



## Economic and Social Council

Distr.  
GENERAL

E/1982/WG.1/SR.16  
22 April 1982

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

First regular session, 1982

SESSIONAL WORKING GROUP OF GOVERNMENTAL EXPERTS ON THE IMPLEMENTATION  
OF THE INTERNATIONAL COVENANT ON ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL RIGHTS

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 16th MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,  
on Friday, 16 April 1982, at 3 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. BURWIN (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya)

later: Mr. AKAO (Japan)

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Consideration of reports submitted in accordance with Council resolution 1988 (LX)  
by States Parties to the Covenant, concerning rights covered by articles 13 to 15  
(continued)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.20 p.m.

CONSIDERATION OF REPORTS SUBMITTED IN ACCORDANCE WITH COUNCIL RESOLUTION 1988 (LX)  
BY STATES PARTIES TO THE COVENANT, CONCERNING RIGHTS COVERED BY ARTICLES 13 TO 15  
(continued)

Report of Mongolia (continued) (E/1982/Add.11)

1. Mr. BERGTHUN (Norway) said that he would have appreciated more statistical information in support of the comments in the Mongolian report. In paragraph 1, for example, statistics showing school attendance by age group would have been useful. In paragraph 13, it would have been interesting to be able to correlate the statistics given in the table with the various population groups. In paragraph 20, it would have been useful to have figures showing what percentage of the population was engaged in non-manual work and what percentage in intellectual activities. In paragraph 59, the percentage of increase in the number of scientific institutions should have been accompanied by a figure showing their total number. That could be done in future.

2. Turning to other areas of the report, he said he would like more detailed information on education in foreign languages, especially for national minorities, on the proportion of resources expended on education in Russian and on religious instruction, a subject which was not mentioned in the report.

3. Referring to the last section of the report, he said that it was clear from paragraphs 66, 72 and 73 that international contacts in the scientific and cultural fields were limited to other socialist countries. He asked whether there were any plans to broaden those contacts to non-socialist countries.

Report of Norway (E/1982/3/Add.12)

4. Mr. SVARTDAL (Norway), in his introductory remarks, said that formal schooling in Norway started at the relatively late age of 7 and that there had been some resistance to efforts to lower it to the age of 6 on the grounds that small children should not be sent away from home at so young an age, especially if they had to travel by bus. In more densely populated areas and in the towns, that had led to the establishment of day nurseries and pre-school groups. In the country as a whole, approximately 25 per cent of the 3 to 6 age group attended such institutions. They were a municipal responsibility and a service for which most parents had to pay.

5. The 9-year comprehensive compulsory school, which began at the age of 7, was a municipal responsibility but the State paid approximately 55 per cent of teachers' salaries. Teacher training was also a State responsibility. The Ministry of Church and Education set the curriculum and approved the textbooks. That arrangement made it possible to create equal opportunities for all and to ensure that pupils learned about human rights and about international organizations, as well as to safeguard against any forms of discrimination.

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6. Because the population was widely scattered, the Norwegian school was usually quite small. Few schools had more than 500 children and often they had less than 50. The school laws stipulated that every child had the right to an education in accordance with his or her abilities. In recent years, high priority had been given to handicapped and mentally retarded children. Approximately 27 per cent of total expenditure was allocated to 12 per cent of the children, namely, those who needed special help. Less than 1 per cent of the total school population lived in special institutions.

7. The 9 year compulsory school was followed by the three year voluntary upper secondary or high school which was in principle open to anyone who had completed the compulsory school, and was free of charge. Approximately 85 per cent of 16 year olds went on to high school for at least 1 year, 60 per cent for 2 years and 40 per cent for 3 years. Youngsters then made choices on the basis of guidance provided by school counsellors. Approximately 35 per cent chose general subjects in a three year course leading to higher studies; approximately 25 per cent chose commercial studies for one, two or three years; and another 25 per cent took up industrial or technical subjects leading to the status of skilled labourer. The rest studied farming, forestry, fishing, social welfare and household affairs.

8. The secondary school was a county responsibility, but the State paid more than 50 per cent of teachers' salaries, set the curriculum, approved the textbooks and arranged county-wide examinations and evaluations.

9. Both the compulsory schools and the secondary schools were administered by locally elected school boards which saw to it that local interests were well served. Each school had elected groups of teachers, parents and students which met at regular intervals with the school committee to discuss and decide matters of common interest.

10. Secondary school students who had to stay away from home during the school year received a State grant.

11. Access to higher education was free to anyone with a three year secondary education which had included certain subjects, such as Norwegian, two foreign languages, mathematics and social and natural sciences.

12. Norway had four universities and a number of teacher-training colleges and technical and business high schools. A recent development was the regional college. There was one in nearly every county, and it offered one- or two-year courses in subjects deemed necessary by the regional board. The aim was to supply the labour market. All higher education was a State responsibility. Students could receive scholarships and loans to meet living costs and instruction and tuition were free.

13. Adult education, which had a long tradition in Norway, was supported by the State, the municipality and the county and therefore cost very little. Its aim was to bridge the gap in knowledge between the older and younger generations and to

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promote the adult population's interest in foreign languages, the arts, science and modern technology.

14. There were comparatively few private schools in Norway - about 150 as opposed to 5,000 non-private schools. The main reason why there was no great need for private schools to promote special religious, moral or political interests was that the school laws stated that one of the purposes of the school system was to advance human equality, freedom of thought, tolerance, understanding of the environment and international responsibility. There were comparatively few children of immigrants or migrant workers in the schools - fewer than 5,000 out of 750,000 Norwegian pupils and students. They received special introductory courses and were later integrated into normal Norwegian classes. Efforts were made to teach those children their native language and culture to the extent that qualified teachers were available.

15. The Ministry of Church and Education maintained close contacts with both teacher and student organizations and when the Government appointed advisory councils for the primary and secondary schools, teacher and student organizations were invited to nominate members; those members were usually in the majority. The councils advised the Ministry on all school affairs. They helped establish and revise the curriculum, review textbooks and arrange nation-wide examinations and evaluations. The Ministry consulted those organizations and local school boards before instituting any major reforms.

16. To promote popular participation in cultural activities, there were performances by a State travelling theatre, exhibitions by a State travelling art gallery and State travelling concerts throughout the year in every locality that had a local stage, concert hall or art gallery. In order to enable the population to develop its own cultural interests, financial aid was given to various private organizations and they contributed significantly to the cultural life the country. The State also transferred funds to local and regional cultural boards, which helped set up amateur theatre groups, amateur orchestras, folk dance groups, and the like. Those groups were immensely popular and helped people in all walks of life develop and enjoy common cultural interests and hobbies.

17. Mr. MRACHKOV (Bulgaria) said that the report of Norway had been drafted in a special way and was not like the other reports. Half of it seemed to be inconsistent with the guidelines for reports prescribed by the Economic and Social Council. As for its substance, it laid much stress on legal aspects, but he would have preferred more practical information concerning the application of laws.

18. Paragraph 8 of the report stated that demands for native language education for minority groups were not entirely met in all local areas and that obstacles were to some extent of an economic nature but mainly related to lack of qualified personnel. He would like more information on that subject as well as on the time frame for the various levels of education.

(Mr. Mrachkov, Bulgaria)

19. Paragraph 10 of the report stated that problems encountered and difficulties affecting the degree of realization of obligations with respect to upper secondary comprehensive education were economic and political. He wondered exactly what those obstacles were and how they could be overcome.

20. Paragraph 12 of the report stated that no educational fee was levied on students in State institutions of higher education, although a compulsory fee was paid to student welfare associations for social welfare purposes. He wanted more information on the rates paid and the social risks against which students were insured.

21. Mr. AKAO (Japan) drew attention to the law of 9 June 1978 on equality between the sexes mentioned on page 2 of the report and wondered whether that was the first time that such equality had been established, whether women were in any way disadvantaged vis-à-vis men, and how the status of women had changed.

22. Paragraph 44 of the report referred to a State-run betting pool with 50 per cent of the proceeds going to the National Scientific Research Councils. He wanted more information on the type of betting pool and how substantial the funds involved were.

23. Mr. MARDOVICH (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) agreed with the representative of Bulgaria that the report of Norway differed from all the previous reports. He too wanted a clearer idea of how the public education system was actually organized and operated in Norway and how it prepared young people for socially useful work. He wanted to know how much teachers were paid and how teacher training was organized to make the profession more attractive.

24. According to paragraph 6 of the report, all 7 to 16 year-olds received basic school education, although the statistical figures for 1979/80 showed 99.7 per cent, which revealed certain problems of registration. He wondered whether the figure 99.7 per cent might not be accurate because for physical or other reasons there were always some children in the country who could not get such an education.

25. Paragraph 8 of the report referred to obstacles which prevented the demands for native language education for minority groups from being entirely met in all local areas. He wanted more details about those obstacles and what was being done to remove them.

26. He joined the representative of Bulgaria in requesting more detailed information regarding the nature of the economic and political difficulties referred to in paragraph 10 of the report.

27. Paragraph 9 of the report stated that according to statistics for 1979-1980 54.7 per cent of the 16 to 19 year-olds received secondary education and he wondered whether that figure was accurate since paragraph 15 of the report stated that Norway had had universal compulsory fundamental education for more than

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two centuries; it seemed to him that that figure should be much higher. Furthermore, paragraph 11 of the report stated that the governing policy in post-war years had been to provide equal opportunities for higher education, irrespective of social condition, geographical local, sex, age or physical handicap. That also seemed to be inconsistent with the 54.7 per cent figure. He wondered whether higher priority was attached to higher education than to secondary education. Both the figures and the wording seemed contradictory.

28. Mr. Ruiz CABANAS (Mexico) said that he had been struck by the reference in paragraph 5 of the report to children of immigrants and of migrant workers, since he had not been aware that such immigrants or migrant workers were present in Norwegian society to any significant extent. He would be interested to have some indication of their numbers and their countries of origin. In that connexion, he wondered whether they benefited from the student grants and loans which paragraph 13 mentioned as being available to certain categories of non-Norwegians.

29. Paragraph 9 stated that 54.7 per cent of 16 to 19 year olds received secondary education. If the rest, as he assumed, were employed in the productive sector, he wondered whether the compulsory fundamental school education which they had received had been found to be adequate preparation for working life.

30. In order to be able to interpret paragraph 26, which stated that private educational institutions would be approved officially if they aimed at achievements equivalent to those of public institutions, it would be useful to have a clearer idea of the main objectives of the public schools themselves in terms of educational standards and the preparation of the students to take an active part in society. He would also like to know who drew up the curricula and programmes of work at the various levels and whether they were the same in public and private institutions.

31. Mr. BOUFFANDEAU (France) asked for clarification on three points: the "problems of registration" mentioned in paragraph 6 in connexion with basic school education; the nature of the economic and political difficulties affecting development plans for upper secondary comprehensive education (paragraph 10); and the "other credits" mentioned in paragraph 14 as strengthening an applicant's chances of admission to college or university.

32. Mr. BORCHARD (Federal Republic of Germany) requested more information concerning the education of handicapped children, particularly, how educational institutions, especially at the elementary level, dealt with cases of children who were not physically handicapped but nevertheless had difficulties in following normal courses; were there special schools for such children? Further, what provision existed, in terms of special advice or assistance, to ensure that they became fully integrated into productive life and society in general?

33. Mr. ALLAFI (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya), referring to paragraph 13, asked what was meant by non-Norwegian's who had special ties to the country in connexion with educational grants and loans. Paragraph 36 also called for further explanation.

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34. It would be interesting to have more information as to the degree and nature of any international co-operation in which Norway was involved, especially with developing countries, in the areas of the education of the handicapped and exchanges of students and researchers.

35. Mr. VEITIA (Venezuela) commended the very practical and clear structure of the report. He requested an explanation on two points: the compulsory fee paid to student welfare associations, referred to in paragraph 12, and the benefits which it was used to provide; and the thinking underlying paragraph 47 in the section on international co-operation.

Report of Mongolia (continued) (E/1982/3/Add.11)

36. Mr. ENKHSAIKHAN (Mongolia), replying to a question asked by the representative of the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, emphasized that the problem of educating children in remote localities was a massive one, owing to the country's huge expanse of territory and very low population density, especially in the southern and eastern agricultural regions. Under the last five-year plan, completed in 1980, 75 per cent of children attending school were accommodated in boarding schools. Those schools were very important in the educational system and many new ones had been built in the last few years. They were instrumental in inculcating a high level of morality and communist spirit and they organized a variety of cultural activities for the pupils, such as film shows, clubs and theatrical productions. As the report pointed out, during the period 1981-1985, at least 70 per cent of the children of agricultural families, and up to 90 per cent of such children in the eastern and southern regions would be accommodated in boarding facilities.

37. The supply of young qualified personnel to the various sectors of the economy was given particular emphasis: a large number of programmes existed to provide work experience and in the last eight years 57,000 such specialists had been trained in 40 vocational training institutions where food and clothing were provided free of charge.

38. The Byelorussian representative had also asked about the people's access to world culture, through such means as literature in translation. A major policy objective in Mongolia was to enhance the country's cultural development by enabling the population to share in the achievements of world culture, which were the common heritage of mankind. Recently an additional 300 classics of world literature had been made accessible. The theatre was constantly being enriched, with many outstanding world classics being produced in Mongolian houses. The role of the State orchestras was especially significant in acquainting the population with music from all over the world. The process of introducing the people to great cultural works had begun in the 1970s with the first translations of classic works of Russian literature and had expanded ever since, ensuring that it had fruitful contacts with the best of world culture.

39. The representative of Japan had asked about the enrolment rate in the various age-groups at different types of schools. Since secondary education was compulsory

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up to the eighth year, the enrolment rate up to age 14 or 15 was approximately 100 per cent. At that age, pupils were able to choose either to continue their general secondary education for another two years or to transfer to a vocational or specialized secondary school. The Government was actively encouraging all youngsters to continue their studies to completion of the tenth year of general education, and about 50 per cent now did so.

40. Since the curriculum in the secondary general education schools was the same throughout the country, children were able to move from one location to another within that system if necessary. However, the specialized or vocational schools presented different problems; if a student wished to move to another institution, he or she had to pass the examinations or otherwise satisfy the requirements of the new school.

41. The social composition of students in institutions of higher learning roughly reflected the social composition of the population; as paragraph 20 of the report indicated, approximately 75 per cent were the children of workers, herdsmen and stock-raisers, while the remaining 25 per cent were the children of non-manual workers and intellectuals. There were no differences in the legal status between children of different groups, nor were special privileges given to any group. The only distinction was that in the country areas most of the children were accommodated, for reasons of geographical distribution, in hostels and boarding houses, while their urban counterparts generally lived with their parents. The grants which they received were the same, from 200 to 400 tughrík, depending on the level of the student's performance. The grant represented approximately one third of a worker's average wages.

42. The representative of Bulgaria had requested information about the length of the period of primary education. That period was four years; it was followed by the 8-year school or the 10-year school. The representative of Bulgaria had also asked for the names of the six institutions of higher education mentioned in paragraph 19 of the report. They were the State University, the Pedagogical Institute, the Agricultural Institute, the Polytechnic Institute, the Medical Institute and the Economic Institute.

43. Replying to the representative of France, he said that statistics dated 1980 showed that there were 23,200 students in Mongolia, including both males and females. Of the total, 56 per cent were women; the preponderance of women was due, in part, to the fact that the period of military service for men covered ages 18 to 20. There were 18,700 students in specialized secondary institutions but no statistics were available as to the breakdown by sex. Both at the higher and secondary levels, the proportion varied from one institution to another; for example, there were more women in the Pedagogical and Medical Institutes and a predominance of men in others. Paragraph 2 of the report had drawn attention to the principle of compulsory education for all children and adolescents. The attendance picture at the primary and secondary levels therefore reflected the demographic breakdown of the population sectors between ages 7 and 16.



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44. The representative of France had also inquired whether the figure of 62 persons with higher education per 10,000 workers could be regarded as adequate. Admittedly, the percentage was not high enough; according to the country's need for development and for technical and scientific progress, it was essential to increase the number of persons with higher education. The system of higher education took into account not only the country's economic and cultural needs but also the interests and aptitudes of the rising generation; the formation of specialists with higher education was carried out in accordance with the long-term plans.

45. With reference to the question from the representative of the Soviet Union regarding attendance at theatres and, in particular, cinemas, the statistical table contained in paragraph 46 of the report indicated very clearly the preponderant role of the cinema and the substantial increase in cinema attendance which had taken place between 1950 and 1981. The cinema was considerably more popular than other forms of entertainment such as the theatre. Between 1950 and 1981 total attendance at theatres, cinemas and other forms of entertainment had risen from 1 million to 22.7 millions and cinema attendance had increased from 0.8 millions to 15.3 millions.

46. In reply to the question from the representative of Norway regarding foreign languages, he pointed out that there were a number of Russian and Chinese schools in the country where the programme was identical to that of all other schools but instruction was in Russian or Chinese. In the Kazakh province of Bayan-Ölgiy, instruction in many schools was in the Kazakh language. In 1940 Mongolia had adopted the Cyrillic alphabet to enable its population to enjoy the benefits of world culture as well as of scientific and technical discoveries through the Russian language, which was the most popular foreign language in Mongolia.

47. In reply to the question raised by the representative of Norway regarding religious schools, he said that religion was regarded as a personal matter in Mongolia. The right to freedom of worship was reflected in article 86 of the Constitution's infringement of the rights and freedoms of religious believers was punishable by law. As an example of religious freedom, a Buddhist monastic seminary had been established in Mongolia and students between 18 and 35 years of age were enrolled without impediment. They studied Buddhist philosophy, logic and the theory of translation; and took instruction in languages, mainly the Tibetan language, which was studied for two and a half years, and in the history of world religions and of Buddhism in Mongolia, India and Tibet, as well as the early history and present Constitution of Mongolia. The monks participated in temple services; when they graduated they became lamas and were permitted to participate in the political activities of the country. A further question had been raised regarding the foreign languages which were taught in Mongolia. They were Russian, French and German.

48. The CHAIRMAN said that, as no other delegation wished to speak, he took it that the Working Group had concluded its consideration of the report of Mongolia concerning rights covered by articles 13 to 15.

49. Mr. ENKHS AIKHAN (Mongolia) withdrew.

50. The meeting was suspended at 4.55 p.m. and resumed at 5.10 p.m.

51. Mr. AKAO (Japan) took the Chair.

Report of Norway (continued) (E/1982/3/Add.11)

52. Mr. SVARTDAL (Norway) said in response to the questions from the representative of Bulgaria that as there were about 4,000 minority group pupils of primary school age speaking 40 different languages, it would be very difficult to provide them all with teachers with a sufficient command of their native language and of the subject to be taught. There were about 500 minority group pupils in secondary education.

53. The educational time-table consisted of six years of primary school and three years of lower secondary school, which were compulsory. They were followed by three years of upper secondary school and three to six years of higher education.

54. In response to the question about paragraph 10, he said that lower secondary school pupils were aged 13 to 16 and schooling was compulsory. Upper secondary school pupils ranged from 16 to 19 years of age. Less than 10 per cent of the applicants for upper secondary education were refused admission. In addition to the regional schools there were the private folk high schools as well as the apprenticeship system.

55. The compulsory fee referred to in paragraph 12 of the report was less than \$100 a year and provided students with many benefits, such as cheaper meals and half-price tickets for travel, theatres and so on.

56. Replying to the representative of Japan with reference to paragraph 2 of the report, he said that the law in question simply codified existing laws on equality between the sexes and had been enacted in response to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. The State-run betting pool referred to in paragraph 44 was a pool on the results of soccer matches; 50 per cent of the proceeds went for sports development and 50 per cent to science and research.

57. In response to the question from the representative of Byelorussia about paragraph 6 and the figure for basic school registration, he said that the correct figure would have been 100 per cent. A few pupils were allowed to end their comprehensive education after the eighth year with the approval of their school counsellors. With regard to education for the handicapped, he said that, on the whole, handicapped pupils were integrated into the regular schools where they followed the ordinary programme or received education specially adapted to their abilities. Less than 1 per cent received special education in specialized institutions. Integration was emphasized and handicapped students were trained to function with others of the same age.

58. With regard to the statistic in paragraph 9 that 54.7 per cent of 16 to 19 year olds received secondary education, he said that 85 per cent of 16 year olds

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went on to the first year of upper secondary school, 60 per cent of those completed the second year and 40 per cent went on to complete the third year. Thus, 54.7 per cent of the whole group completed the entire upper secondary course. About half of those went on to higher education.

59. In reply to the Mexican representative's question about paragraph 5, he said that, traditionally, immigrants to Norway had been from the Mediterranean countries. In the last two decades, however, most had come from Asia, in particular, Pakistan. The number of immigrants had been substantially reduced since 1972. The children of immigrant workers received loans on the same terms as Norwegian students. The phrase "non-Norwegians who have special ties to the country" referred to those whose parents were working in Norway and were therefore Norwegian taxpayers.

60. The programme of study in private schools was determined by the schools themselves. If it was approved by the Ministry of Education, they could receive financial help up to 80 per cent of their costs. In all officially approved schools, much stress was placed on teaching pupils to think for themselves.

61. The representative of France had asked, in connexion with paragraph 14, what qualifications other than a good school record might be required for entrance to higher education. In the case of medical school, for example, an applicant would need practical experience in addition to theoretical education.

62. In reply to the question from the representative of the Federal Republic of Germany about the education of the mentally retarded and children with learning disabilities, he said that the practice was to try to integrate them into the regular school programme, giving them extra help where necessary, including individual help from special teachers trained for the purpose. There were a few special schools, but efforts were being made to place nearly all the mentally handicapped in ordinary schools.

63. The meeting was suspended at 5.25 p.m. and resumed at 5.35 p.m.

64. Mr. SVARTDAL (Norway) said, in reply to the Libyan representative, that the reference in paragraph 36 to measures to prevent scientific and technical progress for purposes contrary to the enjoyment of human rights meant anti-pollution measures and measures for environmental protection.

65. In reply to the question about co-operation with the developing countries, he said that Norway had a number of students from developing countries in its higher educational system.

66. In conclusion, in reply to the Venezuelan representative's question about paragraph 47 of the report, he said that the main difficulties in the way of international co-operation derived from the fact that Norway was a small country with a small population.

67. The CHAIRMAN said that as there were no further speakers, he would take it that the Sessional Working Group had concluded its consideration of the report of Norway concerning rights covered by articles 13 to 15.

The meeting rose at 5.40 p.m.