) to identify, manage and eliminate the manifestations of violence against women; and guaranteeing that the necessary psycho-social and health services are available to victims of violence, with particular attention paid to internally displaced and refugee women;
- ▶ use the education system and the electronic media to combat the traditional stereotype of women "in the noble role of mother" and raise awareness about the role of men in caring for children and their responsibility for parenting;
- ▶ collect information and sex disaggregated data in all areas, and in particular violence against women, prostitution and health; and,
- ▶ ensure that, in the planning and implementation of privatisation, the social responsibilities and obligations under international human rights law are fulfilled so as to ensure that such policies and programmes will not deprive women and other vulnerable groups of enjoyment of their human rights, especially in the area of health.

Torture

Acceded: 13 September 1993.

Armenia's second periodic report is due 12 October 1998.

Rights of the Child

Acceded: 23 June 1993.

Armenia's initial report (CRC/C/28/Add.9) has been submitted and is scheduled for consideration by the Committee at its January 1999 session; the second periodic report is due 21 July 2000.

THEMATIC REPORTS

Mechanisms of the Commission on Human Rights

Extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary execution, Special Rapporteur on: (E/CN.4/1997/60, paras. 16, 18, 19; E/CN.4/1997/60/Add.1, paras. 26–30)

The report refers to a case transmitted to the government regarding death in police custody as a result of injuries inflicted during a severe beating.

The government responded to information previously transmitted by the Special Rapporteur (SR). Concerning another death in custody, the government asserted that on the basis of two autopsies, it was concluded that the prisoner had died of natural causes, that he had received appropriate medical treatment, and that their investigation had established that no unlawful acts had been committed by medical personnel, officials or other persons. Concerning a case of eight prisoners of war of Azerbaijani nationality who died in the Armenian Ministry of Defence prison in Yerevan, the government stated that they had committed suicide after an unsuccessful attempt to escape from the prison. According to the government, the verdict of suicide was based on the testimonies of fellow Azerbaijani prisoners and of wardens, the findings of forensic medical and ballistic examinations, and an investigation by the Military Procurator; and these findings had been reported in the media.

Religious intolerance, Special Rapporteur on: (E/CN.4/1997/91, paras. 9, 17, 22, 24, 26, 28, 41, 66; A/52/477, paras. 21, 25, 28, 33, 37)

The reports refer to manifestations of religious intolerance and/or discrimination against Christians, Jehovah's Witnesses and members of Hare Krishna. It also mentions allegations that the authorities have exerted control over various religious activities, including a ban on proselytizing for certain religious communities and information indicating that permission for a teacher to provide religious instruction depends on the approval of the national Orthodox Church. The report notes that the government provided the Special Rapporteur with information on legislation guaranteeing religious freedom and its manifestation. The government asserted that measures sanctioning non-apostolic religious communities had restored religious stability.

Torture, Special Rapporteur on: (E/CN.4/1997/7, Section III; E/CN.4/1997/7/Add.1, paras. 2–4)

The report notes that the Special Rapporteur (SR) had received reports of beatings and other forms of ill-treatment inflicted on detainees for the purpose of obtaining information, "confessions" or intimidation. These reports alleged that detainees are frequently denied access to family members