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DRAFT INTERNATIONAL COVENANT ON HUMAN RIGHTS  
AND MEASURES FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Existing Procedures for Periodic Reporting  
to Specialized Agencies

(Note by the Secretary-General)

In document E/CN.4/590, which was submitted to the Commission on Human Rights at its seventh session, the Secretary-General summarized the procedures for periodic reporting to the International Labour Organisation, the Food and Agriculture Organization, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and the World Health Organization. In his letter of 2 March 1953, the Acting Director-General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization forwarded a note to the Secretary-General containing the latest information on the existing procedure for the submission of periodic reports to UNESCO by Member States. This note, which is reproduced below, replaces the summary given in document E/CN.4/590.

UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION

1. The Constitution of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization provides that "each Member State shall report periodically to the Organization, in a manner to be determined by the General Conference, on its laws, regulations and statistics relating to educational, scientific and cultural life and institutions, and on the action taken upon the recommendations and conventions adopted by the General Conference" (article VIII).

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These reports are to be drawn up in accordance with a general plan which is communicated in advance to the Member States.

Under the General Conference's existing resolutions, the reports must contain the following: information on the most important changes in the laws and regulations in the fields of education, science and culture during the year; a statement of the measures taken in pursuance of the recommendations and conventions adopted by the General Conference; a statement of the measures taken to create, promote or assist a National Commission or to associate with UNESCO's work all appropriate bodies or institutions in the territory; a statement on action taken by the Government or its national commission, both in giving effect to the resolutions adopted by the General Conference and in more general ways, to assist the development of education, science and culture in furtherance of the aims of UNESCO.

At its seventh session, the General Conference recommended, for budgetary reasons, that Member States should "confine their reports to an account of the important activities undertaken, during the period under review, in connexion with the Programme and with the conventions and agreements of UNESCO - all other essential information, particularly that concerning progress made apart from the programme of the Organization, being for the next set for reports embodied in annexures which will be transmitted to the UNESCO Clearing House for information".

Under its Constitution, however, the General Conference has full power to decide on what specific aspects of the educational, scientific and cultural activities of Member States it wishes to receive detailed information.

Thus, at its seventh session (1952) after examining the conclusions of the committee of Experts appointed to study the meaning of the right to participate in the cultural life of the community it recommended Member States "to devote special attention, in the periodic reports they communicate to the Director-General, to the right to take part in the cultural life of the community and to include in such reports information on the action taken or planned in their respective countries for giving effect to that right, as set forth in article 27, paragraph 1, of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights".

3. At present the reports of Member States are submitted for study to a special committee appointed by the General Conference at the end of each session to meet during the following session. In consequence of the adoption of the system of holding sessions of the Conference in alternate years, the reports will in future be submitted every two years to the Director-General who will issue them in a single volume, with such analyses and comments as he may consider appropriate. The volume will be made available to the members of the Committee one month before the opening of the session. During the session the Committee will examine the reports and their analyses together with the Director-General's comments. On that basis it will formulate its own observations and recommendations which will be studied by the Conference in plenary meeting.

In accordance with a regulation adopted in 1950, relating to recommendations and conventions, States Members of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization are required, within specified time limits, to submit special reports on the measures taken by them to apply the recommendations or conventions adopted by the General Conference.

Special reports dealing with any convention or recommendation adopted by the General Conference should be submitted initially by each Member State not less than two months prior to the opening of the ordinary session of the General Conference following that at which such recommendations or conventions were adopted. Thereafter, additional reports may be requested by the General Conference.

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