

ARMENIA

Date of admission to UN: 2 March 1992.

TREATIES: RATIFICATIONS AND RESERVATIONS

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 at the Committee's November 1999 session; the second periodic report is due 30 June 2000.

Civil and Political Rights

Acceded: 23 June 1993.

Armenia's initial report (CCPR/C/92/Add.2) was considered at the Committee's November 1998 session; the second periodic report is due 22 September 1999.

Optional Protocol: Acceded: 23 June 1993.

Racial Discrimination

Acceded: 23 June 1993.

Armenia's initial and second reports were submitted as one document (CERD/C/289/Add.2) which was considered at the Committee's March 1998 session; the third periodic report is due 23 July 1998.

Discrimination against Women

Acceded: 13 September 1993.

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

Torture

Acceded: 13 September 1993.

Armenia's second periodic report was due 12 October 1998.

Rights of the Child

Acceded: 23 June 1993.

Armenia's initial report (CRC/C/28/Add.9) has been submitted and is scheduled for consideration by the Committee at its September/October 1999 session; the second periodic report is due 21 July 2000.

REPORTS TO TREATY BODIES

Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination

Armenia's initial and second periodic reports were submitted as one document (CERD/C/289/Add.2, July 1997) which was considered by the Committee at its March 1998 session. The report prepared by the government contains information on the role of the Union of Nationalities, established in 1994, with a membership representing the Assyrian, Greek, Georgian, Jewish, German, and Polish communities, the League of Kurdish Intelligentsia, the Russia Society, the Russian Cultural Association ODA, the Harmonia International Centre for Russian Culture, the Aid Foundation for Russian Compatriots, and the charity Ukraina. The report also covers such areas and measures as: constitutional provisions related to equality and non-discrimination and similar provisions in the Penal Code; the prohibition on propaganda and incitement; the Law on the press and the Law on freedom of conscience; safeguards for the protection of the rights of the accused; the process of elections and referenda; freedom of movement and resident status; the Code on marriage and the family; legal provisions related to land and property; the separation of church and state, freedom of conscience and religious organizations, and the status of religions in Armenia; the Law on socio-political organizations and the Law on social organizations; the right to form and join trade unions; the right to housing, medical care, social security and pensions; education and school systems; cultural policies and programmes, and the Ministry of Culture.

The Committee's concluding observations and comments (CERD/C/304/Add.51) noted the difficult period of political, economic and social reforms following the dissolution of the former Soviet Union and the fact that these elements, together with recent demographic movements, hinder full implementation of the Convention. The Committee welcomed: the government's stated commitment to ensure equality before the law; the signing of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) Agreement on questions relating to the restoration of the rights