

report prepared by the government contains demographic and statistical data, information on the political structure and an overview of the legal framework for the protection of human rights.

The Constitution determines not only individual human rights and freedoms but also the instruments which are available to individuals for the protection of their rights. The primary instruments are judicial protection, right to appeal, the right to payment of damages and the right to constitutional complaint at the Constitutional Court. At the time the report was prepared, the Constitution provided for the establishment of an office of the ombudsman assigned the task of safeguarding human rights and basic freedoms in relation to state bodies, the bodies of local self-government and those holding public authority. The Law on the Human Rights Ombudsman had not yet been adopted by the Parliament and, in the interim, the implementation of human rights was entrusted to the Council of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms which was elected prior to the adoption of the new Constitution.

Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

Succeeded: 6 July 1992.

Slovenia's initial report was due 30 June 1994.

Civil and Political Rights

Succeeded: 6 July 1992.

Slovenia's second periodic report was due 24 June 1997.

Optional Protocol: Acceded: 6 July 1992.

Reservations and Declarations: Article 1 and paragraph 2 (a) of article 5.

Second Optional Protocol: Signed: 14 September 1993; ratified: 10 March 1994.

Racial Discrimination

Succeeded: 6 July 1992.

Slovenia's initial and second and third periodic reports were due 6 July 1993, 1995 and 1997 respectively.

Discrimination against Women

Succeeded: 6 July 1992

Slovenia's second periodic report was due 5 August 1997.

Slovenia's initial report (CEDAW/C/SVN/1) was considered by the Committee at its January 1997 session. The Committee's concluding observations and comments (CEDAW/C/1997/L.1/Add.3) noted the difficulties arising from the transition to democracy and a social-market economy and the need to build a different civil society, and the fact that many of these difficulties can and do have a negative impact on the situation of women and hinder the legal and practical implementation of the Convention. The Committee also noted that sex-role stereotypes relating to the nature of women and men and the "appropriate" work for the sexes were pervasive in Slovenian society and had not been questioned under the former political system, despite its adherence to formal equality between women and men.

The Committee welcomed the sensitivity towards gender issues expressed by the government and by certain sectors of the newly emerging civil society, in particular in the number of non-governmental organizations for women. It welcomed: the extensive human rights guarantees in the Constitution and, in particular, those relating to women's human rights; the

fact that the Convention took precedence over national legislation; the immediate effect of the Convention in the legal system and legislation providing women with *de jure* equality; the integration of human rights principles into the ongoing process of legislative reform and into newly formulated policies; the active role of the Office for Women Policy, founded in 1992, which operates as an independent government advisory service, advising on legislation, policies and programmes and, through campaigns and programmes, seeks to improve gender sensitivity in the population; and, the efforts of the government to eliminate stereotyped images of women in the media and in advertising, as well as the National Programme for Households, which aims at helping young women and men to share work and family responsibilities in a non-stereotyped way.

The Committee also noted positively: the awareness of the government of the widespread violence against women in the private sphere, and that it was developing measures to combat that violence and to assist victims; the steps taken towards new legislation to protect prostitutes; the temporary special efforts of the Office for Women's Policies to raise public awareness and to introduce measures to increase women's representation in parliament; the high number of women in the judiciary and the promising figures of women's enrolment in faculties of law; the significant representation of women in high-level administrative jobs; the fact that a large number of non-governmental organizations for women had been formed in a relatively short time and the cooperation fostered by the Office for Women's Policies with NGOs, in particular during the preparation of the report and in the formulation of the National Platform of Action, which seeks to implement the Beijing Platform for Action; the high level of women's education in Slovenia; the efforts made to include human rights education at various levels of the school curriculum; the fact that courses in women's studies were offered at some universities and that research on the impact of the depiction of women in textbooks was being carried out.

The Committee further welcomed: the existence of a formal day-care system that provides day care to slightly more than 50 per cent of children up to the age of 6; the revision of the existing labour legislation and the formulation of new equality provisions in this area; the fact that the principle of "equal pay for equal work" and for "work of equal value" will be considered in labour legislation; the fact that a high percentage of women are employed; the envisioned provisions against sexist language in job classifications and advertisements and the discussion of a legislative proposal on parental leave that would give a greater share of responsibility to fathers; and, inclusion of the right of abortion in the Constitution.

The areas of concern identified by the Committee were: the fact that the Office for Women's Policies had an advisory role only and, therefore, was dependent on the political will of the government; the insufficient resources, human and financial, allocated to the Office considering the tasks it has to tackle; the pervasiveness and entrenched nature of sex-role stereotypes and the risk that such stereotypes might be strengthened because of the difficult economic, social and cultural changes the population was facing; the fact that the real extent of violence against women may not have been