

wage disparities between women and men and the segregation of women in low-paying and low skilled work, noting that this has been one of the results of privatization and economic rationalization.

Concern was also raised over: the increase in over-protective measures for pregnancy and motherhood, as well as early retirement policies for women; the high rate of induced abortions, bearing in mind the wide availability of contraceptives; the lack of information and training of health professionals with regard to contraceptives; and the lack of information related to the very high divorce rate, its causes, and the legal status of protection, if any, accorded to women in *de facto* unions.

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

- ♦ incorporate into the Constitution and other relevant laws a definition of discrimination modelled on article 1 of the Convention;
- ♦ give impetus to the establishment of an adequately resourced national machinery with a clear mandate to implement, coordinate and monitor the provisions of the Convention; review legislation and policies in the area of discrimination against women;
- ♦ review its perspective on special temporary measures in the area of women's political and economic participation in leadership positions; institute numerical goals and targets, as well as a plan of action with timetables to increase women's participation in these areas;
- ♦ enact a special law and introduce policies to combat all forms of violence against women, together with promotion of education and media programmes sensitizing the public on this issue; introduce training for the judiciary, law enforcement officers, lawyers, health professionals and others whose work is relevant in the context of violence against women; initiate comprehensive research to assess the extent and nature of violence against women in the country;
- ♦ undertake a comprehensive study and analysis of the effects of the economic and socio-political transition of the country on women; ensure that such a study is carried out from a gender perspective to determine the differential impact of the transition on women and men and to determine the differential policies that are required;
- ♦ formulate and implement effective policies to combat prostitution and trafficking of women, including not only services to victims and sanctions for perpetrators, but the design and implementation of comprehensive national social and economic policies to create new opportunities for women; take effective action to combat feminization of poverty and to improve the economic situation of women in order to prevent trafficking and prostitution;

- ♦ launch specific training programmes to educate health professionals, as well as mass campaigns to inform the public on the use of contraceptives and misuse of induced abortions as a means of family planning; and
- ♦ promote the image of women as individuals and independent actors in the public sphere.

THEMATIC REPORTS

Mechanisms of the Commission on Human Rights

Religious intolerance, Special Rapporteur on:
(E/CN.4/1998/6, paras. 48, 61, 69)

In commentary on conscientious objection, the report states that in the Czech Republic there is apparently a legal time limit within which conscientious objectors must declare their refusal to perform military service, or apply to perform alternative service.



ESTONIA

Date of admission to UN: 17 September 1991.

TREATIES: RATIFICATIONS AND RESERVATIONS

Land and People: Estonia has submitted a core document (HRI/CORE/1/Add.50) for use by the treaty bodies. The report provides demographic and statistical data, information on the government, the separation and balance of powers, and the judicial system.

The universally recognized principles and norms of international law are an inseparable part of the Estonian legal system. If cases where domestic law or other acts contradict the provisions of treaties ratified by the Parliament — including international human rights treaties — the provisions of the international treaty are applied. Every person has the right to bring a case before the courts if any rights or liberties have been violated. On 10 December 1992, the Estonian Institute for Human Rights was established as a public body to monitor the protection of human rights.

Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

Acceded: 21 October 1991.

Estonia's initial report was due 30 June 1994.

Civil and Political Rights

Acceded: 21 October 1991.

Estonia's second periodic report was due 20 January 1998.

Optional Protocol: Acceded: 21 October 1991.