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ACCEPTANCE OF HUMAN RIGHTS TREATIES

Paper prepared by UNITAR

The Secretary-General has the honour to submit to the Conference the attached paper prepared by the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) in pursuance of the invitation of the Preparatory Committee for the Conference noted in resolution 2217 C (XXI), adopted by the General Assembly on 19 December 1966.

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ACCEPTANCE OF HUMAN RIGHTS TREATIES

I. Introduction

1. During the last two decades, the United Nations adopted sixteen multilateral treaties of varying scope in the field of human rights.^{1/} The topics covered by these treaties range from genocide, slavery, refugees, statelessness, traffic in women, political rights of women, to elimination of racial discrimination, and political and economic rights. Whereas some of the treaties, for example, that on slavery and traffic in women, deal with topics which have been the subject of international concern and, indeed, of regulation by treaties long before the creation of the United Nations, others, such as the International Covenants on Political and Economic Rights, deal with topics which have traditionally been regulated by internal rather than international law.

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1. Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, 1948.
 2. Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Persons and of the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others, 1949.
 3. Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, 1951.
 4. Convention on the International Right of Correction, 1952.
 5. Convention on the Political Rights of Women, 1952.
 6. Slavery Convention signed at Geneva on 25 September 1926 and amended by the Protocol opened for Signature or Acceptance at the Headquarters of the United Nations on 7 December 1953.
 7. Convention Relating to the Status of Stateless Persons, 1954.
 8. Supplementary Convention on the Abolition of Slavery, the Slave Trade, and Institutions and Practices Similar to Slavery, 1956.
 9. Convention on the Nationality of Married Women, 1957.
 10. Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness, 1961.
 11. Convention on Consent to Marriage, Minimum Age for Marriage and Registration of Marriages, 1962.
 12. International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, 1965.
 13. International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, 1966.
 14. International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, 1966.
 15. Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, 1966.
 16. Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees, 1966.

2. The human rights treaties, like other multilateral treaties, are open to signature and are subject to ratification or accession by States. States are not legally bound to apply the terms of these treaties unless they accept them by formally depositing with the Secretary-General of the United Nations the instruments of ratification or accession, or notifications of succession to treaties. The question of acceptance^{2/} of the human rights treaties, consequently, is of primordial significance in any action with the promotion and implementation of human rights.

3. It will be observed that the human rights treaties were adopted either at international conferences convened by the United Nations or by the General Assembly. States participated in the drafting of the treaties and voted at the time of their final adoption. The voting records demonstrate that almost all of them were approved by a unanimous or nearly unanimous vote. [See annex I] Yet they were accepted only by a minority of States. The total number of acceptances of all human rights treaties, as of 31 December 1967, was 459, about 21.3 per cent of the maximum attainable number of acceptances. The following details may be added to this statistical finding. In aggregate, only three human rights treaties^{3/} have received more than half of the maximum attainable acceptances; others have received far fewer acceptances, as, for example, the Convention for the Reduction of Statelessness, 1961, which has not so far received more than five signatures and one ratification.

4. The acceptance records of States vary from one another. Few States have ratified or acceded to a majority of the human rights treaties. The number of such States, as of 31 December 1967 is seven. This means that 125 States adhered to less than half of the number of treaties. To further break down this figure, fifty-nine States have accepted either two or less than two human rights treaties; of them, thirty accepted two, fifteen accepted one, and fourteen accepted none. [See annex II for information concerning acceptance.]

2/ The term acceptance is used throughout the paper in a generic sense to include ratification, accession, or succession to treaties. It does not include, however, signature, for signature is only a preliminary to acceptance and not definitive acceptance.

3/ The Convention on Genocide, 1948, the Slavery Convention, 1926, as amended in 1953, and the Supplementary Convention on Slavery, 1956.

II. Some possible causes of delay in the acceptance of
human rights treaties

5. The causes of delay in the ratification of, or accession to, human rights treaties generally differ from State to State and convention to convention. Subject, however, to the above consideration, there are certain common factors affecting the acceptance by States of human rights treaties. One of them concerns the problem of succession to treaties by the newly independent States, especially in Asia, Africa and the Caribbean.

A. "Old" treaties and "New" States

6. The phenomenal rise to independence of a large number of territories in the fifties and sixties of this century has given rise to, among other things, the problem of succession to multilateral conventions, including human rights treaties. Seven of the human rights treaties were adopted by the United Nations before 1956, and nine of them before 1960. Some of these treaties were under the territorial clause, applied or extended by the administering Powers to the colonial and other territories. When the newly independent States became Members of the United Nations or its specialized agencies, the question arose whether the application or extension of a particular treaty by an administering Power would automatically bind the successor State. If not, what action is called for by the newly independent States? That the problem was of practical significance can be demonstrated by reference to the number of States which became independent in the fifties and sixties. In the fifties eleven^{4/} territories became independent; and in the sixties thirty-nine^{5/} more gained independence. Thus, the territorial application of a large number of treaties was affected by the political changes in the fifties and sixties.

^{4/} Cambodia, Ceylon, Ghana, Guinea, Indonesia, Jordan, Laos, Malaysia, Morocco, Sudan and Tunisia.

^{5/} Algeria, Barbados, Botswana, Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo (Brazzaville), Congo (Democratic Republic of), Cyprus, Dahomey, Gabon, Guyana, Ivory Coast, Jamaica, Kenya, Kuwait, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Maldive Islands, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mongolia, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Somalia, Southern Yemen, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Uganda, Tanzania, Upper Volta and Zambia.

7. In United Nations practice, the newly independent States were not considered automatically as parties to multilateral treaties applied to or extended by the administering Powers under the territorial clause. It was necessary for the newly independent States to explicitly declare by notification to the Secretary-General in the case of United Nations Conventions that they consider themselves to be bound by the ratifications or accessions of the administering Powers. Following this practice, the Secretariat notified a country, as soon as it became a Member of the United Nations, of the multilateral treaties which were applied to it by the administering Power, with a view to ascertaining its intentions as regards succession. Only when the newly independent States Members of the United Nations notified the Secretariat of a definitive succession^{6/} were they listed as parties to the relevant conventions. Where such States expressly declared their intention of succession, the old treaties were applied to them from their date of independence. But not all States replied to the Secretariat's letters;^{7/} not all of them chose to succeed to obligations in respect of all human rights conventions.^{8/} Consequently, the sphere of application of some of the human rights treaties was reduced.

8. Moreover, when an administering Power had failed to ratify or accede to a particular human rights treaty, then its decision affected all the Non-Self-Governing Territories and other dependent territories within its jurisdiction. The failure of the United Kingdom, for example, to accede to the Genocide Convention resulted in the lack of adherence on the part of the colonial and other territories under its rule when they became independent. This probably explains the rather low record of certain Asian and African States in regard to the Genocide Convention. Of course, nothing precluded those newly independent States from acceding to this or other Conventions. But it does seem to make a difference, whether a convention was earlier extended to the territories by the administering Powers. In practical terms, it might be far easier for a newly independent State to succeed to multilateral treaties extended to it by an administering Power than to accede in its own name. A case in point is the Refugees Convention, 1951. Out of the fifty-three

^{6/} For a description of the Secretariat practice concerning succession to multilateral treaties, see Year Book of the International Law Commission (1966) II, p. 106.

^{7/} Ibid., p. 125.

^{8/} Ibid., p. 117.

acceptances, fifteen are successions, most of them being from the African States. The extension of this Convention, by France and the United Kingdom to the territories under their rule helped facilitate wider adherence by the emerging African States concerned. One of the problems affecting wider acceptance of human rights conventions is thus the result of administrative and technical difficulties concerning succession to treaties.

B. Lack of expertise

9. Another cause or factor affecting wider acceptance of the human rights treaties is the lack of adequate personnel and expertise in some national Governments. The question of ratification of or accession to human rights treaties is far from a simple policy decision to be taken at the level of Foreign Minister or Head of State. It often involves investigation into the substantive scope of the treaties, the effects of the conventions upon existing law and policy of States. Not infrequently, ratification of treaties necessitates adoption of new legislation, and consequently, the drafting of legislative bills. In addition, where the language of a State is not one of the official languages of the United Nations, the texts of conventions need to be translated into the official language or languages of the State. All this requires a machinery and personnel having the necessary expertise. In many States, and especially the newly independent States, there seems to be a shortage of administrative and legal expertise to carry out the necessary tasks. Informal discussions with some delegations from the Asian, African and Latin American States to the twenty-second session of the General Assembly have revealed that one of the factors of delay in the acceptance of multilateral conventions, including human rights treaties, is the lack of sufficient administrative and legal personnel.^{9/} Most States in Asia and Africa attained independence only recently. Before independence, they had little to do with the question of ratification of treaties, as this was the responsibility of the administering Power concerned. Few, if any, of the new States had, at the time of independence, treaty divisions or the necessary expertise to carry out the elaborate

^{9/} One legal adviser to an African Government observed that if he had time and personnel he would have advised his Government to accept 80 per cent of the United Nations treaties. (The present record of the Government concerned is about 25 per cent.)

inquiries in connexion with multilateral treaties. This factor has affected the record of acceptance of some of the newly independent States in Asia, Africa and the Caribbean.

10. It is interesting in this connexion to take note of the acceptance record of the small States in respect of human rights treaties. Nearly one seventh of the total number of States eligible to accept the human rights treaties belongs to this category.^{10/} The aggregate record of acceptance of the small States is much below the world level. In statistical terms, it is 11 per cent, about half the world record. Five of the small States have not so far been able to accept a single human rights treaty, four them could accept one, and four others not more than two out of the sixteen United Nations human rights treaties. It appears that an important reason for the comparatively low record of the small States, and especially the newly independent ones, is the lack of expertise and personnel necessary to carry out the task involved in the ratification of treaties. Treaty work in some small States has been entrusted to an attorney or solicitor-general whose main responsibilities relate to civil, criminal, and other questions pertaining to municipal law. Such an arrangement is least conducive to wider acceptance of treaties.

C. Constitutional questions

11. Constitutional requirements concerning ratification of treaties have been one of the common causes of delay in the acceptance of human rights treaties. The following constitutional problems have arisen in connexion with the ratification of treaties.

12. In a large number of States human rights treaties can be ratified by the President or the Head of State only after the competent legislative organ has given its approval in accordance with the procedure laid down by the Constitution. This procedure has given rise to some problems in certain States. As one legal representative of a Latin American country pointed out, in his country the ordinary

^{10/} Barbados, Botswana, Cyprus, Gabon, Gambia, Guyana, Holy See, Iceland, Lesotho, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Maldives, Malta, Monaco, San Marino, (Singapore), Trinidad and Tobago and Western Samoa have a population under 1 million. Singapore, with a population close to 2 million has an area of 581 square kilometres.

rules applicable to legislative bills apply to the approval of treaties by the Congress. If a bill containing the text of a treaty is not approved by the two houses of the Congress in one session, then the bill lapses and proceedings have to be begun all over again in a subsequent session. In other States, legal procedures relating to bills are not applied stricto sensu, but elaborate hearings are conducted before consent to a treaty is given by the competent organ of the Congress.

13. In some States, the executive is no doubt possessed of the power to ratify a treaty internationally, without the prior consent or approval of Parliament, but as some of the human rights treaties belong to the category of treaties which need to be implemented through national legislation, there is a need for legislative action.^{11/} Seldom do States ratify or accede to a treaty internationally before the necessary legislation has been adopted. Preparation of new legislation entails time and is in any case conditioned by factors, such as the business or agenda before the legislature, the items needing priority, and the policy of the Government towards the subject-matter of a treaty. Of these factors, the one relating to priorities can be singled out for a brief comment. An Asian legal adviser at the twenty-second session of the General Assembly explained that the reason for his country's failure to accept the Slavery Conventions is due to lack of time on the part of the National Assembly to approve them. Evidently, other matters were given priority by the National Assembly concerned.

14. Legal advisers of two States which have comparatively higher records of acceptance pointed out that it is the policy of their States to include in their delegations to international conferences prominent congressmen and members of the Parliament. This practice, they observed, yielded useful results in terms of speedier and wider acceptance of multilateral treaties.

15. In some States the federal problem has been the cause of delay in the acceptance of certain human rights treaties. This problem seems to be acute in Australia, Canada and the United States.^{12/} The United States Senate, whose consent

^{11/} In these States treaties need implementing legislation when they either entail alteration of domestic law, involve financial commitments, or affect private rights.

^{12/} See generally C.W. Jenks, Human Rights and International Labour Standards (London, 1960), p. 142.

is required for the ratification of treaties by the President of the United States, has been deeply concerned with federal-state relations. In the hearings on the Genocide Convention, 1948, and the Convention on the Political Rights of Women, 1952, arguments were advanced whether the treaties concerned altered the balance between federal and state jurisdiction.

16. However, in recent times certain practices have developed in some of the federal States which seem to mitigate the difficulties arising from federal-state relations. For example, in Canada, after the Privy Council decided in the Labour Conventions Case that the Dominion Parliament had no power to enact, for the purpose of carrying out international labour conventions, statutes relating to matters within the exclusive competence of the Provinces, a new practice evolved. To avoid the legal difficulty which might arise if provincial legislation required for the fulfilment of international obligations were refused, Canada now enters into previous discussions with the Provinces before concluding international agreements.^{13/} In Australia, too, it appears that States are consulted before treaties are ratified by the Federal Government.^{14/}

D. Parallel treaties

17. The Convention for the Suppression of Traffic in Persons and of the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others, 1950, is the last in a series of treaties dealing with matters pertaining to traffic in human beings. There are four earlier treaties on the subject, all of them adopted before the United Nations, but later amended by it. Certain States which are parties to the older treaties concerning traffic in human beings are not parties to the 1950 Convention. The earlier treaties seem to be a delaying factor.

18. The 1950 treaty on the Traffic in Persons has been such a factor in the acceptance of the Supplementary Convention on Slavery, 1956, by one State. In explaining its attitude towards the Slavery Conventions, the State concerned

^{13/} See United Nations, Laws and Practices Concerning the Conclusion of Treaties (New York, 1953) p. 25.

^{14/} A.H. Body, "Australian Treaty Making Practice and Procedure", in International Law in Australia, ed. O'Connell (London, 1965) pp. 52-64.

indicated "in so far as they may be related to the traffic connected with prostitution, they are already governed internationally by the Convention done at Lake Success on 21 March 1950".^{15/}

19. Regional treaties on either the same or similar subjects seem to be a factor causing delay or preventing the acceptance of certain human rights treaties by some Latin American States. Three human rights treaties: the Convention on the Status of Refugees, 1951, the Convention on the Political Rights of Women, 1952, and the Convention on the Nationality of Married Women, 1957, have thus been affected by this consideration.

E. Other causes

20. Other general causes or factors of delay in the acceptance of the human rights treaties relate to administrative factors, such as "red-tape" and inter-departmental differences. Many representatives of States have pointed out that one of the causes of delay in the acceptance of the human rights treaties is the difference between the Ministries of Law (or Justice) and Foreign (or External) Affairs.

21. Besides these general causes or factors of delay, there are special reasons why certain States have failed to accept the human rights treaties. These vary from State to State and treaty to treaty. For example, the presence of Hong Kong refugees in a certain Asian State has, according to a representative of that State, been the reason for the hesitation to accept the Refugees Convention, 1951. Representatives of an African and an Asian State pointed out that the reason for the delay in acceptance of the Convention on Consent to Marriage, 1962, by their respective States is the existence of certain traditional laws in regard to marriage. These are only a few examples of particular reasons relating to delay or non-acceptance of certain human rights treaties. No attempt has been made here to inquire into fundamental objections either due to the substance of the treaties or other political or social causes underlying non-acceptance, as the main purpose of this study is to consider remedial measures which would facilitate wider acceptance generally.

^{15/} See United Nations document E/4168/Rev.1, p. 267.

III. Some possible measures for facilitating wider acceptance

22. An attempt has been made in section II to identify some of the possible causes and factors of delay impeding acceptance of the human rights treaties. In this section will be considered some possible measures which States or international bodies may take for facilitating wider acceptance of the treaties.

A. The use of reservations

23. Resort to reservations has been one of the measures employed by States in facilitating acceptance of multilateral treaties. In order to consider to what extent such a measure facilitated acceptance of the human rights treaties, it may be necessary to examine contextually the relevant reservations.

24. Reservations to the human rights treaties can be broadly categorized into three groups: first reservations pertaining to the disputes-settlement clause; second, reservations to substantive provisions; and lastly, reservations relating to "metropolitan" and "provincial" considerations.

25. By far, the largest number of reservations to the human rights treaties relate to the disputes-settlement clause conferring jurisdiction on the International Court of Justice. In all, forty-eight out of the 218 States parties to the Conventions on Genocide, Suppression of the Traffic in Persons, political Rights of Women, Nationality of Married Women, Elimination of Racial Discrimination, made reservations to the disputes-settlement clause.

26. Concerning reservations to certain substantive provisions of the human rights treaties, the Convention on the Status of Refugees, 1951, was accepted by fifty-five States of which forty-seven made reservations of one kind or another. Reservations of thirteen States relate, among others, to article 17 concerning wage-earning employment. Another common reservation made by a large number of States relates to an exercise of option whether the meaning of the words "events occurring before 1 January 1951" in article 1 of the Convention should relate to "(a) events occurring in Europe before 1 January 1951 or (b) events occurring in Europe or elsewhere before 1 January 1951". As regards the Convention on the Status of Stateless Persons, five of the eighteen States parties made reservations to provisions concerning wages, stamp duty,

insurance benefits, national pensions, etc. In regard to the Conventions on the Political Rights of Women, six States excluded from the scope of article III, which confers on women the right to hold public office, conditions relating to recruitment to armed and public services. Six of the seventeen States parties to the treaty on Consent to Marriage made reservations in respect of paragraph 2 of article 1, which in effect qualified the conditions prescribed in paragraph 1 relating to the solemnization of marriage.

27. The third category of reservations pertain to the federal or the colonial problem. Thus, for example, one State, while acceding to the Convention on the Political Rights of Women made a reservation "in respect of rights within the legislative jurisdiction of the provinces". Another State while becoming a party to the Treaty on the Suppression of Traffic in Persons restricted its operation to the "metropolitan territory".

28. Thus, in the above instances, the use of reservations facilitated acceptance of the human rights treaties by the concerned States. However, it should be pointed out that reservations, while being a positive factor, have also negative aspects. By making reservations, States parties to the treaties have cut down in various degrees the scope and applicability of certain provisions of the human rights treaties. In addition, some of the reservations, such as, for example, those relating to the disputes-settlement clause were objected to by certain States,^{16/} with the effect that the treaty concerned does not apply between the reserving and the objecting States.

B. Experts and training

29. One of the factors hindering wider acceptance of the human rights treaties, as mentioned earlier, is shortage of expertise and trained personnel in some of the States, especially the newly independent ones. This situation could be remedied in two ways - by providing the services of an expert to a requesting State and by training the officials of developing and other countries needing

^{16/} Twelve States objected to reservations as regards the disputes-settlement clause in the Genocide Convention; eleven States took exception to a similar clause in the Convention on the Political Rights of Women.

expertise. The services of an expert may be provided either under the technical assistance programme or on the OPEX basis. The former may be relevant in the case of a specific request in regard to one or several human rights treaties, and the latter may be suitable in the case of requests by States which require the expert to render various kinds of services, and also desire to subject him to the discipline of national government during his tenure of office. OPEX has the additional advantage of providing "on the job" training to a local official, who will be eventually taking over the functions of the expert.

30. A special training programme relating to multilateral treaties may also help increase trained personnel and expertise in government. The programme may consider improving the skills of officials in matters of drafting multilateral treaties, implementing legislation, reservations, and other related matters. Inquiries into interrelations of treaties and national laws may also be considered in the programme. Training on these questions will in the long range be an effective means of accelerating acceptance of all multilateral treaties.

31. The United Nations may also consider awarding fellowships to national officials working on treaty problems. The fellows may be provided opportunities to visit States with established treaty departments as well as States which have successful experiences in the field of human rights treaties. Such facilities would provide practical experience relating to the acceptance and application of multilateral treaties.

C. Consultations

32. Consultations among Governments and legislatures may also facilitate wider acceptance of the human rights treaties. It has been found that one of the factors of delay in many States is due to administrative mechanics and parliamentary procedures relating to ratification of treaties. The delay resulting therefrom could be alleviated through the adoption by States of new and effective methods of co-ordination between various departments and organs of Government. Consultations may serve to exchange information about the newer developments in various States in regard to ratification of treaties, as a result of which States may consider adopting procedures helpful for wider acceptance of multilateral treaties.

33. Consultations may take one of several forms and involve many organizations. They could take place within the framework of Intergovernmental Consultative Organizations or Intergovernmental Regional Organizations, Interparliamentary Associations, and the United Nations. Each in its own way can contribute to better appreciation of the various questions relating to acceptance of the human rights treaties.

34. The following points may be considered in relation to the United Nations. Consultations and discussions may be organized among members of Parliament and /...

Congress, on a regional basis, to consider practical impediments to ratification of, or accession to, the human rights treaties. As, in most States, the approval of multilateral conventions is the function of legislatures, consultations and discussions among members of legislatures may help develop the perspectives useful for wider appreciation of the human rights treaties.

D. Role of Committee of Experts on Ratification and Acceptance

35. A Committee of Experts on Ratification and Acceptance, entrusted with the task of systematic and regular review of the position of ratifications of international treaties in the field of human rights, may have a useful function to perform in the promotion of wider acceptance of these treaties. The experience of the Committee of Experts on Application of Conventions and Recommendations set up by the International Labour Organisation in regard to the Conventions adopted under its aegis seems to support this suggestion. There have been other Committees of the United Nations, e.g., the Committee on Information from Non-Self-Governing Territories, which have exercised similar useful functions.

36. The primary function of such a Committee of Experts would be to obtain information from Member States on the action taken by each in regard to the ratification of international treaties concerning human rights, the problems relating to the submission of treaties for acceptances to competent national authorities, the difficulties experienced in the processes of acceptance and suggestions for United Nations action to help Member States on this question. As a result of periodical collection and review of pertinent information from Member States, it would be possible for the Committee of Experts to ascertain the reasons for delay in acceptance of treaties and, in suitable cases, propose additional promotional measures for the consideration of individuals, Governments and international organizations.

37. To be effective, the proposed Committee of Experts will have to be constituted in pursuance of a decision of the Commission on Human Rights, ECOSOC, or the General Assembly. It should preferably consist of individuals who are experts in organizational, constitutional and legal affairs relevant to the ratification and acceptance of international treaties dealing with human rights. The Committee has also to be representative of all the geographical areas and political, legal and cultural systems of the world. The ILO Committee of Experts seems to be organized on this basis.

38. The Committee will be instrumental in providing a central point for the collection and dissemination of information at regular intervals about ratification of human rights treaties. At present this facility is not

available on a systematic basis. It would also create a greater awareness of the problems pertaining to ratification both among international organizations and Member States. The Experts Committee can also serve as the relevant organ of the United Nations in undertaking follow-up action as in the case of the ILO Committee.

E. Promotion of acceptance by international officials

39. International officials have performed a useful role in promoting wider acceptance of multilateral treaties. The following examples will show the nature and scope of their role in this sphere. Here again, the experience of the International Labour Organisation has been the most extensive and effective. The Director-General of ILO is required, in accordance with the decisions of the Governing Body, to continue his efforts to obtain in all countries the ratification of the various conventions adopted by the International Labour Organisation. Mr. Albert Thomas, the late Director-General, considered this as one of his most important responsibilities during his visits to the capitals of the Member States of the ILO. Recent studies of the progress of ratification of the ILO Conventions and the part played by the Director-General and other ILO officials have indicated the importance of officials in the promotion of acceptance.

40. The statute of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, annex to General Assembly resolution 428 (V) of 14 December 1950, directs the High Commissioner to provide for the protection of refugees by promoting the conclusion and ratification of international conventions for the protection of refugees and supervising their application. It is believed that one of the factors contributing to the comparatively large number of acceptance of the Convention on the Status of Refugees by African States is the role played by representatives of various offices of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in Africa.

41. Acceptance of multilateral treaties is also facilitated by the activities of Special Rapporteurs who have been appointed by the United Nations in regard to particular problems of human rights. A case in point is the work of the Special Rapporteurs on Slavery. It may be recalled that the Supplementary Convention on Slavery, 1956, has the highest number of acceptances of all the

human rights treaties. These examples indicate the advisability and usefulness of appointing an international official to promote the ratification of human rights treaties or existing officials should be encouraged to devote more of their time and energies in this direction.^{17/}

F. The role of individuals and non-governmental organizations

42. A League of Nations Committee, appointed in 1929 to consider the question of ratifications and signature of conventions concluded under the auspices of the League of Nations, in proposing measures to expedite ratifications has stated:

"In the future as in the past, personal interventions with the competent authorities of the different countries on every suitable opportunity will be able to exercise a most beneficial influence."^{18/}

This probably refers to the influence of national and international officials. National officials who participated in international treaty-making conferences have observed that whenever they took an active interest in the question of ratification of treaties, there was less delay. Non-officials have also, from time to time, exercised influence in varying degrees on national attitudes towards the human rights treaties.

43. It has long been evident that non-governmental organizations have played a significant part in the promotion of human rights, particularly in the acceptance of the human rights treaties. The human rights provisions of the United Nations Charter, the ILO Conventions on the Abolition of Forced Labour and the Supplementary Convention on Slavery are well-known examples of the contributions of non-governmental organizations. In some States, the non-governmental organizations have influenced the attitudes of Governments and legislators towards the acceptance of the human rights treaties. For example,

^{17/} During the discussion of proposals concerning the creation of the post of a High Commissioner for Human Rights, it was suggested by some States that the promotion of ratifications of, or accession to, human rights treaties should be one of his functions. See United Nations document E/CN.4/AC.21/L.1, pp. 13, 18.

^{18/} League of Nations Assembly document, A.10.1930.V.

the Anti-Slavery Society has long been active on questions of slavery. Similarly, religious and trade union organizations have been active on questions of discrimination. More recently, international organizations of lawyers and judges have been actively concerned with the promotion of the human rights treaties.

44. The attention given to human rights during this International Year for Human Rights and the International Conference on Human Rights may induce individuals, and non-governmental organizations to take a more active role in promoting ratification of human rights treaties.

ANNEX I: STATUS OF HUMAN RIGHTS TREATIES (as of 31 December 1967)

No.	NAME OF TREATY	Vote on Adoption	No. of Signatures	No. of Ratifications	No. of Accessions	No. of Successions	Total No. of Parties
I	Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, 1948	56 to None	43	38	32	1	71
II	Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Persons and of the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others, 1949	35 to 2, with 15 abstentions	14	6	31	0	37
III	Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, 1951	24 to None	20	20	18	15	53
IV	Convention on the International Right of Correction, 1952	25 to 22, with 10 abstentions	10	4	4	0	8
V	Convention on the Political Rights of Women, 1952	46 to None, with 11 abstentions	43	34	17	4	55
VI	Slavery Convention signed at Geneva on 25 December 1926 and amended by the Protocol opened for Signature or Acceptance on 7 December 1953	50 to None, with 6 abstentions	38*		19	6	63
VII	Convention Relating to the Status of Stateless Persons, 1954	19 to None, with 2 abstentions	22	10	7	1	18
VIII	Supplementary Convention on the Abolition of Slavery, the Slave Trade, and Institutions and Practices Similar to Slavery, 1956	40 to None, with 3 abstentions	39	33	33	6	72
IX	Convention on the Nationality of Married Women, 1957	47 to None, with 24 abstentions	26	19	13	5	37
X	Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness, 1961	21 to None, with 7 abstentions	5	1	0	0	1
XI	Convention on Consent to Marriage, Minimum Age for Marriage and Registration of Marriages, 1962	90 to None, with 7 abstentions	19	9	8	0	17
XII	International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, 1965	106 to None, with 1 abstention	64	16	2	0	18
XIII	International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, 1966	105 to None	19	0	0	0	0
XIV	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, 1966	106 to None	18	0	0	0	0
XV	Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, 1966	66 to 2, with 38 abstentions	11	0	0	0	0
XVI	Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees, 1966	91 to None, with 15 abstentions			9		9

* Without reservation as to Acceptance or of Receipt of Instruments of the Protocol of 7 December 1953.

ANNEX II (continued)

AMERICAS

	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X	XI	XII	XIII	XIV	XV	XVI	Total A's
North America: CANADA	A				A	A		A	A			S					5
USA	S					A		A			S	S					2
Latin America: ARGENTINA	A	A	A	S	A			A	A			S				A	7
BARBADOS																	0
BOLIVIA	S				S							S					0
BRAZIL	A	A	A		A	A	S	A	S			S					6
CHILE	A			S	A				S		S	S					2
COLOMBIA	A		A				S		S			S	S	S	S		2
COSTA RICA	A				A		S					A	S	S	S		3
CUBA	A	A		A	A	A		A	A		A	S					8
DOMINICAN REPUBLIC	S				A			A	A	S	A						4
ECUADOR	A	S	A	S	A	A	S	A	A			A	S				7
EL SALVADOR	A			A	S		S	S					S	S	S		2
GUATEMALA	A			A	A		S	S	A			S					4
GUYANA																	0
HAITI	A	A			A			A									4
HONDURAS	A	S					S						S	S	S		1
JAMAICA			A	A	A	A		A	A			S	S	S	S		6
MEXICO	A	A			S	A		A				S					4
NICARAGUA	A				A												2
PANAMA	A											A					2
PARAGUAY	S			S	S												0
PERU	A		A	S				S				S					2
TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO					A	A	A	A	A			S					5
URUGUAY	A				S				S			S	S	S	S		1
VENEZUELA	A											A					2

ANNEX II (continued)

ASIA AND THE
 FAR EAST

	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X	XI	XII	XIII	XIV	XV	XVI	Total A's
AFGHANISTAN	A				A	A		A									4
AUSTRALIA	A		A			A		A	A			S					5
BURMA	A	S			S	A											2
CAMBODIA	A							A				S					2
CEYLON	A	A				A		A	A		S						5
CHINA	A				A	A		A	A		S	S	S	S	S		5
INDIA	A	A			A	A		A	S			S					5
INDONESIA					A												1
IRAN	A	S						A				S					2
IRAQ	A	A				A		A									4
ISRAEL	A	A	A		A	A	A	A	A	S	S	S	S	S			8
JAPAN		A			A												2
JORDAN	A					A		A									3
KUWAIT						A		A									2
LAOS	A							A									2
LEBANON	A				A												2
MALAYSIA								A	A								2
MALDIVE ISLANDS																	0
MONGOLIA	A				A							S					2
NEPAL					A	A		A									3
NEW ZEALAND	S		A			A		A	A		A	S					5
PAKISTAN	A	A			A	A		A	S			A					6
PHILIPPINES	A	A			A	A	S	A			A	A	S	S	S		7
REPUBLIC OF KOREA	A	A			A		A										4
REPUBLIC OF VIET-NAM	A					A		S									2
SAUDI ARABIA	A																1
SINGAPORE		A							A								2
SYRIA	A	A				A		A									4
THAILAND					A												1
YEMEN																	0
SOUTHERN YEMEN																	0
WESTERN SAMOA											A						1

ANNEX II (continued)

WESTERN EUROPE

	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X	XI	XII	XIII	XIV	XV	XVI	Total A's
AUSTRIA	A		A		S	A		A									4
BELGIUM	A	A	A		A	A	A	A				S					7
CYPRUS			A					A				A	S	S	S		3
DENMARK	A	S	A		A	A	A	A	A		A	S					8
FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY	A		A				S	A				S					3
FINLAND	A	S			A	A		A			A	S	S	S	S		5
FRANCE	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A		S	S						8
GREECE	A		A		A	A		S			S	S					4
HOLY SEE			A				S					S				A	2
ICELAND	A		A		A			A				A					5
IRELAND			A			A	A	A	A								5
ITALY	A		A			A	A	A			S		S	S			5
LIECHTENSTEIN			A				S										1
LUXEMBOURG		S	A				A	A					S				3
MALTA						A		A	A								3
MONACO	A		A			A											3
NETHERLANDS	A		A			A	A	A	A	S	A	S					7
NORWAY	A	A	A		A	A	A	A	A		A	S				A	10
PORTUGAL			A					A	S								2
SAN MARINO								A									1
SPAIN		A						A									2
SWEDEN	A		A		A	A	A	A	A		A	S	S	S	S	A	9
SWITZERLAND			A			A	S	A									3
TURKEY	A		A		A	A		A									5
UNITED KINGDOM			A		A	A	A	A	A	A		S					7

ANNEX II (continued)

EASTERN EUROPE

	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X	XI	XII	XIII	XIV	XV	XVI	Total A's
ALBANIA	A	A			A	A		A	A								6
BULGARIA	A	A			A			A	A			A					6
BYELORUSSIAN SSR	A	A			A	A		A	A			S					6
CZECHOSLOVAKIA	A	A			A			A	A		A	A					7
HUNGARY	A	A			A	A		A	A			A					7
POLAND	A	A			A			A	A		A	S	S	S			6
ROMANIA	A	A			A	A		A	A		S						6
UKRAINIAN SSR	A	A			A	A		A	A			S					6
USSR	A	A			A	A		A	A			S					6
YUGOSLAVIA	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A		A	A	S	S			11