

Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

Signed: 29 September 1967; ratified: 6 December 1971.

Sweden's fourth periodic report is due 30 June 1999.

Reservations and Declarations: Paragraph (d) of article 7.

Civil and Political Rights

Signed: 29 September 1967; ratified: 6 December 1971.

Sweden's fifth periodic report is due 27 October 1999.

Reservations and Declarations: Paragraph 3 of article 10; paragraph 7 of article 14; paragraph 1 of article 20; declaration under article 41.

Optional Protocol: Signed: 29 September 1967; ratified: 6 December 1971.

Reservations and Declarations: Paragraph 2 of article 5.

Second Optional Protocol: Signed: 13 February 1990; ratified: 11 May 1990.

Racial Discrimination

Signed: 5 May 1966; ratified: 6 December 1971.

Sweden's 13th periodic report was due 4 January 1997.

Sweden's 12th periodic report (CERD/C/280/Add.4) was considered by the Committee at its August 1997 session. The report prepared by the government contains information on, *inter alia*: provisions in the Instrument of Government related to non-discrimination and protection of rights; the Parliamentary commissions to review Swedish immigration and refugee policies and policies related to the long-term integration of immigrants and refugees in Sweden; freedom of expression; criminal liability of the media; criminal offences related to speech; penal legislation related to racist speech and actions; the National Council for Crime Prevention; the Act against Ethnic Discrimination and the Ombudsman against Ethnic Discrimination; the rights of the Sami people and the functioning of the Sami Parliament; the Code of Judicial Procedure; the right to participate in the electoral process; the labour market, access to education and measures related to compensation in cases of discrimination; training for police in the area of racism and xenophobia; and, measures taken to eliminate racism and xenophobia.

The Committee's concluding observations and comments (CERD/C/304/Add.37) noted that the recession in Sweden had serious consequences generally and led to severe setbacks for refugees and immigrants, in particular. The Committee stated that the consequences of the recession were most felt in the labour market situation of refugees and immigrants, who were found to be worse off than Swedes in most areas of society and, further, that the gap was widening.

The Committee welcomed: the fact that Sweden is one of a limited number of states parties to make a declaration under article 14 recognizing the competence of the Committee to receive and consider communications from groups and individuals; the intention of the government to review the Act against Ethnic Discrimination of 1994 because it is not having the desired effect; the adoption of new legislation which broadens the definition of "refugee"; the activities of various governmental institutions concerned with integration policies and combatting racism and xenophobia, as well as the active participation of Sweden in international efforts to combat racism; the establishment of the Sami Parliament; the fact that non-nationals have the right to vote and stand for election at

the municipal level; and the establishment of a system of education for refugees and immigrants.

The principal subjects of concern identified by the Committee were, *inter alia*: the finding of a research project conducted by the National Council for Crime Prevention that crimes with racial motives have increased since 1980; the social position of Roma, particularly in such areas as education and employment, which is less favourable than that of the rest of the population and has led to their dependency on social welfare benefits; the failure of existing legislation to implement fully article 4 related to racist organizations, speech and actions; the low and declining participation by non-nationals in local elections; and, the activities based on ideas or theories of racial superiority of various organizations and individuals and the increasing dissemination of recorded music, with lyrics promoting hatred against ethnic minorities.

The Committee recommended that the government:

- ▶ while reviewing legislation, pay particular attention to full implementation of the provisions of the Convention, in particular article 4;
- ▶ provide in its next report information on the number of complaints, judicial decisions and compensation awards concerning acts of racism in all their forms;
- ▶ take further measures in order to ensure the use by Sami of their own language;
- ▶ reinforce the policy of promoting equal opportunity in economic and social life for immigrants, refugees and ethnic minorities by appropriate legislative, administrative and other measures; and,
- ▶ take further action to ensure that the provisions of the Convention are more widely disseminated among the Roma, the Sami and "Tornedal Finns", immigrant associations, and other ethnic groups, as well as among government officials, employers and trade unions.

Discrimination against Women

Signed: 7 March 1980; ratified: 2 July 1980.

Sweden's fourth periodic report (CEDAW/C/SWE/4) has been submitted but is not yet scheduled for consideration by the Committee; the fifth periodic report is due 3 September 1998.

Torture

Signed: 4 February 1985; ratified: 8 January 1986.

Sweden's fourth periodic report is due 25 June 2000.

Reservations and Declarations: Declarations under articles 21 and 22.

Sweden's third periodic report (CAT/C/34/Add.4) was considered by the Committee at its April/May 1997 session. The report prepared by the government contains information on measures related to articles 3 through 5, 8, 10 and 16 of the Convention. The subjects considered include: the policy of non-refoulement, extradition and expulsion; the Swedish Immigration Board and the Aliens Appeals Board; changes in law resulting from incorporation of the European Convention on Human Rights into legislation; provisions in the Penal Code; the Personnel Responsibility Committee of the National Police Board; changes in the Penal Code to include acts by foreign contingents of the armed forces during service