

the ILO, the report notes that Sri Lanka is among the countries in South Asia where trafficking in children is rife.

The Special Rapporteur's interim report to the General Assembly (A/52/482, para. 24) states that there appears to be a significant problem of child prostitution, with government estimates of more than 2,000 child prostitutes in the country. The report notes the government's statement that it is addressing the problem.

Violence against women, Special Rapporteur on:
(E/CN.4/1997/47, Sections III, V; E/CN.4/1997/47/Add.4, paras. 3, 9)

In the section dealing with rape and sexual violence, the report refers to the November 1995 amendments to the Penal Code in Sri Lanka which set the minimum sentence for a rape conviction at seven years and, for certain aggravated cases, such as custodial rape, gang rape or rape of a pregnant woman, at ten years. In the section referring to violence against women migrant workers, the report notes a survey conducted at Colombo international airport which found that 84 per cent of migrant workers leaving the country were women and that 94 per cent of the women were migrating for domestic work. The Special Rapporteur (SR) noted that Sri Lanka is among the primary sending countries for domestic workers to the Gulf region and states that, in April 1995, in Kuwait, some 150 migrant domestic workers sought shelter in Sri Lanka's embassy. Steps taken by the government to regulate the sending of migrant workers are noted, including provisions in the Overseas Employment Act of 1995, requiring that a prospective migrant worker must possess a "Certificate of Registration", issued only upon presentation of an employment contract, in order to leave. The Act also prescribes that overseas employers are required to cover the cost of travel and medical benefits for the migrant workers.

The SR transmitted a case to the government related to the case of a young woman who was gang-raped by 11 members of the Sri Lankan security forces and subsequently killed after she disappeared from the Kaithady checkpoint, Jaffna. The information received on the case indicated that the young woman's body, along with those of her mother, brother and a neighbour, were recovered and buried at state expense and, further, that nine suspects had been arrested in connection with the rape and murder of the young woman and her family and neighbour. The SR expressed the strong hope that every effort would be made by the government to ensure that the perpetrators of the crimes were prosecuted and convicted in a manner consistent with international human rights standards.

The government's reply to the case condemned the killing and stated that it did not represent a pattern since military operations in Jaffna had been conducted without major civilian casualties and collateral damage. The government informed the SR that a police investigation and magisterial inquiry were carried out and the courts decided, after non-summary proceedings, that further judicial inquiries would be held in Jaffna to facilitate, *inter alia*, access to witnesses.

Mechanisms and Reports of the Sub-Commission

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

The report notes that a state of emergency was declared on 20 June 1989 and terminated on 4 September 1994, except

in the Northern and Eastern provinces and in certain other areas bordering those two provinces.

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SYRIA

(Syrian Arab Republic)

Date of admission to UN: 24 October 1945. [Syria withdrew in 1958 to unite with Egypt as the United Arab Republic and resumed its independence and separate membership in the UN in 1961.]

TREATIES AND REPORTS TO TREATY BODIES

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

Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

Acceded: 21 April 1969.

Syria's third periodic report was due 30 June 1994.

Reservations and Declarations: General declaration; paragraph 1 of article 26.

Civil and Political Rights

Acceded: 21 April 1969.

Syria's second through fourth periodic reports were due 18 August 1984, 1989 and 1994 respectively.

Reservations and Declarations: General declaration.

Racial Discrimination

Acceded: 21 April 1969.

Syria's 12th through 14th periodic reports were due 21 May 1992, 1994 and 1996 respectively.

Reservations and Declarations: General declaration; article 22.

Rights of the Child

Signed: 18 September 1990; ratified: 24 February 1997.

Syria's second periodic report is due 13 August 2000.

Reservations and Declarations: General reservation; articles 14, 2 and 21.

Syria's initial report (CRC/C/28/Add.2) was considered by the Committee at its January 1997 session. The report prepared by the government provides statistical and demographic data as well as information on constitutional and legal provisions related to areas covered by the Convention, including but not limited to: harmonization of national law and policy with provisions of the Convention; definition of the child; name and nationality; freedom of expression and access to appropriate information; association and peaceful assembly; protection of privacy; parental guidance and responsibilities; separation from parents and family reunification; adoption, illicit transfer and non-return of children; basic health and social welfare; education, including vocational education and guidance; children in states of emergency; young offenders; children with disabilities; child victims of exploitation and children belonging to minorities or indigenous population groups. The report also cites the role of popular organizations involved in the general promotion of the Convention as well as specific areas of rights, including the Women's General Federation, the Tala'i al-Baath (Baath Vanguard) and the Shabibat al-Thawra (Revolutionary Youth) Federation.