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INTERNATIONAL COVENANTS ON HUMAN RIGHTS

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

Report of the Secretary-General

1. The General Assembly by its resolution 2200 A (XXI) of 16 December 1966 adopted and opened for signature, ratification or accession 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, and expressed the hope that the Covenants and the Optional Protocol would be signed, ratified or acceded to without delay and would come into force at an early date. The Assembly also requested the Secretary-General to submit to its future sessions reports concerning the state of ratifications of the Covenants and of the Optional Protocol. In response to that request, reports on the status of the International Covenants and the Optional Protocol have been submitted annually to the Assembly since its twenty-second session, in 1967.

2. Both Covenants and the Optional Protocol were opened for signature at New York on 19 December 1966. In accordance with their respective provisions, 1/ the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights entered into force on 3 January 1976, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights

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1/ Article 27 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, article 49 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and article 9 of the Optional Protocol.

entered into force on 23 March 1976, and the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, having received the required number of ratifications or accessions, entered into force simultaneously with that Covenant on 23 March 1976.

3. By its resolution 35/132 of 11 December 1980, the General Assembly again invited all States which had not yet done so to become parties to both Covenants as well as to consider acceding to the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and 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. The Assembly also requested the Secretary-General to submit at its thirty-sixth session a report on the status of the Covenants and the Optional Protocol.

4. As at 1 September 1981, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights had been ratified or acceded to by 69 States, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights had been ratified or acceded to by 67 States and the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights had been ratified or acceded to by 26 States. In addition, 11 States had signed the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, 12 States had signed the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and 7 States had signed the Optional Protocol. The list of States which have signed, ratified or acceded to the Covenants and the Optional Protocol and the dates of their signatures, ratifications or accessions appear in annexes I to III of the present report.

5. Upon ratification of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, or subsequently, the Governments of Austria, Canada, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Federal Republic of, Iceland, Italy, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Senegal, Sri Lanka, Sweden and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland have made the declaration provided for under article 41 of the Covenant, recognizing the competence of the Human Rights Committee, established under article 28 of the Covenant, 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 23 March 1979 in accordance with paragraph 2 of that article.

6. As regards the implementation of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Economic and Social Council at its organizational session for 1981, adopted decision 1981/102 of 6 February 1981, in which, having considered the future composition, organization and administrative arrangements of the Sessional Working Group on the Implementation of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, it decided to keep the matter under further review at its first regular session of 1981; took note of the appointment by the President of the Council, in conformity with its decision 1978/10 of 3 May 1978, of the members of the Council which are also States parties to the Covenant as members of the Sessional Working Group; and urged the States members of the Sessional Working Group to include in their delegations experts in matters dealt with in the Covenant, to participate in the work of the Group.

7. The Sessional Working Group on the Implementation of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, established in accordance with Economic and Social Council decision 1978/10 of 3 May 1978, held its third session at United Nations Headquarters from 14 April to 1 May 1981. The Group was composed of the following members of the Council which were also States parties to the Covenant: Barbados, Bulgaria, Ecuador, German Democratic Republic, Germany, Federal Republic of, India, Iraq, Jordan, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Nicaragua, Norway, Senegal, Spain, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and Zaire.

8. At its third session, the Sessional Working Group considered reports submitted by States parties under the first and second stages of the Programme established by Council resolution 1988 (LX) of 11 May 1976 concerning rights covered by articles 6 to 9 and 10 to 12 of the Covenant. It also considered the question of the review of its future composition, organization and administrative arrangements in accordance with Council decision 1981/102 and submitted a report to the Economic and Social Council at its first regular session of 1981 (E/1981/64 and Add.1).

9. By its decision 1981/158 of 8 May 1981, the Economic and Social Council took note of the report of the Sessional Working Group; approved the recommendations of the Group concerning the review of its composition, organization and administrative arrangements; and decided to incorporate them into the methods of work of the Group as set out in Council resolution 1979/43 of 11 May 1979. By its decision 1981/159 of 8 May 1981, the Council decided to request States parties to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights that have not yet submitted their reports as called for under article 16 of the Covenant and Council resolution 1988 (LX), to do so as soon as possible. And, by its decision 1981/162, also of 8 May 1981, the Council decided to review the composition, organization and administrative arrangements of the Sessional Working Group at its first regular session of 1982.

10. As regards the implementation of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the Human Rights Committee held its eleventh session at the United Nations Office at Geneva from 20 to 31 October 1980, its twelfth session at United Nations Headquarters from 23 March to 10 April 1981 and its thirteenth session at the United Nations Office at Geneva from 13 to 31 July 1981. In accordance with article 45 of the Covenant and article 6 of the Optional Protocol, the Committee has submitted its annual report, through the Economic and Social Council, to the General Assembly at its thirty-sixth session, 2/ which covers the activities of the Committee at its eleventh, twelfth and thirteenth sessions.

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2/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-sixth Session, Supplement No. 40 (A/36/40).

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 1968	
Argentina	19 February 1968	
Australia	18 December 1972	10 December 1975
Austria	10 December 1973	10 September 1978
Barbados		5 January 1973 a/
Belgium	10 December 1968	
Bulgaria	8 October 1968	21 September 1970
Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic	19 March 1968	12 November 1973
Canada		19 May 1976 a/
Central African Republic		8 May 1981 a/
Chile	16 September 1969	10 February 1972
China b/		
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 1968	23 December 1975
Democratic Kampuchea	17 October 1980	
Denmark	20 March 1968	6 January 1972
Dominican Republic		4 January 1978 a/
Ecuador	29 September 1967	6 March 1969
Egypt	4 August 1967	
El Salvador	21 September 1967	30 November 1979

<u>State</u>	<u>Date of signature</u>	<u>Date of receipt of the instrument of ratification or accession</u>
Finland	11 October 1967	19 August 1975
France		4 November 1980 <u>a/</u>
Gambia		29 December 1978 <u>a/</u>
German Democratic Republic	27 March 1973	8 November 1973
Germany, Federal Republic of	9 October 1968	17 December 1973
Guinea	28 February 1967	24 January 1978
Guyana	22 August 1968	15 February 1977
Honduras	19 December 1966	17 February 1981 <u>a/</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>
Mexico		23 March 1981 <u>a/</u>

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<u>State</u>	<u>Date of signature</u>	<u>Date of receipt of the instrument of ratification or accession</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
Nicaragua		12 March 1980 a/
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 a/
Senegal	6 July 1970	13 February 1978
Spain	28 September 1976	27 April 1977
Sri Lanka		11 June 1980 a/
Suriname		28 December 1976 a/
Sweden	29 September 1967	6 December 1971
Syrian Arab Republic		21 April 1969 a/
Trinidad and Tobago		8 December 1978 a/
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 a/
United States of America	5 October 1977	

<u>State</u>	<u>Date of signature</u>	<u>Date of receipt of the instrument of ratification or accession</u>
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>

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a/ Accession.

b/ Following on the adoption of resolution 2758 (XXVI) of 25 October 1971 on the lawful rights of the People's Republic of China in the United Nations by the General Assembly, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China, by a note addressed to the Secretary-General, received on 29 September 1972, stated:

"1. With regard to the multilateral treaties signed, ratified or acceded to by the defunct Chinese government before the establishment of the People's Republic of China, my Government will examine their contents before making a decision in the light of the circumstances as to whether or not they should be recognized.

"2. As from 1 October 1949, the day of the founding of the People's Republic of China, the Chiang Kai-shek clique has no right at all to represent China. Its signature and ratification of, or accession to, any multilateral treaties by usurping the name of 'China' are all illegal and null and void. My Government will study these multilateral treaties before making a decision in the light of the circumstances as to whether or not they should be acceded to."

The lists in annexes I to III therefore do not include the signature of the two Covenants and the Optional Protocol on behalf of the "Republic of China" on 5 October 1967.

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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	13 August 1980
Austria <u>a/</u>	10 December 1973	10 September 1978
Barbados		5 January 1973 <u>b/</u>
Belgium	10 December 1968	
Bulgaria	8 October 1968	21 September 1970
Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic	19 March 1968	12 November 1973
Canada <u>a/</u>		19 May 1976 <u>b/</u>
Central African Republic		8 May 1981 <u>b/</u>
Chile	16 September 1969	10 February 1972
China <u>c/</u>		
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
Democratic Kampuchea	17 October 1980	
Denmark <u>a/</u>	20 March 1968	6 January 1972
Dominican Republic		4 January 1978 <u>b/</u>
Ecuador	4 April 1968	6 March 1969
Egypt	4 August 1967	
El Salvador	21 September 1967	30 November 1979
Finland <u>a/</u>	11 October 1967	19 August 1975
France		4 November 1980 <u>b/</u>
Gambia		22 March 1979 <u>b/</u>

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<u>State</u>	<u>Date of signature</u>	<u>Date of receipt of the instrument of ratification or accession</u>
German Democratic Republic	27 March 1973	8 November 1973
Germany, Federal Republic of <u>a/</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	
Hungary	25 March 1969	17 January 1974
Iceland <u>a/</u>	30 December 1968	22 August 1979
India		10 April 1979 <u>b/</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>a/</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>b/</u>
Lebanon		3 November 1972 <u>b/</u>
Liberia	18 April 1967	
Libyan Arab Jamahiriya		15 May 1970 <u>b/</u>
Luxembourg	26 November 1974	
Madagascar	17 September 1969	21 June 1971
Mali		16 July 1974 <u>b/</u>
Mauritius		12 December 1973 <u>b/</u>
Mexico		23 March 1981 <u>b/</u>
Mongolia	5 June 1968	18 November 1974
Morocco	19 January 1977	3 May 1979
Netherlands <u>a/</u>	25 June 1969	11 December 1978
New Zealand <u>a/</u>	12 November 1968	28 December 1978

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<u>State</u>	<u>Date of signature</u>	<u>Date of receipt of the instrument of ratification or accession</u>
Nicaragua		12 March 1980 <u>b/</u>
Norway <u>a/</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>b/</u>
Senegal <u>a/</u>	6 July 1970	13 February 1978
Spain	28 September 1976	27 April 1977
Sri Lanka <u>a/</u>		11 June 1980 <u>b/</u>
Suriname		28 December 1976 <u>b/</u>
Sweden <u>a/</u>	29 September 1967	6 December 1971
Syrian Arab Republic		21 April 1969 <u>b/</u>
Trinidad and Tobago		21 December 1978 <u>b/</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>a/</u>	16 September 1968	20 May 1976
United Republic of Tanzania		11 June 1976 <u>b/</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>b/</u>

a/ Made the declaration under art. 41 of the Covenant.

b/ Accession.

c/ See annex I, foot-note b/.

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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>
Central African Republic		8 May 1981 <u>a/</u>
China <u>b/</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
Nicaragua		12 March 1980 <u>a/</u>
Norway	20 March 1968	13 September 1972
Panama	27 July 1976	8 March 1977
Peru	11 August 1977	3 October 1980

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<u>State</u>	<u>Date of signature</u>	<u>Date of receipt of the instrument of ratification or accession</u>
Portugal	1 August 1978	
Philippines	19 December 1966	
Senegal	6 July 1970	13 February 1978
Suriname		28 December 1976 <u>a/</u>
Sweden	29 September 1967	6 December 1971
Trinidad and Tobago		14 November 1980 <u>a/</u>
Uruguay	21 February 1967	1 April 1970
Venezuela	15 November 1976	10 May 1978
Zaire		1 November 1976 <u>a/</u>

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a/ Accession.

b/ See annex I, foot-note b/.