

to an individual's legal safety, the right to vote and be elected, the right to participate, and rights related to the environment.

Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

Signed: 11 October 1967; ratified: 19 August 1975.
Finland's fourth periodic report is due 30 June 1999.

Civil and Political Rights

Signed: 11 October 1967; ratified: 19 August 1975.
Finland's fourth periodic report (CCPR/C/95/Add.6) has been submitted but is not yet scheduled for consideration by the Committee; the fifth periodic report is due 18 August 1999.

Reservations and Declarations: Paragraphs 2 (b) and 3 of article 10; paragraph 7 of article 14; paragraph 1 of article 20; declaration under article 41.

Optional Protocol: Signed: 11 December 1967; ratified: 19 August 1975.

Second Optional Protocol: Signed: 13 February 1990; ratified: 4 April 1991.

Racial Discrimination

Signed: 6 October 1966; ratified: 14 July 1970.
Finland's 13th periodic report was due 13 August 1995; the 14th periodic report was due 13 August 1997.

Discrimination against Women

Signed: 17 July 1980; ratified: 4 September 1986.
Finland's third periodic report (CEDAW/C/FIN/3) has been submitted and is pending for the Committee's January 1999 session; the fourth periodic report is due 4 October 1999.

Torture

Signed: 4 February 1985; ratified: 30 August 1989.
Finland's third periodic report is due 28 September 1998.
Reservations and Declarations: Declaration under articles 21 and 22.

Rights of the Child

Signed: 26 January 1990; ratified: 20 June 1991.
Finland's second periodic report is due 19 July 1998.

THEMATIC REPORTS

Mechanisms and Reports of the Sub-Commission

Sale of children, child prostitution, child pornography: (E/CN.4/Sub.2/1997/11, para. Finland)

The report summarized information provided by the government in terms of steps taken for the protection of children. The government referred to reforms contained in a Government Bill that was sent to Parliament early in 1997. When enacted the reforms will: change provisions on sexual offences in the Penal Code with the aim of improving the legal protection of children in criminal cases; make possession of child pornography and the purchase of sexual services from persons under 18 years of age punishable offences; impose more severe sentences for offences such as the distribution of child pornography; extend the penalty for sexual abuse of a child from only a fine to imprisonment; and, broaden the grounds on which a person can be considered guilty of aggravated sexual abuse of a child.

The government also indicated that several working groups have been mandated to deal with problems related to commercial sex. The working group set up by the Police Department of the Ministry of the Interior proposed several measures aimed at reducing prostitution and crimes related to prostitution. The committee appointed by the Ministry of Justice on commercial sex and prostitution made various proposals to reduce sex tourism and problems arising from sex bars and restaurants. And the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, in cooperation with the Ministry of Trade and Industry, developed and implemented an information campaign concerning sex tourism. Reference is also made to the fact that the government's equality programme, which was presented in February 1997, includes a chapter on commercial sex, prostitution and trafficking in wives, and explains the measures for which ministries will be responsible.

The government stated that promoting sexual health and welfare has a preventive effect on prostitution and that the development of young persons' knowledge of their sexuality has been found to be particularly important. Sex education is included in school curricula and the state finances special projects related to sex education and the elimination of social exclusion in order to prevent prostitution among the young. The information notes that the 1997 annual voluntary collection for charity arranged by schoolchildren and students raised funds for the preventive work of the End Child Prostitution in Asian Tourism (ECPAT) movement against child sex tourism in Thailand.

Other Reports

Minorities, Report of the S-G to the CHR: (E/CN.4/1997/82, para. 40)

The report of the Secretary-General summarizes information provided by the International Federation of Human Rights Leagues (FIDH) that was prepared by the Finnish League for Human Rights. A number of the provisions in the 1995 amendments to the Constitution are noted, including those pertaining to: equality before the law; non-discrimination on the basis of, *inter alia*, origin, language, religion or conviction; the right to use either of Finland's official languages before a court or other authority and the right to obtain documents from public authorities in either of the two languages; the responsibility of public authorities to provide for the educational, cultural and social needs of the Finnish- and the Swedish-speaking population of the country; the right of the Sami and the Romany to maintain and develop their own languages and cultures; and, provisions governing the right of the Sami to use the Sami language before the public authorities as prescribed by Act of Parliament.

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FRANCE

Date of admission to UN: 24 October 1945.

TREATIES AND REPORTS TO TREATY BODIES

Land and People: France has submitted a core document (HRI/CORE/1/Add.17/Rev.1) for use by the treaty bodies. The report contains demographic data as well as information on the general political structure and the legal framework for the protection of human rights.