

AUSTRIA

Date of admission to UN: 14 December 1955.

TREATIES AND REPORTS TO TREATY BODIES

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

Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

Signed: 10 December 1973; ratified: 10 September 1978.
Austria's third periodic report was due 30 June 1997.

Civil and Political Rights

Signed: 10 December 1973; ratified: 10 September 1978.
Austria's third periodic report (CCPR/C/83/Add.3) has been submitted but is not yet scheduled for consideration by the Commission; the fourth periodic report is due 9 April 1998.
Reservations and Declarations: Paragraph 4 of article 12; articles 9 and 14; paragraph 3 of article 10; articles 19, 21 and 22; article 26; declaration under article 41.

Optional Protocol: Signed: 10 December 1973; ratified: 10 December 1987.

Reservations and Declarations: Paragraph 2 of article 5.

Second Optional Protocol: Signed: 8 April 1991; ratified: 2 March 1993.

Racial Discrimination

Signed: 22 July 1969; ratified: 9 May 1972.
Austria's 11th through 13th periodic reports were due 8 June 1993, 1995 and 1997 respectively.
Reservations and Declarations: Paragraphs (a), (b) and (c) of article 4.

Discrimination against Women

Signed: 17 July 1980; ratified: 31 March 1982.
Austria's third and fourth periodic reports were submitted as one document (CEDAW/C/AUT/304) which is pending for consideration at the Committee's January 1999 session; the fifth periodic report is due 30 April 1999.
Reservations and Declarations: Paragraph (b) of article 7; article 11.

Torture

Signed: 14 March 1985; ratified: 29 July 1987.
Austria's second and third periodic reports were due 27 August 1992 and 1996 respectively.
Reservations and Declarations: paragraph 1 (c) of article 5; article 15.

Rights of the Child

Signed: 26 January 1990; ratified: 6 August 1992.
Austria's initial report (CRC/C/11/Add.14) has been submitted and is pending for consideration at the Committee's September 1998 session; the second periodic report is due 4 September 1999.
Reservations and Declarations: Articles 13, 15, 17 and 38.

THEMATIC REPORTS

Mechanisms of the Commission on Human Rights

Racial discrimination, Special Rapporteur on:
(E/CN.4/1997/71, paras. 55-77)

The Special Rapporteur (SR) on racism and racial discrimination notes reports concerning: a predawn arson attack on a Turkish-owned building that was being converted into a mosque, and information indicating the attack was racially motivated; the death of four people by a pipe-bomb concealed in a placard which read, "Gypsies go back to India" (allegedly the responsibility of the neo-Nazi Bavarian Liberation Army); and, a bomb, disguised as an aerosol can, which exploded in Stinatz-an area populated mainly by Austrians of Croatian descent-and a pamphlet at a bus stop in the town which read "Go back to Dalmatia".

The government replied that investigations into the first case had shown criminal liability for arson but failed to identify those responsible. With regard to the attacks on the Roma, the government stated that there was every reason to believe that the incident in which four people were killed was racially motivated. The investigation linked the attack to a series of letter bombs sent in December 1993. The government noted that the Romanies status as a national minority in Austria was officially recognized in 1993. Further, the Austrian police had set up a group of experts in the anti-terrorist service of the Federal Ministry of the Interior, which is chiefly concerned with investigating all the bombings that have occurred since 1993. Extra staff were assigned to other units of the Federal Ministry of the Interior and were taking part in the investigations. The government stated that, despite the wealth of information provided by the general public, it had proven difficult to identify the person or persons responsible for the attacks because they were apparently not previously known for their extremist activities. The name of the "Bavarian Liberation Army", which is linked to all the letter-bomb attacks, has so far not led to any specific person or group of persons. The Federal Ministry of the Interior has offered a \$10 million reward (approximately US \$1 million) for information leading to the arrest of the persons responsible for the Oberwart and Stinatz bombings and the other letter-bomb attacks. The city of Vienna has offered a \$200,000 reward (approximately US\$ 20,000) for any information that helps to identify the perpetrators of the letter-bomb attacks.

Religious intolerance, Special Rapporteur on: (A/52/477, paras. 21, 25, 33, 37)

The Special Rapporteur's interim report to the General Assembly notes that with regard to conscientious objection there is a legal time limit within which conscientious objectors must declare their refusal to undertake military service or apply to do non-military national service. The report further states that the duration of alternative service is such as to make it appear a form of punishment.

Torture, Special Rapporteur on: (E/CN.4/1997/7, Section III; E/CN.4/1997/7/Add.1, paras. 5-8)

The Special Rapporteur (SR) notes that two cases were transmitted to the government. The first involved a journalist who, seeing two plainclothes police officers detaining an African asylum-seeker, asked the officers for their service numbers and whether they had a warrant for the arrest. Reportedly, the journalist, who had written extensively on rightist extremism in Austria, was subsequently approached by ten uniformed officers. Identified by one of the officers, the journalist was then assaulted, beaten unconscious and placed under arrest. The government replied that an