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IMPLEMENTATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION ON THE
SUPPRESSION AND PUNISHMENT OF THE CRIME OF APARTHEID

Reports submitted by States parties under article VII
of the Convention

Addendum

BYELORUSSIAN SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLIC

[8 February 1978]

The victory of the Great October Socialist Revolution, the implementation of a Leninist national policy and the building of a developed socialism eliminated once and for all the possibility of any manifestation in the Byelorussian SSR of the ideology and practice of apartheid or discrimination along racial or national lines, which are alien to the Soviet people.

Complete equality of races, nations and national groups has been established in the Soviet socialist society, and they have developed in harmony throughout the 60 years of the Soviet State's existence.

The principle of racial and national equality in the Soviet socialist State has been reaffirmed in the Constitution of the USSR adopted on 7 October 1977 and finds expression in the Constitutions of the Union Republics.

Thus article 98 of the Constitution of the Byelorussian SSR reads as follows:

"Equality of rights of citizens of the Byelorussian SSR, irrespective of their nationality or race, in all spheres of economic, State, cultural, social and political life is an immutable law.

"Any direct or indirect restriction of the rights of, or conversely the establishment of any direct or indirect privileges for, citizens according to their race or nationality, and likewise any advocacy of racial or national exclusiveness or hatred and contempt, shall be punishable by law."

The complete equality of citizens of the Republic irrespective of their nationality and race will undoubtedly be reaffirmed in the new Constitution of the Byelorussian SSR now being drafted.

In the Byelorussian SSR any violation of national and racial equality is regarded as a crime and punishable by law; this is a guarantee of the suppression of any acts on those lines. Article 71 of the Criminal Code of the Byelorussian SSR reads as follows:

"Any propaganda or agitation for the purpose of arousing racial or national hostility or dissension, and likewise any direct or indirect restriction of the rights of, or the establishment of any direct or indirect privileges for, citizens according to their race or nationality, shall be punishable by imprisonment for a term of not less than six months and not more than three years or by exile for a term of not less than two and not more than five years."

The constitutional principle of complete national and racial equality is expressed and reaffirmed in numerous legislative acts relating to various aspects of life in the Republic.

Thus article 4 of the Public Education Act passed on 25 December 1974 proclaims as one of the basic principles of public education in the Byelorussian SSR "the equality of all citizens in access to education irrespective of race and nationality, sex, attitude to religion, property or social status".

Article 16 of the Code of Labour Law of the Byelorussian SSR, which provides guarantees of admission to employment, reads as follows:

"Any unjustified refusal to admit a person to employment is unlawful. Under the Constitution of the USSR and the Constitution of the Byelorussian SSR, any direct or indirect restriction of rights and the establishment of any direct or indirect privileges according to sex, race, nationality or attitude to religion in connexion with admission to employment are not allowed."

Article 5 of the Act concerning the Judicial System of the Byelorussian SSR, which establishes the equality of citizens before the law and the courts, provides as follows:

"Justice in the Byelorussian SSR shall be administered on the principles of equality of citizens before the law and the court, irrespective of their social, property and official status, nationality, race and religion."

Article 4 of the Marriage and Family Code of the Byelorussian SSR establishes the equal rights of citizens in family relations, irrespective of their nationality, race or attitude to religion, and does not permit the institution of any direct or indirect restrictions or privileges, upon entry into marriage, according to nationality, race or attitude to religion.

The Byelorussian SSR, having proclaimed national and racial equality as one of the most important principles on which life within the State is based, consistently opposes, in the international arena, apartheid, racial segregation and discrimination wherever and in whatever form they have appeared. It actively supported the adoption by the United Nations General Assembly of the International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid and was among the first to sign and ratify the Convention. As a party to that important international Convention, the Byelorussian SSR resolutely condemns the continuing inhuman, criminal policy of apartheid, racial segregation and discrimination, racial oppression and flagrant violation of human rights pursued by the racist-colonialist régimes in southern Africa.

On the initiative of the Byelorussian SSR, the United Nations General Assembly adopted at its thirty-second session resolution 32/122 on the protection of persons detained or imprisoned as a result of their struggle against apartheid, racism and racial discrimination, colonialism, aggression and foreign occupation and for self-determination, independence as well as social progress for their people.

The press, radio and television and voluntary organizations in the Byelorussian SSR are carrying on a systematic campaign to provide the population of the Republic with information exposing the practice and inhuman policy of colonialism, racism and apartheid. Solidarity weeks, public meetings and other events are organized in the Republic in support of the peoples who are waging a rightful struggle against the vestiges of colonialism, racism and apartheid.

Guided by the Leninist principle of supporting the peoples' struggle for national liberation and social progress, a principle which is embodied in its constitutional system, the Byelorussian SSR will continue to give every possible assistance to the peoples fighting for their freedom and independence against colonialism, imperialism and their manifestations - apartheid and racial discrimination.
