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COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS

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STATUS OF THE INTERNATIONAL COVENANTS ON HUMAN RIGHTS

Report by the Secretary-General

1. At its thirty-fifth session, the Commission on Human Rights had before it a note by the Secretary-General (E/CN.4/1329) on the status of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.
2. By its resolution 6 (XXXV) of 2 March 1979, the Commission reaffirmed the importance of the International Covenants on Human Rights as major parts of international efforts to promote universal respect for and observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms; again invited all States which had not yet done so to become parties to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights as well as to consider acceding to the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights; invited the States parties to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights to consider making the declaration provided for in article 41 of that Covenant; and requested the Secretary-General to submit to the Commission on Human Rights at its thirty-sixth session a report on the status of the International Covenants on Human Rights and on the Optional Protocol and to include in this report information on the work of the Economic and Social Council and its Working Group on the implementation of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. The present note was prepared in response to that request.
3. Since the adoption by the Commission of resolution 6 (XXXV), the two Covenants were ratified or acceded to by El Salvador, the Gambia, Iceland, India, Japan and Morocco. As a result, on 31 December 1979, 63 States had become parties to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and 61 States had become parties to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. The list of States that had signed, ratified or acceded to the Covenants, as well as the dates of their signature, ratification or accession, may be found in annexes I and II. Also indicated in annex II are the 12 States parties which have so far made the declaration under article 41 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, recognizing the competence of the Human Rights Committee to receive and consider communications to the effect that a State party claims that another State party is not fulfilling its obligations under the Covenant. The provisions of article 41 entered into force on 28 March 1979 in accordance with paragraph 2 of that article.

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4. In addition, the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights was acceded to by Iceland. As of 31 December 1979, 22 States parties to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights had also become parties to the Protocol. The list of States that had signed, ratified or acceded to the Protocol, as well as the dates of their signature, ratification or accession, may be found in annex III.
5. As regards the implementation of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Sessional Working Group on the Implementation of that Covenant, established in accordance with Economic and Social Council decision 1978/10 of 3 May 1978, held its first session at United Nations Headquarters from 17 April to 3 May 1979. At the first meeting, Mr. Klaus Törnudd (Finland) was elected Chairman of the Working Group by acclamation.
6. The Working Group decided to devote its first session to organizational matters, especially the formulation of its methods of work as requested in Economic and Social Council decision 1978/10 and made recommendations on the subject in its report (E/1979/64) to the Council at its first regular session, 1979. By its resolution 1979/43 of 11 May 1979 entitled "Implementation of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights", the Council approved the methods of work recommended by its Working Group. Copies of Council resolution 1979/43 which includes the methods of work of the Sessional Working Group will be available to the Commission at its thirty-sixth session.
7. At the first regular session of the Council to be held in 1980, the Sessional Working Group will undertake the examination of reports (E/1978/8 and Add.1 to 27) submitted by States parties under the first stage of the programme established by Council resolution 1988 (LX), concerning rights covered by articles 6 to 9 of the Covenant.
8. The General Assembly in its resolution 34/45 of 23 November 1979 welcomed the information that the Economic and Social Council has now finalized arrangements for the consideration of reports submitted under the provisions of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, and expressed the hope that the Council will take steps to consider these reports as soon as possible.
9. As regards the implementation of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the Human Rights Committee held its sixth session at United Nations Headquarters from 9 to 27 April 1979, its seventh session at the United Nations Office at Geneva from 30 July to 17 August 1979 and its eighth session at the United Nations Office at Geneva from 15 to 26 October 1979. During these three sessions the Committee considered reports submitted by 12 States parties under article 40 of the Covenant, and concluded consideration of 2 communications, by adopting its views on the merits of these cases, under article 5 (4) of the Optional Protocol.
10. The third annual report of the Human Rights Committee 1/ covering the activities of the Committee at its sixth and seventh sessions was adopted at the conclusion of its seventh session on 17 August 1979. The report was submitted through the Economic and Social Council to the General Assembly at its thirty-fourth session. Following the decision of the Human Rights Committee at its fifth session to adopt its annual reports at the end of its summer sessions for appropriate transmission to the General Assembly through the Council in compliance with the requirement of article 45 of the Covenant, the activities of the Committee at its October session will be covered in its next annual report.

1/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 40 (A/34/40).

11. In its resolution 34/45 of 23 November 1979, the General Assembly noted with appreciation the report of the Human Rights Committee on its sixth and seventh sessions and expressed satisfaction at the serious and constructive manner in which the Committee is continuing to undertake its functions, as well as at the co-operation extended to the Committee by the States parties which have submitted their reports under article 40 of the Covenant. The Assembly urged States parties which have not yet done so to submit their reports to the Committee as speedily as possible; requested the Secretary-General to continue to keep the Human Rights Committee informed of the activities of the Commission on Human Rights, the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities and the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination and also to transmit the annual reports of the Human Rights Committee to these bodies; and requested further the Secretary-General, in preparing the report mentioned in decision 23 (XXXV) of the Commission on Human Rights concerning the development of public information activities in the field of human rights, to bear in mind the question of improving the publicity for the work of the Human Rights Committee.

12. The Human Rights Committee is scheduled to hold its ninth session from 17 March to 3 April 1980 at the United Nations Office at Geneva. In its resolution 34/45, the General Assembly noted with due attention the recommendation of the Human Rights Committee regarding the holding of future meetings of the Committee in developing countries and requested the Secretary-General to explore this possibility, taking into account the Committee's recommendation and to submit a report in this regard to the Assembly at its thirty-fifth session.

ANNEX I

List of States which have signed, ratified or acceded
to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and
Cultural Rights

<u>State</u>	<u>Date of signature</u>	<u>Date of receipt of the instrument of ratification or accession</u>
Algeria	10 December 1963	
Argentina	19 February 1968	
Australia	18 December 1972	10 December 1975
Austria	10 December 1973	10 September 1978
Barbados		5 January 1973 <u>a/</u>
Belgium	10 December 1963	
Bulgaria	8 October 1963	21 September 1970
Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic	19 March 1963	12 November 1973
Canada		19 May 1976 <u>a/</u>
Chile	16 September 1969	10 February 1972
Colombia	21 December 1966	29 October 1969
Costa Rica	19 December 1966	29 November 1968
Cyprus	9 January 1967	2 April 1969
Czechoslovakia	7 October 1963	23 December 1975
Denmark	20 March 1963	6 January 1972
Dominican Republic		4 January 1978 <u>a/</u>
Ecuador	29 September 1967	6 March 1969
Egypt	4 August 1967	
El Salvador	21 September 1967	30 November 1979
Finland	11 October 1967	19 August 1975
Gambia		29 December 1978 <u>a/</u>
German Democratic Republic	27 March 1973	8 November 1973
Germany, Federal Republic of	9 October 1963	17 December 1973
Guinea	28 February 1967	24 January 1978
Guyana	22 August 1963	15 February 1977
Honduras	19 December 1966	

a/ Accession.

<u>State</u>	<u>Date of signature</u>	<u>Date of receipt of the instrument of ratification or accession</u>
Hungary	25 March 1969	17 January 1974
Iceland	30 December 1968	22 August 1979
India		10 April 1979 <u>a/</u>
Iran	4 April 1968	24 June 1975
Iraq	18 February 1969	25 January 1971
Ireland	1 October 1973	
Israel	19 December 1966	
Italy	18 January 1967	15 September 1978
Jamaica	19 December 1966	3 October 1975
Japan	30 May 1978	21 June 1979
Jordan	30 June 1972	28 May 1975
Kenya		1 May 1972 <u>a/</u>
Lebanon		3 November 1972 <u>a/</u>
Liberia	18 April 1967	
Libyan Arab Jamahiriya		15 May 1970 <u>a/</u>
Luxembourg	26 November 1974	
Madagascar	14 April 1970	22 September 1971
Mali		16 July 1974 <u>a/</u>
Malta	22 October 1968	
Mauritius		12 December 1973 <u>a/</u>
Mongolia	5 June 1968	18 November 1974
Morocco	19 January 1977	3 May 1979
Netherlands	25 June 1969	11 December 1978
New Zealand	12 November 1968	28 December 1978
Norway	20 March 1968	13 September 1972
Panama	27 July 1976	8 March 1977
Peru	11 August 1977	28 April 1978
Philippines	19 December 1966	7 June 1974
Poland	2 March 1967	18 March 1977
Portugal	7 October 1976	31 July 1978
Romania	27 June 1968	9 December 1974
Rwanda		16 April 1975 <u>a/</u>

<u>State</u>	<u>Date of signature</u>	<u>Date of receipt of the instrument of ratification or accession</u>
Senegal	6 July 1970	13 February 1978
Spain	28 September 1976	27 April 1977
Suriname		28 December 1976 <u>a/</u>
Sweden	29 September 1967	6 December 1971
Syrian Arab Republic		21 April 1969 <u>a/</u>
Trinidad and Tobago		8 December 1978 <u>a/</u>
Tunisia	30 April 1968	18 March 1969
Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic	20 March 1968	12 November 1973
Union of Soviet Socialist Republics	18 March 1968	16 October 1973
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	16 September 1968	20 May 1976
United Republic of Tanzania		11 June 1976 <u>a/</u>
United States of America	5 October 1977	
Uruguay	21 February 1967	1 April 1970
Venezuela	24 June 1969	10 May 1978
Yugoslavia	8 August 1967	2 June 1971
Zaire		1 November 1976 <u>a/</u>

ANNEX II

List of States which have signed, ratified or acceded to the
International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights

<u>State</u>	<u>Date of signature</u>	<u>Date of receipt of the instrument of ratification or accession</u>
Algeria	10 December 1968	
Argentina	19 February 1968	
Australia	18 December 1972	
Austria <u>b/</u>	10 December 1973	10 September 1978
Barbados		5 January 1973 <u>a/</u>
Belgium	10 December 1968	
Bulgaria	8 October 1968	21 September 1970
Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic	19 March 1968	12 November 1973
Canada <u>b/</u>		19 May 1976 <u>a/</u>
Chile	16 September 1969	10 February 1972
Colombia	21 December 1966	29 October 1969
Costa Rica	19 December 1966	29 November 1968
Cyprus	19 December 1966	2 April 1969
Czechoslovakia	7 October 1968	23 December 1975
Denmark <u>b/</u>	20 March 1968	6 January 1972
Dominican Republic		4 January 1978 <u>a/</u>
Ecuador	4 April 1968	6 March 1969
Egypt	4 August 1967	
El Salvador	21 September 1967	30 November 1979
Finland <u>b/</u>	11 October 1967	19 August 1975
Gambia		22 March 1979 <u>a/</u>
German Democratic Republic	27 March 1973	8 November 1973
Germany, Federal Republic of <u>b/</u>	9 October 1968	17 December 1973
Guinea	28 February 1967	24 January 1978
Guyana	22 August 1968	15 February 1977
Honduras	19 December 1966	

a/ Accession.

b/ Made the declaration under article 41 of the Covenant.

<u>State</u>	<u>Date of signature</u>	<u>Date of receipt of the instrument of ratification or accession</u>
Hungary	25 March 1969	17 January 1974
Iceland <u>b/</u>	30 December 1968	22 August 1979
India		10 April 1979 <u>a/</u>
Iran	4 April 1968	24 June 1975
Iraq	18 February 1969	25 January 1971
Ireland	1 October 1973	
Israel	19 December 1966	
Italy <u>b/</u>	18 January 1967	15 September 1978
Jamaica	19 December 1966	3 October 1975
Japan	30 May 1978	21 June 1979
Jordan	30 June 1972	28 May 1975
Kenya		1 May 1972 <u>a/</u>
Lebanon		3 November 1972 <u>a/</u>
Liberia	18 April 1967	
Libyan Arab Jamahiriya		15 May 1970 <u>a/</u>
Luxembourg	26 November 1974	
Madagascar	17 September 1969	21 June 1971
Mali		16 July 1974 <u>a/</u>
Mauritius		12 December 1973 <u>a/</u>
Mongolia	5 June 1968	18 November 1974
Morocco	19 January 1977	3 May 1979
Netherlands <u>b/</u>	25 June 1969	11 December 1978
New Zealand <u>b/</u>	12 November 1968	28 December 1978
Norway <u>b/</u>	20 March 1968	13 September 1972
Panama	27 July 1976	8 March 1977
Peru	11 August 1977	28 April 1978
Philippines	19 December 1966	
Poland	2 March 1967	18 March 1977
Portugal	7 October 1976	15 June 1978
Romania	27 June 1968	9 December 1974
Rwanda		16 April 1975 <u>a/</u>

Date of receipt of
the instrument of
ratification or
accession

<u>State</u>	<u>Date of signature</u>	<u>Date of receipt of the instrument of ratification or accession</u>
Senegal	6 July 1970	13 February 1978
Spain	28 September 1976	27 April 1977
Suriname		28 December 1976 <u>a/</u>
Sweden <u>b/</u>	29 September 1967	6 December 1971
Syrian Arab Republic		21 April 1969 <u>a/</u>
Trinidad and Tobago		21 December 1978 <u>a/</u>
Tunisia	30 April 1968	18 March 1969
Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic	20 March 1968	12 November 1973
Union of Soviet Socialist Republics	18 March 1968	16 October 1973
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland <u>b/</u>	16 September 1968	20 May 1976
United Republic of Tanzania		11 June 1976 <u>a/</u>
United States of America	5 October 1977	
Uruguay	21 February 1967	1 April 1970
Venezuela	24 June 1969	10 May 1978
Yugoslavia	8 August 1967	2 June 1971
Zaire		1 November 1976 <u>a/</u>

ANNEX III

List of States which have signed, ratified or acceded to the
Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and
Political Rights

<u>State</u>	<u>Date of signature</u>	<u>Date of receipt of the instrument of ratification or accession</u>
Austria	10 December 1973	
Barbados		5 January 1973 <u>a/</u>
Canada		19 May 1976 <u>a/</u>
Colombia	21 December 1966	29 October 1969
Costa Rica	19 December 1966	29 November 1968
Cyprus	19 December 1966	
Denmark	20 March 1968	6 January 1972
Dominican Republic		4 January 1978 <u>a/</u>
Ecuador	4 April 1968	6 March 1969
El Salvador	21 September 1967	
Finland	11 December 1967	19 August 1975
Guinea	19 March 1975	
Honduras	19 December 1966	
Iceland		22 August 1979 <u>a/</u>
Italy	30 April 1976	15 September 1978
Jamaica	19 December 1966	3 October 1975
Madagascar	17 September 1969	21 June 1971
Mauritius		12 December 1973 <u>a/</u>
Netherlands	25 June 1969	11 December 1978
Norway	20 March 1968	13 September 1972
Panama	27 July 1976	8 March 1977
Peru	11 August 1977	
Portugal	1 August 1978	
Philippines	19 December 1966	

a/ Accession.

<u>State</u>	<u>Date of signature</u>	<u>Date of receipt of the instrument of ratification or accession</u>
Senegal	6 July 1970	13 February 1978
Suriname		28 December 1976 <u>a/</u>
Sweden	29 September 1967	6 December 1971
Uruguay	21 February 1967	1 April 1970
Venezuela	15 November 1976	10 May 1978
Zaire		1 November 1976 <u>a/</u>
