

**Mass exoduses, Report of the HCHR to the CHR:**  
(E/CN.4/1997/42, Section III.A)

The report of the High Commissioner for Human Rights includes summaries of responses from governments and notes the value Russia attached to the CIS Conference to address problems of refugees, displaced persons, other forms of involuntary displacement and returnees in the countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States and relevant neighbouring States (Geneva, 30 and 31 May 1996). Russia referred to the Programme of Action that has been adopted to address modern forms of involuntary and enforced migration, including forcibly displaced persons, and pointed out that the Programme laid a solid foundation for more active cooperation among the states and humanitarian organizations in protecting and assisting refugees and forcibly displaced persons and in mobilizing the efforts of the international community to tackle the problems associated with forced population displacements in the post-Soviet region. Note was made of the consensus that had been achieved on the judicial, institutional and material dimensions of the migration situation in the region, where action to deal with the consequences of the massive exodus in the 1990s went hand-in-hand with effective preventive measures. Russia also noted adoption of clarifications to the federal migration programme and the outline of the state's nationality policy, as well as the approval of a series of basic documents on social questions, such as the federal employment promotion programme for 1996/97, the Fundamentals of States' Family Policy and the outline of action to improve the status of women in the Russian Federation.

**Restitution, compensation, rehabilitation:** (E/CN.4/1997/29, para. 4)

The report of the Secretary-General referred to the texts of various laws, provided by the government, related to rehabilitation of victims of political repression and the June 1996 Order of the President on the peasant uprisings of 1918–1922.

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## SLOVAKIA

**Date of admission to UN:** 19 January 1993.

### TREATIES AND REPORTS TO TREATY BODIES

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

**Economic, Social and Cultural Rights**

Succeeded: 28 May 1993.

Slovakia's initial report was due 30 June 1995.

*Reservations and Declarations:* Article 26.

**Civil and Political Rights**

Succeeded: 28 May 1993.

Slovakia's second periodic report is due 31 December 1998.

*Reservations and Declarations:* Article 48

**Optional Protocol:** Succeeded: 28 May 1993.

Slovakia's initial report (CCPR/C/81/Add.9) was considered by the Human Rights Committee at its July/August 1997 session. The report prepared by the government

provides extensive information on constitutional and legal provisions related to the rights set out in the Covenant and notes the adoption of the Charter of Fundamental Rights and Freedoms. The report covers a number of areas, including but not limited to: equality rights for women; abolition of the death penalty; the Code of Criminal Procedure and the Penal Code; citizenship and aliens; due process and the rights of the accused; the right to privacy and protection from unlawful interference; conscience, religion and belief; freedom of expression, access to information, television and radio broadcasting; the rights to assembly and association and trade unions; the Family Act; and the rights of national minorities, including language rights.

In its concluding observations and comments (CCPR/C/60/SLO/3) the Committee expressed regret that the report did not provide specific information on the implementation of the Covenant in practice while containing comprehensive information on prevailing constitutional and legislative norms. Among the factors and difficulties affecting implementation of the ICCPR, reference is made to the fact that Slovakia is still in a period of transition from an authoritarian to a democratic system and that it recently acquired its independence after the dissolution of Czech and Slovak Federation. Following on this, the Committee commented that remnants of the former totalitarian system have not yet been completely overcome and that further steps remain to be undertaken in consolidating and developing democratic institutions and strengthening the implementation of the Covenant. The Committee also noted persistent political and social attitudes in the country that are adverse to the promotion and full protection of human rights, and the lack of clarity in the delimitation of the competences of the executive, legislative and judicial authorities. The Committee considered that this lack of clarity could endanger the implementation of the rule of law and a consistent human rights policy.

Among the factors viewed positively by the Committee were: the preferential status given to international treaties, including the ICCPR, over domestic laws; the inclusion of an extensive and elaborate catalogue of fundamental rights, including minority rights, in the Constitution; the enactment of the Charter of Fundamental Rights and Freedoms; and, the application by the Constitutional Court of provisions of the Covenant, including reference to the Committee's General Comments. The Committee also welcomed Slovakia's succession to the Optional Protocol. The establishment of institutions to deal with human rights issues, such as the Commission for Minorities, the Coordinating Commission on the Status of Women, and the Special Representative for persons in need of particular assistance was noted by the Committee and it welcomed adoption of measures aimed at redressing past injustices. Among them were provisions related to reclamation by former owners or their descendants of properties confiscated by the former Communist regime, and mitigation of certain property injustices done to churches and religious societies (between 1945 and 1990) and to synagogues and Jewish societies (between 1939 and 1990). The Committee commended the abolition of the death penalty in 1990 and welcomed: the establishment of special units within the Slovak police to deal with crimes against women and children; the enactment of new laws to deal with violence against women and the sexual exploitation of children; and, the