

differences in the state of health between members of ethnic and national minorities and the rest of the population; and the provision in the Matching Bill to provide illegal immigrants with essential health-care services.

The Committee expressed concern over, *inter alia*: the dissemination of ideas of racial superiority and of intolerance by various organizations, political parties and individuals; report indicating a lack of consistent compliance with the guidelines for the Public Prosecution Department, requiring the pursuit of an active investigation policy in discrimination cases and that prosecution be undertaken in all such cases; the increasing racial segregation in society, mainly in the large towns, with so-called "white" schools and neighbourhoods, noting similar trends in Aruba and in parts of the Netherlands Antilles; practices relating to the entry and control of foreigners, both in the continental territory, and in Aruba and the Netherlands Antilles, which could lead to racial discrimination in effect; the disproportionately low rate of participation of minorities in the labour market and their increasing unemployment rates, as well as reports of both direct and indirect forms of discrimination in recruitment procedures; the under-representation of ethnic minorities in most areas of education and, in particular, estimates that only 2 per cent of the total student population in higher education comes from ethnic minorities; and, in Aruba and the Netherlands Antilles, the fact that the process of education may not give the necessary attention to the reality that the majority of the population speaks Papiamentu.

The Committee recommended that the government, *inter alia*:

- ♦ give more attention to countering, investigating, and prosecuting such activities as dissemination of ideas of racial superiority and of intolerance by various organizations, political parties and individuals;
- ♦ take the necessary measures to ensure that regulations and practices related to the entry and control of foreigners do not have discriminatory effects;
- ♦ take action to ensure and promote equal opportunity in economic and social life, in particular with regard to education and employment;
- ♦ give more attention to providing students from ethnic minorities at all levels of education, as appropriate, instruction in their mother tongue;
- ♦ provide more information on the implementation of the 1994 Law of Equal Treatment and the activity of the Commission for Equal Treatment, noting proposals to extend the competence of this Commission and to make it more effective in countering discrimination;
- ♦ review its arrangements for the coordination by one ministry of all actions in implementation of the Convention, including reporting obligations; and

- ♦ introduce, in the next report, a consistent nomenclature and classification of ethnic and national minorities, and include information regarding the Frisian minority and data on the total population according to ethnic and national origin.

Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

The European part of the Kingdom of Netherlands

The Netherlands second periodic report (E/1990/6/Add.11, April 1996) was considered by the Committee at its May 1998 session. The report prepared by the government contains information on, *inter alia*: long-term unemployed persons; youth employment programmes; measures to address the employment of older persons; the Equal Employment Opportunities Commission; pay equity and non-discrimination in employment; conditions of work, including remuneration, health and safety, equal promotion opportunities, hours of work and paid holidays; trade union rights and the right to strike; family law, child care, parenting support, youth services, maternity protection and the situation of children and young people; standards of living, including education, housing and adequate food; the national health policy, mental health care, access to health care for vulnerable groups; the elderly; the education system, including the Education Priority Policy (OVV) and measures addressing the rights to primary and secondary education; and cultural life, including the Arts Plan.

The Committee's concluding observations and comments (E/C.12/1/Add.25) noted that, to a considerable extent, the Netherlands has met its obligations with respect to the protection of the rights set out in the Covenant and welcomed: programmes and measures adopted in the education system to eliminate discrimination against women and to address social stereotypes of women in the media; the success of the campaign against racial discrimination, as seen in the fact that incidents of racial violence seem to have disappeared; the programmes to create new jobs and help the unemployed — particularly ethnic minorities, young people and persons over 50 years of age — to become part of or be reintegrated into the labour force; and the government's intention to withdraw its reservation to the Covenant concerning the right to strike. The Committee stated that the policy of providing subsidies for the construction of places of worship for the various religions was of considerable importance both in helping to combat discrimination and in contributing to the realization of the right to take part in cultural life.

Factors hindering implementation of the Covenant were noted as including the fact that the structural adjustment policy adopted by the government has lowered the standard of living of the lowest income groups. The Committee stated that the reduction in services and subsidies previously provided by the state has had adverse effects on wages, health, social security and education. Reference is made to the fact that the policy had not undergone