

investigation had been initiated but could not be concluded because the whereabouts of the journalist were unknown and his testimony was needed. The second case involved an Egyptian national, reportedly assaulted by four members of the Vienna Drugs Squad after he was seen with a suspected drugs dealer. The government informed the SR that the officers involved were indicted on charges of causing grievous bodily harm, but later acquitted. The Vienna Public Prosecutor's Officer had entered an appeal against the judgement. The government provided the SR with a copy of a decree issued by the Austrian Ministry of Justice in September 1989 concerning procedures for the prompt and impartial investigation of allegations of torture or ill-treatment by police or security officials.

Other Reports

Children and juveniles in detention, Report of the S-G to the CHR: (E/CN.4/1997/26, para. 2, Section I)

The report of the Secretary-General refers to information provided by the government on provisions in the Code of Criminal Procedure related to: the obligation to report offences for prosecution which applies, for example, to the staff of youth welfare offices, social, family and drug counselling services as well as to probation officers, teachers or attorneys for children and juveniles; new provisions regarding the imposition and prolongation of detention on remand; the requirement that youth welfare officers must be informed of the institution of proceedings against a juvenile; expansion of the range of persons who may be asked to take part in the questioning of a juvenile detainee to include family members and teachers; the stipulation that the juvenile concerned must be informed of the right to have family members or a teacher present during questioning immediately after his arrest; and, the stipulation that, in proceedings before courts the accused juvenile must be given a defence counsel *ex officio* for the entire duration of the proceedings. The government also provided information on: sentencing; receipt of parcels while in detention; pay for work done; the requirement that the assize court must include a minimum of four lay judges who are teachers, pedagogues or persons who have worked in the fields of public or private youth welfare or youth care; the requirement that the assessors court must have at least one such person, and at least one whose gender is the same as that of the accused; protection of the principle of the presumption of innocence; the provision that both parents or other legal representatives of the juvenile have the right to be heard in criminal proceedings to the same extent as such a right is granted to the accused; the stipulation that all judgements and decisions rendered by a court may be appealed; the requirement that, if an accused does not have sufficient knowledge of German, free linguistic assistance, usually in the form of an interpreter must be provided; the provision that, in the case of juveniles, all maximum fines and terms of imprisonment provided for under criminal law are reduced by half; the prohibition on sentencing juveniles to life imprisonment if they were not over 20 when the offence was committed; and institutions in which juveniles serve prison sentences.

Conscientious objection to military service, Report of the S-G to the CHR: (E/CN.4/1997/99, para. 46)

The report of the Secretary-General notes that: conscripts are informed about the possibility of submitting a civilian

service statement; a special information office for civilian service matters has been established at the Federal Ministry of the Interior; and several private organizations make information available about the civilian service.

Minorities, Report of the S-G to the CHR: (E/CN.4/1997/82, paras. 3, 7-8, 10-13, 15)

The report of the Secretary-General refers to information received from the government citing federal legislation or administrative arrangements which provide for: the use of minority languages as official languages; mother tongue instruction designed for children whose primary language is not German; schooling for the Slovene, Croatian and Hungarian ethnic groups and provision of an individual right to use their respective language as the language of instruction or to learn it as a compulsory subject (arising from the Minority Schools Acts for the provinces of Carinthia and Burgenland); and instruction in minority schools as both bilingual and monolingual instruction. The government also stated that, under the Ethnic Groups Act, the federal administration is obliged to promote any measures and projects that preserve and ensure the existence of ethnic groups, their traditions, as well as their characteristics and rights. Such federal assistance may be in the form of grants, training and counselling of members of ethnic groups, and financial assistance to associations, foundations and funds.

UN Decade for Human Rights Education, Report of the S-G to the GA: (A/52/469, para. 42)

The report of the Secretary-General notes that the Ministry of Education and Cultural Affairs has commissioned the Service Centre for Human Rights Education, established within the framework of the Decade at the Ludwig Boltzmann Institute of Human Rights, to initiate the systematic development of human rights education in Austria.

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BELGIUM

Date of admission to UN: 27 December 1945.

TREATIES AND REPORTS TO TREATY BODIES

Land and People: The core document prepared by the government for use by the treaty bodies (HRI/CORE/1/Add.1/Rev.1) contains statistical data and information on the political structures in Belgium and the general legal framework for the protection of human rights.

The rights guaranteed in the Belgian Constitution essentially mirror those set out in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the European Convention on Human Rights. To the extent that article 23 of the Constitution stipulates that every person has a right to a life consistent with human dignity, economic, social and cultural rights are an integral part of the rights regime and include the right to work, equitable working conditions and fair remuneration, the right to information, consultation and collective bargaining, the right to social security and health care, the right to social, medical and legal assistance, decent housing, a healthy environment and the right to cultural and social fulfilment. The courts have jurisdiction over questions related to the applicability of international treaty law when the rights