

genital mutilation with the goal of raising awareness of the problem in the poor areas and suburbs of Cairo. The campaign included distribution of a questionnaire to 50 women between the ages of 24 and 50 to solicit their views about the decision of the Egyptian Ministry of Health forbidding female genital mutilation. The report notes that responses to the questionnaire showed that those canvassed supported the Ministry's decision. The report also notes that, in August 1996, the EOHR issued a press release which condemned the death of a 14-year-old girl as a result of genital mutilation, and called on the Doctors' Association to raise and discuss the question of female genital mutilation from a medical viewpoint, and to try to reach a professional consensus on the prohibition of the operation by doctors whatever the circumstances.

The report notes that 90 per cent of the women who responded to the questionnaire from the EOHR already had mutilated daughters and the only girl not yet circumcised had not undergone the procedure simply because she had not yet reached the required age. The report also refers to a statement by the highest civil court in Egypt recommending the legalization of female circumcision while, at the same time, admitting that the practice was not mandatory under Islam. From this statement, the report concludes that the prohibition on hospitals and clinics mutilating young girls is likely to be rescinded. It also notes that the Council of State has been warned by a group of Islamist doctors and lawyers, who have accused the Minister of violating Islam, and who have claimed that the practice is important to curb the sexual appetite of women. The report notes that nearly 3,600 Muslim and Copt girls are subjected to female genital mutilation in Egypt each day.

#### *Other Reports*

**Migrant workers, Report of the S-G to the CHR:**  
(E/CN.4/1997/65, para. 4)

The report of the Secretary-General notes that Egypt has acceded to the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families.

**Right to development, Report of the S-G to the CHR:**  
(E/CN.4/1997/21, para. 8 (f))

The report of the Secretary-General includes information provided by the UN Population Fund (UNFPA), noting that the UNFPA is conducting a research study on male sexuality in and out of the family in cooperation with the Population Council in Egypt. The study is focused on the attitudes and views of adolescent boys and men on their sexual and reproductive behaviour, decision-making about contraception and their role in the family. The study complements the Population Council's on-going study on girls and women.

**World Public Information Campaign on Human Rights, Report of the S-G to the CHR:** (E/CN.4/1997/36, para. 85)

The report of the Secretary-General refers to activities by the UN Information Centre Cairo which organized, in cooperation with the Centre of Legal Studies and Information on Human Rights, the Second African Workshop for Teaching

Human Rights, attended by 100 people. UNIC also provided material for a photo exhibition organized by the Sudanese Victims of Torture Group to promote public awareness of human rights.

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## EQUATORIAL GUINEA

**Date of admission to UN:** 12 November 1968.

### TREATIES AND REPORTS TO TREATY BODIES

**Land and People:** Equatorial Guinea has not submitted a core document for use by the treaty bodies.

#### **Economic, Social and Cultural Rights**

Acceded: 25 September 1987.

Equatorial Guinea's initial report was due 30 June 1990; the second periodic report was due 30 June 1995.

#### **Civil and Political Rights**

Acceded: 25 September 1987.

Equatorial Guinea's initial report was due 24 December 1988; the second periodic report was due 24 December 1993.

**Optional Protocol:** Acceded: 25 September 1987.

#### **Discrimination against Women**

Acceded: 23 October 1984.

Equatorial Guinea's second and third periodic reports were submitted as one document (CEDAW/C/GNQ/2-3) which is pending for consideration at the Committee's January 1998 session; the fourth periodic report was due 22 November 1997.

#### **Rights of the Child**

Acceded: 15 June 1992.

Equatorial Guinea's initial report was due 14 July 1994.

### COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS

#### **Special Rapporteur on Equatorial Guinea**

The question of human rights in the Republic of Equatorial Guinea has been publicly considered by the CHR since 1979. At its forty-ninth session, in resolution 1993/69, the Commission requested its Chairman to appoint a Special Rapporteur (SR) on Equatorial Guinea with a mandate to make a thorough study of the violations of human rights by the government of Equatorial Guinea. The mandate has been renewed annually since that time. Mr. Alejandro Artucio was Special Rapporteur in 1997 and reported to the Commission.

The report of the SR (E/CN.4/1997/54), the fourth, provides commentary on a number of areas where reform is still needed to ensure effective and real protection and respect for human rights. A number of continuing shortcomings in the performance of the state are identified and include: the absolute character of the state; the lack of substantive changes to the Electoral Act of January 1995 — under which the electoral authority lacks independence and is subordinate to the Executive; the lack of independence of the judiciary specifically, the Supreme Court's inability to enforce its decisions because of interference from other sectors of the state and, in particular, from the Executive; the fact that judges and