

The SR's interim report to the General Assembly (A/52/477, paras. 25, 28, 30, 33, 34, 38) notes that communications were sent to the government related to violations of religious freedom against all religions, religious groups and religious communities other than those reflecting the official state religion and the fact that non-Muslims face a number of religious restrictions, such as: a prohibition on the import of non-Muslim publications; restrictions on the teaching of history or religions and other subjects related to religion in non-Muslim educational institutions; the requirement that Islam be taught; and, refusal of permission to build, enlarge or renovate non-Muslim places of worship.

### ***Mechanisms and Reports of the Sub-Commission***

**States of emergency, Special Rapporteur on:** (E/CN.4/Sub.2/1997/19/Add.1)

The report notes that a state of emergency was declared on 12 December 1962 and is still in force.

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## **BURMA**

### **(Myanmar)**

**Date of admission to UN:** 19 April 1948.

### **TREATIES AND REPORTS TO TREATY BODIES**

**Land and People:** Burma has not submitted a core document for use by the treaty bodies.

#### **Discrimination against Women**

Acceded: 22 July 1997.

Burma's initial report is due 21 August 1998.

*Reservations and Declarations:* Article 29.

#### **Rights of the Child**

Acceded: 15 July 1991.

Burma's second periodic report is due 13 August 1998.

Burma's initial report (CRC/C/8/Add.9) was considered by the Committee at its January 1997 session. The report prepared by the government includes demographic and statistical data as well as information on the political and economic system and child-rearing and social customs. The report also provides information on: the Child Law; civil rights and political freedoms; family environment and alternative care; basic health and welfare; education, leisure, recreation and cultural activities; special protection measures; and, the formation of the National Committee on the Rights of the Child. The government also provided a written response to questions submitted by the Committee prior to consideration of the initial report (CRC/C/Q/Mya.1).

The Committee's concluding observations and comments (CRC/C/15/Add.69) welcomed: adoption of a National Plan of Action and establishment of a National Committee on the Rights of the Child in 1993 and the enactment of a national law on the protection of children in 1993.

Among the factors and difficulties hindering implementation of the Convention, the Committee noted: the years of internal conflict in some regions of the country; the violence and instability which have had a considerable negative impact on the situation of children; the fact that many children have

been subjected to various forms of violations of their rights and have been forced to flee areas affected by such violence; and, the several years of unfavourable economic conditions in Burma and the adverse effect of conditions on the situation of the most vulnerable groups in society.

The principal subjects of concern identified by the Committee were: the lack of conformity between the existing national legal framework and the Convention, namely the Citizenship Act, the Village and Towns Acts and the Whipping Act, the laws on freedom of expression and association, the Child Law on Child Labour; low age of criminal responsibility (7 years); the failure clearly to prohibit torture and the lack of a complaint procedure for children; the fact that the law prohibiting discrimination does not explicitly protect children from discrimination; and, the fact that human rights of children are not yet integrated in a fundamental body of law.

The Committee also expressed concern over: the fact that the Convention and the National Plan of Action have not yet been translated into concrete programmes and policies; the fact that the system of data collection does not adequately disaggregate information so as to reflect the situation of all children, particularly those belonging to the most disadvantaged groups; the inadequacy of measures taken to ensure the implementation of children's economic, social and cultural rights; the insufficient budget allocation for social expenditures, in particular in favour of children belonging to the most disadvantaged groups of the population; the status and situation of children belonging to ethnic and religious minority groups, girls, and children living in rural and remote areas; the fact that the national identity card explicitly mentions the religion and the ethnic origin of each citizen, including children; the provision in the Citizenship Act which establishes three different categories of citizenship, creating the possibility that some categories of children and their parents might be stigmatized and/or denied certain rights; the insufficient measures taken to raise awareness and to provide education on the Convention to adults and children alike; the failure to have the Convention translated in all national languages; the lack of knowledge on the Convention among professional groups working for and with children.

Concern was also expressed by the Committee over: the fact that children considered poor are channelled towards monastic Buddhist schools and are offered no alternative educational opportunity; inadequacies with regard to the rights to freedom of speech, association and peaceful assembly; the recent closure of some high-schools; the fact that the existing legal framework and procedures set to regulate adoption do not fully conform with the Convention; the high rate of infant mortality and malnutrition, as well as the low level of health services; the insufficiencies of measures to offer appropriate and accessible social, rehabilitation and educational services to disabled children; the high level of drop-out and repetition rates; the lack of resources for vocational training; and the insufficient measures taken to provide education in minority languages.

The Committee expressed serious concern over: the impact of years of internal conflict resulting in forcible relocation or displacement; abuse and violence perpetrated against children and, in particular, the rape of young girls by