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HUMAN RIGHTS AND SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENTS

Report of the Secretary-General

Addendum

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* Reissued for technical reasons.

REPLIES RECEIVED FROM GOVERNMENTS

BYELORUSSIAN SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLIC

[Original: Russian]

[2 June 1981]

1. In view of the decisive role of scientific and technological progress in the development of mankind - progress which affects all aspects of social life and creates the necessary material prerequisites for improving the well-being of individuals and peoples, including the implementation of human rights and freedoms - the Byelorussian SSR co-sponsored at the thirtieth session of the United Nations General Assembly the Declaration on the Use of Scientific and Technological Progress in the Interests of Peace and for the Benefit of Mankind.
2. The Byelorussian SSR believes that all States must promote international co-operation to ensure that the results of scientific and technological developments are used in the interests of strengthening international peace and security, freedom and independence, and also for the purpose of the economic and social development of peoples and the realization of human rights and freedoms in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations. The Declaration calls upon all States to refrain from any acts involving the use of scientific and technological achievements for the purposes of violating the sovereignty and territorial integrity of other States, interfering in their internal affairs, waging aggressive wars, suppressing national liberation movements or pursuing a policy of racial discrimination. Such acts are not only a flagrant violation of the Charter of the United Nations and principles of international law, but constitute an inadmissible distortion of the purposes that should guide scientific and technological developments for the benefit of mankind.
3. The Declaration reaffirmed the right of peoples to self-determination and the need to respect human rights and freedoms and the dignity of the human person in the conditions of scientific and technological progress.
4. In the Byelorussian SSR the provisions of the above-mentioned Declaration are constantly being implemented. The socialist order creates all the necessary conditions for the acceleration of scientific and technological progress and the use of its achievements for the progressive development of society and the fulfilment of the individual. Everything is being done in the Republic to ensure that scientific and technological progress is in the interests of peace and for the benefit of mankind, and promotes the realization of human rights.
5. Article 15 of the Constitution of the Byelorussian SSR clearly defines the supreme goal and social aim of social production as "the fullest possible satisfaction of the people's growing material and cultural and intellectual requirements". It is precisely in these conditions that scientific and technological progress is giving mankind more extensive economic, social, cultural and other rights.

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6. At the Twenty-ninth Congress of the Communist Party of Byelorussia, held in January 1981, Comrade T. Y. Kiselev, candidate for membership of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Byelorussia, emphasized that: "The struggle for the acceleration of scientific and technological progress in all units and sectors of the national economy is, in the last analysis, the struggle for the satisfaction of society's requirements for technically advanced and economical means of production and high-quality articles of consumption".
7. According to the Constitution of the Byelorussian SSR (art. 45), citizens of the Byelorussian SSR, in accordance with the aims of building communism, are guaranteed freedom of scientific, technical and artistic work. This freedom is ensured by broadening scientific research, encouraging invention and innovation and developing literature and the arts. The State provides the necessary material conditions for this and support for voluntary societies and unions of workers, and organizes the introduction of inventions and innovations in production and other spheres of activity.
8. In accordance with the Constitution of the Byelorussian SSR (art. 21), the State concerns itself with improving working conditions, safety and labour protection and the scientific organization of work, and with reducing and ultimately eliminating all arduous physical labour through comprehensive mechanization and automation of production processes in all branches of the economy.
9. At present over 176,000 people are employed in the area of science and technology in the Republic, including 36,000 research workers and research worker-teachers. A large network of research, planning, design and technological establishments has been created.
10. Wide sections of the population take a very active part in the acceleration of scientific and technological progress. Some 400,000 people are members of voluntary scientific and technological societies, while the society of inventors and innovators has 350,000 members, of which over 170,000 are manual workers.
11. As socialist society develops, so the role of moral principles in all spheres of social life increases. This is reflected in radical changes in the remuneration of labour and of other forms of social activity in the conditions of scientific and technological progress, which also has a positive effect on the formation of a harmoniously developed, spiritually rich and highly moral personality. This process is indissolubly linked with the deepening and expansion of the system of education, the right to which is affirmed in the Constitution of the Byelorussian SSR. Article 43 of the Constitution states that: "Citizens of the Byelorussian SSR have the right to education.
12. "This right is ensured by free provision of all forms of education, by the institution of universal, compulsory secondary education and broad development of vocational, specialized secondary and higher education, in which instruction is oriented toward practical activity and production; by the development of

extra-mural correspondence, and evening courses; by the provision of State scholarships and grants and privileges for students; by the free issue of school textbooks; by the opportunity to attend a school where teaching is in the native language; and by the provision of facilities for self-education."

13. Of the Republic's population of 9.6 million, more than 3.5 million persons are receiving instruction of various kinds.

14. As a result of the rapid pace of scientific and technological progress in the Republic, as in the USSR as a whole, the people's well-being is steadily improving. From 1976 to 1980, for example, real per capita income in the Byelorussian SSR grew by 19 per cent and the average monthly remuneration of manual and non-manual workers increased by 20 per cent, while pay for collective farm workers rose by 32 per cent. During the same period, 21 million m² of new housing was provided, which made it possible to improve the housing conditions of 1.9 million people, i.e., one fifth of the country's inhabitants.

15. The next (eleventh) five-year plan, covering the period 1981-1985, provides for further advances by Soviet society in all areas of social life, in accordance with the decisions of the Twenty-sixth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. On the basis of the high rate of scientific and technological progress envisaged for the Byelorussian SSR under the plan, during this period real per capita income will increase and far-reaching measures will be taken to create more favourable conditions for the work, life, education, health care and leisure activities of the whole population.

16. Under our country's planned socialist system, social evils such as unemployment were eliminated from social life long ago - over 50 years ago. In the Constitution of the Byelorussian SSR, the right to work is not only proclaimed but guaranteed. For example, article 33 of the Constitution states that: "Citizens of the Byelorussian SSR have the right to work (that is, to guaranteed employment and pay in accordance with the quantity and quality of their work and not below the State-established minimum), including the right to choose their trade or profession, type of job and work in accordance with their inclinations, abilities, training and education, with due account of the needs of society.

17. "This right is ensured by the socialist economic system, steady growth of the productive forces, free vocational and professional training, improvement of skills, training in new trades or professions, and development of the systems of vocational guidance and job placement."

18. The economic integration of the CMEA member countries is playing an increasing role in the achievement of scientific and technological progress in the countries of socialism. It makes it possible to ensure the most efficient concentration of forces on major efforts, and to achieve savings through specialized mass production of equipment.

19. The provision in the Declaration concerning the need to take measures to extend the benefits of science and technology to all strata of the population and also to protect them, both socially and materially, from possible harmful effects

of the misuse of scientific and technological developments, including their misuse to infringe upon the rights of the individual or of the group, particularly with regard to respect for privacy and the protection of the human personality and its physical and intellectual integrity, is extremely important. The relevance of this provision of the Declaration is especially obvious in those capitalist countries where a system of complete surveillance and interference in privacy, using scientific and technological devices, has been created and is expanding.

20. Respect for the individual and protection of the rights and freedoms of citizens is affirmed and guaranteed in the Constitution (art. 55 of the Constitution of the Byelorussian SSR). Citizens of the Byelorussian SSR have the right to protection by the courts against encroachment of their honour and reputation, life and health, and personal freedom and property. Furthermore, under article 54 of the Constitution of the Byelorussian SSR, the privacy of citizens and of their correspondence, telephone conversations and telegraphic communications is protected by law.

21. These constitutional rules entirely exclude any encroachment on the rights of the individual or of the group with or without the use of scientific and technological devices.

22. Citizens of the Byelorussian SSR are guaranteed inviolability of the person (art. 52 of the Constitution of the Byelorussian SSR).

23. International scientific and technological co-operation on the basis of equality facilitates scientific and technological progress. The Byelorussian SSR has extensive scientific and technological contacts with many countries, including developing countries. Byelorussian specialists are working successfully in many of them; and these countries are being provided with modern equipment produced in the Byelorussian SSR. Thousands of specialists from developing countries are being educated in higher and specialized secondary educational institutions in the Byelorussian SSR. All this is in keeping with the provision in the Declaration which refers to the strengthening and development of the scientific and technological capacity of developing countries with a view to accelerating the realization of the social and economic rights of the peoples of those countries.

24. We view the Declaration as an important instrument pointing the way to the realization of the achievements of scientific and technical progress in the interests of peace and for the benefit of mankind, and emphasizing the need for the adoption at the national and international levels of effective and urgent measures to avert possible adverse consequences of scientific and technological development for peace, human rights and world society as a whole. One flagrant example of the use of scientific and technological progress against mankind is the arms race and the development of more and more new systems of weapons of mass destruction.

25. In clear contradiction with the provisions of the Declaration, also, are the social scourges characteristic of capitalist countries, such as mass unemployment, social inequality, discrimination against individual sections of the population, etc.

26. The Byelorussian SSR considers that the United Nations is called upon to make an important contribution to the deepening and expansion of international co-operation in the realization of the provisions of the Declaration under consideration. At the thirty-fifth session of the United Nations General Assembly, the delegation of the Byelorussian SSR was among the sponsors of resolution 35/130, on "Human rights and scientific and technological developments", in which, inter alia, the Secretary-General of the United Nations was requested to ask States Members to provide information on the implementation by them of the provisions of the Declaration on the Use of Scientific and Technological Progress in the Interests of Peace and for the Benefit of Mankind.

27. In addition, on the initiative of the delegation of the Byelorussian SSR at the thirty-seventh session of the Commission on Human Rights, the Commission adopted resolution 38 (XXXVII) in which it instructed the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities to undertake a study of the use of the results of scientific and technological progress for the realization of the rights to work and to development. A study of this kind will be of practical value both for developing and for developed countries, and will contribute to the implementation of the provisions of the Declaration.

28. The Byelorussian SSR is firmly convinced that the essential prerequisites for successful international scientific and technological co-operation and for the application of the results of scientific and technological progress to development are the strengthening of peace and international security, peaceful coexistence, the curbing of the arms race, the preservation and expansion of détente, support for the just struggle of the peoples for freedom and independence, the cessation of the aggressive machinations of imperialism and the restructuring of international economic relations on a just and equitable basis.
