

Albania; noted the need for all concerned to refrain from hostilities and acts of violence; repeated its call to the parties involved to continue the political dialogue; condemned all acts of violence and called for their immediate end; welcomed the offer made by some states to establish a temporary and limited multinational protection force to facilitate the delivery of humanitarian assistance and help create a secure environment for the missions of international organizations in Albania; called on the parties to continue the political dialogue and facilitate the electoral process; condemned all acts of violence and called for their immediate end; and, noted the electoral monitoring mission of the OSCE-Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights.

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ARMENIA

Date of admission to UN: 2 March 1992.

TREATIES AND REPORTS TO TREATY BODIES

Land and People: Armenia has submitted a core document (HRI/CORE/1/Add.57) for use by the treaty bodies. The report prepared by the government includes detailed demographic and statistical data as well as descriptions of the social, economic and cultural characteristics of Armenia. The report notes that since independence in 1991 Armenia has been working to establish a democratic multiparty republic with a presidential system of government. At the time the Core document was prepared, Armenia had not yet adopted a Constitution and was operating under terms set out in the August 1990 Declaration of Independence.

In the absence of a Constitution, this Declaration and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights were considered the highest law and provide the framework for the protection of human rights. International legal instruments have supremacy over all provisions of Armenia's legislation. Specific laws touching on human rights have been adopted by the Parliament, including in the areas of freedom of speech and the press, religious organizations, the rights of minorities, the rights of persons with disabilities, employment, trade unions and social and political organizations. The Department for Human Rights within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has requested assistance from the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in drafting human rights legislation, holding seminars on human rights, translating human rights documents into Armenian, and establishing a human rights centre in Armenia.

Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

Acceded: 13 September 1993.

Armenia's initial report (E/1990/5/Add.36) has been submitted and is pending for consideration by the Committee at its November 1999 session; the second periodic report is due 30 June 2000.

Civil and Political Rights

Acceded: 23 June 1993.

Armenia's initial report was due 22 September 1994.

Optional Protocol: Acceded: 23 June 1993.

Racial Discrimination

Acceded: 23 June 1993.

Armenia's initial and second periodic reports were submitted as one document (CERD/C/289/Add.2) which is not yet scheduled for consideration by the Committee; the third periodic report is due 23 July 1998.

Discrimination against Women

Acceded: 13 September 1993.

Armenia's second periodic report is due 13 October 1998.

Armenia's initial report (CEDAW/C/ARM/1; CEDAW/C/ARM/1/Corr.1) was considered at the Committee's July 1997 session. The report prepared by the government includes general information on, *inter alia*: land and population; ethnic characteristics; language and religion; the political structure; economic, social and cultural characteristics; and the normative framework related to human rights. The section of the report addressing articles 1 through 16 of the Convention, includes information on, *inter alia*: constitutional and legal provisions related to non-discrimination; international instruments ratified by Armenia related to women's human rights; the Criminal and Penal Codes; special measures (affirmative action); violence against women; women's organizations; statistics on women in public life; education, employment, health and property rights; and refugees, migrants and internally displaced persons. The report also notes the national plan of action, which includes: use of the media to publicize and disseminate laws and conventions on women's human rights; media programmes to provide information and advice on legal and other aspects of women's human rights; information and counselling services; and, training for senior staff in government institutions, enterprises and other organizations.

The Committee's concluding observations (CEDAW/C/1997/II/L.1/Add.5) welcomed Armenia's accession to the Convention without reservations so soon after independence and viewed positively: the government's effort to amend its laws to bring them into line with the standards set out in international human rights instruments, including the Convention; the incorporation of the Convention in domestic law, giving it precedence over conflicting national legislation; translation of the Convention into Armenian and its wide dissemination; the government's intention to reform the criminal code in respect of violence against women and the sexual exploitation of women through prostitution and trafficking; the exceptionally high level of literacy and education in Armenia, particularly among women; the identification of four priority areas of concern in relation to women's health; and, the programme to establish a system of family planning services, including provision of contraceptives to women free of charge.

In terms of factors hindering implementation of the Convention the Committee noted that one immediate effect of the introduction of competitive politics, which accompanied democratization in Armenia, was an adverse effect on the position of women, reflected in their dramatic loss of representation at all levels of decision-making. As well, the process of transition to a market economy appears to have resulted in the economic marginalization of women, exacerbated by the economic toll of the 1988 earthquake, and the armed conflict around Nagorno Karabakh. The Committee