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ELIMINATION OF ALL FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN

Report of the Secretary-General

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## I. INTRODUCTION

1. The General Assembly, by its resolution 34/180 of 18 December 1979, adopted the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and expressed the hope that the Convention would come into force at an early date. In its subsequent resolutions 35/140, 36/131, 37/64, 38/109, 39/130, 40/39, 41/108, 42/60, 43/100 and 44/73, the Assembly urged States that had not yet ratified or acceded to the Convention to do so as soon as possible and requested the Secretary-General to report on the progress in this area, which has been done annually (A/35/428, A/36/295 and Add.1, A/37/349 and Add.1, A/38/378, A/39/486, A/40/623, A/41/608 and Add.1, A/42/627, A/43/605 and A/44/457).
2. In its resolution 44/73 of 8 December 1989, the General Assembly emphasized the importance of the strictest compliance by States parties with their obligations under the Convention and urged them to make all possible efforts to submit their initial as well as second and subsequent reports. The Assembly, the Commission on the Status of Women and the Economic and Social Council recognized the special relevance of these reports to the Commission's review and appraisal of the implementation of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women. 1/
3. The Assembly, having considered the report of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women on its eighth session, 2/ endorsed the Committee's general recommendation No. 10 on activities to commemorate the tenth anniversary of the adoption of the Convention, including the request that its report on the achievements of and obstacles encountered by States parties in implementing the Convention be regularly updated. The Assembly requested that sufficient resources be provided for that purpose and, further, requested the Secretary-General to facilitate and encourage, within existing resources, the dissemination of public information relating to the Convention and the Committee.
4. By the same resolution, the Assembly supported the view of the Committee that the Secretary-General should accord higher priority to strengthening support for the Committee. The Assembly noted the Secretary-General's proposals for full funding of the Committee and requested that the programme budget for 1990-1991 provide for attendance at all meetings of the Committee by appropriate professional and secretarial staff as well as for necessary facilities for the effective functioning of the Committee.
5. The Commission on the Status of Women, by its resolution 34/6 and the Economic and Social Council, by its resolution 1990/17, shared the view of the Assembly on strengthening technical and substantive support for the Committee. The Commission further supported the request of the Committee for additional secretariat resources in order to provide for the analysis of texts of intergovernmental bodies and committees of experts to assist the Committee.
6. The Assembly encouraged the Committee to rationalize its procedures, to expedite the consideration of periodic reports and to develop procedures and

guidelines for the consideration of second reports. It also endorsed the proposal made by the Committee to convene a working group to meet for three to five days prior to the ninth session of the Committee to prepare issues and questions relating to the second and subsequent periodic reports of the States parties to be considered at the ninth session of the Committee, and invited the Secretary-General to take the necessary action. The Commission on the Status of Women, in its resolution 34/6, urged that this practice be continued, within the regular budget allocations.

7. In paragraph 15 of its resolution 44/73, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit to the Assembly at its forty-fifth session a report on the implementation of the resolution and to transmit the report, and that of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, to the Commission on the Status of Women at its thirty-fifth session for information.

## II. STATUS OF THE CONVENTION ON THE ELIMINATION OF ALL FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN

8. The Convention was opened for signature in New York on 1 March 1980 and, in accordance with its article 27, entered into force on 3 September 1981.

9. As at 1 August 1990, 96 countries had signed the Convention, 82 States had ratified it and 21 States had acceded to it, bringing the total number of ratifications and accessions to 103. Since the last progress report, dated 18 August 1989 (A/44/457), Belize, Bolivia, Chile and Trinidad and Tobago have become parties to the Convention.

10. The complete list of States that have signed and ratified or acceded to the Convention, as well as the dates of their signatures and the dates of receipt of the instruments of ratification or accession, is contained in annex I to the present report. Reservations made upon ratification are contained in annex II and objections to reservations are contained in annex III.

## III. IMPLEMENTATION OF GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION 44/73

11. With regard to paragraphs 6 and 13 of General Assembly resolution 44/73, further activities to those described in the Secretary-General's report (A/44/457) were undertaken to commemorate the tenth anniversary of the adoption of the Convention and to facilitate and encourage the dissemination of public information relating to the Convention and the Committee.

12. The tenth anniversary special information kit produced by the Department of Public Information was distributed widely to non-governmental organizations and the media in 1989. Two sales publications, entitled The Work of CEDAW, were prepared by the Division for the Advancement of Women. The first volume, covering the period 1982-1985, was published in 1989. 3/ The second volume, covering the period 1986-1987, is scheduled to be published in 1990. Provision for the publication of

additional volumes will be made in forthcoming programme budgets. The Division also continued to publish summaries on the sessions and the developments of the work of the Committee in its information document, Women News. All promotional material concerning the Convention and the work of the Committee is distributed to the United Nations Information Centres. In addition to the normal recipients of United Nations documents, Committee documents are also sent directly to a growing list of international organizations, research institutions, libraries and national machineries set up in States to monitor and improve the status of women in their countries.

13. With regard to paragraph 6 of Assembly resolution 44/73 and in accordance with general recommendation No. 10 of the Committee, the Division for the Advancement of Women continued organizing training seminars at the regional and interregional levels to promote the status of women and to further the ratification and implementation of the Convention. The objectives of seminars held in Greece and Guatemala during 1989 and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics in September 1990 responded to the Committee's general recommendations No. 6 on increasing publicity, and No. 10 on setting up national machinery to promote the widest use of the Convention at the national level and to assist Governments in fulfilling their reporting obligations under the Convention. The Commission, by its resolution 34/6 and the Economic and Social Council, by its resolution 1990/17, urged the relevant organs and organizations of the United Nations to support such initiatives.

14. In addition to training seminars, which are currently being scheduled for 1991 in several regions, resources from the regular programme of technical assistance are being used to provide on request advisory services in relation to the Convention to individual Governments. A mission was organized, for example, in June 1990 to assist the Government of Malta in considering ratification of the Convention.

15. Concerning paragraphs 6 and 12 of General Assembly resolution 44/73, full funding is provided in the Secretary-General's programme budget for the biennium 1990-1991 for substantive and technical support to the Committee including the pre-session working group. The Division for the Advancement of Women continues to provide the Committee with relevant background information, including statistics, to facilitate its work, drawing additionally on the policy analyses prepared for the Commission on the Status of Women. The preparation of the requested update of the Committee's report on the achievements of States parties and obstacles encountered by them in implementing the Convention will be included in the draft programme budget for the period 1992-1993.

#### Notes

1/ See Report of the World Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievement of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace, Nairobi, 15-26 July 1985 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.85.IV.10), chap. I, sect. A.

Notes (continued)

2/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 38 (A/41/38), annex.

3/ United Nations publication, Sales No. E.1989.IV.4.

ANNEX I

List of States that have signed, ratified or acceded to the  
Convention as at 1 August 1990

<u>State</u>	<u>Date of signature</u>	<u>Date of receipt of the instrument of ratification or accession</u>
Afghanistan	14 August 1980	
Angola		17 September 1986 a/
Antigua and Barbuda		1 August 1989 a/
Argentina	17 July 1980	15 July 1985 b/
Australia	17 July 1980	28 July 1983 b/
Austria	17 July 1980	31 March 1982 b/
Bangladesh		6 November 1984 a/, b/
Barbados	24 July 1980	16 October 1980
Belgium	17 July 1980	10 July 1985 b/
Belize	7 March 1990	16 May 1990
Benin	11 November 1981	
Bhutan	17 July 1980	31 August 1981
Bolivia	30 May 1980	10 May 1990
Brazil	31 March 1981	1 February 1984 b/
Bulgaria	17 July 1980	8 February 1982 b/
Burkina Faso		14 October 1987 a/
Burundi	17 July 1980	
Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic	17 July 1980	4 February 1981 c/
Cameroon	6 June 1983	
Canada	17 July 1980	10 December 1981 b/
Cape Verde		5 December 1980 a/
Chile	17 July 1980 b/	7 December 1989
China	17 July 1980	4 November 1980 b/
Colombia	17 July 1980	19 January 1982
Congo	29 July 1980	26 July 1982
Costa Rica	17 July 1980	4 April 1986
Côte d'Ivoire	17 July 1980	
Cuba	6 March 1980	17 July 1980 b/
Cyprus		23 July 1985 a/, b/
Czechoslovakia	17 July 1980	16 February 1982 b/
Democratic Kampuchea		17 October 1980
Democratic Yemen		30 May 1984 a/, b/
Denmark	17 July 1980	21 April 1983
Dominica	15 September 1980	15 September 1980
Dominican Republic	17 July 1980	2 September 1982
Ecuador	17 July 1980	9 November 1981
Egypt	16 July 1980	18 September 1981 b/
El Salvador	14 November 1980	19 August 1981 b/
Equatorial Guinea		23 October 1984 a/

<u>State</u>	<u>Date of signature</u>	<u>Date of receipt of the instrument of ratification or accession</u>
Ethiopia	8 July 1980	10 September 1981 <u>b/</u>
Finland	17 July 1980	4 September 1986
France	17 July 1980	14 December 1983 <u>b/</u> , <u>c/</u>
Gabon	17 July 1980	21 January 1983
Gambia	29 July 1980	
German Democratic Republic	25 June 1980	9 July 1980 <u>b/</u>
Germany, Federal Republic of	17 July 1980	10 July 1985 <u>b/</u>
Ghana	17 July 1980	2 January 1986
Greece	2 March 1982	7 June 1983
Grenada	17 July 1980	
Guatemala	8 June 1981	12 August 1982
Guinea	17 July 1980	9 August 1982
Guinea-Bissau	17 July 1980	23 August 1985
Guyana	17 July 1980	17 July 1980
Haiti	17 July 1980	20 July 1981
Honduras	11 June 1980	3 March 1983
Hungary	6 June 1980	22 December 1980 <u>b/</u>
Iceland	24 July 1980	18 June 1985
India	30 July 1980 <u>b/</u>	
Indonesia	29 July 1980	13 September 1984 <u>b/</u>
Iraq		13 August 1986 <u>a/</u> , <u>b/</u>
Ireland		23 December 1985 <u>a/</u> , <u>b/</u>
Israel	17 July 1980	
Italy	17 July 1980 <u>b/</u>	10 June 1985
Jamaica	17 July 1980	19 October 1984 <u>b/</u>
Japan	17 July 1980	25 June 1985
Jordan	3 December 1980 <u>b/</u>	
Kenya		9 March 1984 <u>a/</u>
Lao People's Democratic Republic	17 July 1980	14 August 1981
Lesotho	17 July 1980	
Liberia		17 July 1984 <u>a/</u>
Libyan Arab Jamahiriya		16 May 1989 <u>a/</u> , <u>b/</u>
Luxembourg	17 July 1980	2 February 1989 <u>b/</u>
Madagascar	17 July 1980	17 March 1989
Malawi		12 March 1987 <u>a/</u> , <u>b/</u>
Mali	5 February 1985	10 September 1985
Mauritius		9 July 1984 <u>a/</u> , <u>b/</u>
Mexico	17 July 1980 <u>b/</u>	23 March 1981
Mongolia	17 July 1980 <u>b/</u>	20 July 1981 <u>b/</u>
Netherlands	17 July 1980	
New Zealand	17 July 1980	10 January 1985 <u>b/</u> , <u>c/</u>
Nicaragua	17 July 1980	27 October 1981
Nigeria	23 April 1984	13 June 1985
Norway	17 July 1980	21 May 1981
Panama	26 June 1980	29 October 1981

<u>State</u>	<u>Date of signature</u>	<u>Date of receipt of the instrument of ratification or accession</u>
Paraguay		6 April 1987 a/
Peru	23 July 1981	13 September 1982
Philippines	15 July 1980	5 August 1981
Poland	29 May 1980	30 July 1980 b/
Portugal	24 April 1980	30 July 1980
Republic of Korea	25 May 1983	27 December 1984 b/
Romania	4 September 1980	7 January 1982 b/
Rwanda	1 May 1980	2 March 1981
Saint Kitts and Nevis		25 April 1985 a/
Saint Lucia		8 October 1982 a/
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines		4 August 1981 a/
Senegal	29 July 1980	5 February 1985
Sierra Leone	21 September 1988	11 November 1988
Spain	17 July 1980	5 January 1984 b/
Sri Lanka	17 July 1980	5 October 1981
Sweden	7 March 1980	2 July 1980
Switzerland	23 January 1987	
Thailand		9 August 1985 a/, b/
Togo		26 September 1983 a/
Trinidad and Tobago	27 June 1985 b/	12 January 1990 b/
Tunisia	24 July 1980	20 September 1985 b/
Turkey		20 December 1985
Uganda	30 July 1980	22 July 1985
Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic	17 July 1980	12 March 1981 c/
Union of Soviet Socialist Republics	17 July 1980 b/	23 January 1981 c/
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	22 July 1981 b/	7 April 1986 b/
United Republic of Tanzania	17 July 1980	20 August 1985
United States of America	17 July 1980	
Uruguay	30 March 1981	9 October 1981
Venezuela	17 July 1980	2 May 1983 b/
Viet Nam	29 July 1980	17 February 1982 b/
Yugoslavia	17 July 1980	26 February 1982
Zaire	17 July 1980	17 October 1986
Zambia	17 July 1980	21 June 1985

a/ Accession.

b/ Declarations or reservations.

c/ Reservation subsequently withdrawn.



ANNEX II

Reservations made upon ratification from 1 August 1989 to  
1 August 1990

Reservation made by the Government of Trinidad and Tobago  
upon ratification

[Original: English]

[12 January 1990]

With respect to Article 29 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago does not consider itself bound by the provisions of paragraph 1 of that Article [concerning the settlement of disputes].

/...

ANNEX III

Objections made from 1 August 1989 to 1 August 1990

Objection by Sweden to the reservation made by the Libyan Arab  
Jamahiriya upon accession

[Original: English]

[25 May 1990]

The Government of Sweden has examined the contents of the reservation made by the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, by which the accession "is subject to the general reservation that such accession cannot conflict with the laws on personal status derived from the Islamic Shariah", and has come to the conclusion that it is incompatible with the object and purpose of the Convention (article 28, paragraph 2). The Government of Sweden therefore objects to this reservation.

A State by acceding to the Convention commits itself to adopt the measures required for the elimination of discrimination, in all its forms and manifestations, against women. A reservation by which a State party limits its responsibilities under the Convention by invoking general principles of national law may cast doubts on the commitments of the reserving State to the object and purpose of the Convention and, moreover, contribute to undermining the basis of international treaty law. It is in the common interest of States that treaties to which they have chosen to become parties also are respected, as to object and purpose, by all parties.

This objection does not have the effect of preventing the Convention from entering into force between Sweden and the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya.

Objection by Finland to the reservation made by the Libyan Arab  
Jamahiriya upon accession

[Original: English]

[8 June 1990]

The Government of Finland has examined the contents of the reservation made by the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya and considers the said reservation as being incompatible with the object and purpose of the Convention. The Government of Finland therefore enters its formal objection to this reservation.

This objection is not an obstacle to the entry into force of the said Convention between Finland and the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya.

Objection by the Federal Republic of Germany to the reservation  
made by the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya upon accession

[Original: English]

[20 June 1990]

The Government of the Federal Republic of Germany rejects as incompatible with the object and purpose of the Convention the reservation made by the Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya with regard to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

In relation to the Federal Republic of Germany, the above-mentioned reservation may not be invoked in support of a legal practice which does not pay due regard to the legal status accorded to women and children in the Federal Republic of Germany in conformity with the Convention.

This declaration is not to be interpreted as preventing the entry into force of the Convention between the Federal Republic of Germany and the Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya.

Objection by Denmark to the reservation made by the Libyan Arab  
Jamahiriya upon accession

[Original: English]

[3 July 1990]

The Government of Denmark has taken note of the reservation made by the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya when acceding to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. In the view of the Government of Denmark this reservation is subject to the general principle of treaty interpretation according to which a party may not invoke the provisions of its internal law as justification for failure to perform a treaty.

Objection by Norway to the reservation made by the Libyan Arab  
Jamahiriya upon accession

[Original: English]

[12 July 1990]

The Government of Norway has examined the contents of the reservation made by the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, by which the accession "is subject to the general reservation that such accession cannot conflict with the laws on personal status derived from the Islamic Shariah". The Norwegian Government has come to the conclusion that this reservation is incompatible with the object and purpose of the Convention (article 28, paragraph 2). The Government of Norway objects to the reservation.

The Norwegian Government will stress that, by acceding to the Convention, a State commits itself to adopt the measures required for the elimination of discrimination, in all forms and manifestations, against women. A reservation by which a State party limits its responsibilities under the Convention by invoking religious law (Shariah), which is subject to interpretation, modification, and selective application in different States adhering to Islamic principles, may create doubts about the commitments of the reserving State to the object and purpose of the Convention. It may also undermine the basis of international treaty law. All States have common interest in securing that all parties respect treaties to which they have chosen to become parties.

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