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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 General 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 entered into force on 23 March 1976, three months after the date of deposit with the Secretary-General of the United Nations of the thirty-fifth instrument of ratification or accession, 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.

* A/32/150.

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

3. By its resolution 31/86 of 13 December 1976, the General Assembly, inter alia, welcomed with deep satisfaction the entry into force of the Covenants and the Optional Protocol as a major step in the international efforts to promote universal respect for and observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms; invited once again all States to become parties to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Optional Protocol thereto; and requested the Secretary-General to submit to the Assembly at its thirty-second session a report on the status of the International Covenants and the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

4. As at 1 September 1977, the Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights had been ratified or acceded to by 46 States; the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights had been ratified or acceded to by 44 States; and the Optional Protocol to the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights had been ratified or acceded to by 16 States. In addition, 56 States had signed the Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights; 55 States had signed the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights; and 22 States had signed the Optional Protocol to the Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. ^{2/} The list of States which have signed, ratified or acceded to the Covenants and the Optional Protocol, as well as the dates of their signatures, ratifications or accessions, may be found in annexes I to III below.

5. Upon ratification of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the Governments of Denmark, Finland, Germany, Federal Republic of, Norway, Sweden and the United Kingdom have made the declaration provided for under article 41 of that Covenant, recognizing the competence of the Human Rights Committee, established

^{2/} Including the signature of both Covenants and the Optional Protocol on behalf of the Republic of China on 5 October 1967. It will be recalled that, by its resolution 2758 (XXVI) of 25 October 1971, the General Assembly decided:

"... to restore all its rights to the People's Republic of China and to recognize the representatives of its Government as the only legitimate representatives of China to the United Nations, and to expel forthwith the representatives of Chiang Kai-shek from the place which they unlawfully occupy at the United Nations and in all the organizations related to it."

By a note dated 25 September 1972, addressed to the Secretary-General, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China stated, inter alia:

"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 '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."

For further information, see Multilateral Treaties in respect of which the Secretary-General Performs Depositary Functions: List of Signatures, Ratifications, Accessions, etc., as of 31 December 1976 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.77.V.7).

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 Committee shall be competent to exercise the functions provided for under article 41 when at least 10 States parties to the Covenant have made such declarations.

6. In accordance with the provisions of articles 28 to 32 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the States parties to that Covenant held their first meeting at United Nations Headquarters on 20 September 1976 and elected the 18 members of the Human Rights Committee from a list of persons nominated by the States parties. The States parties at the first meeting also decided that the term of office of the members of the Committee should begin on 1 January 1977. In accordance with article 32, paragraph 1, of the Covenant, the members of the Committee are elected for a term of four years. However, in pursuance of the same provision, immediately after the first election, the names of nine members were chosen by lot by the Chairman of the first meeting. The terms of those nine members shall expire at the end of two years. A list of the members of the Committee and the dates on which their terms of office shall expire is contained in annex IV below. 3/

7. The Human Rights Committee held its first session at United Nations Headquarters from 21 March to 1 April 1977 and its second session at the United Nations Office at Geneva from 11 to 31 August 1977. In accordance with article 45 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the Committee shall submit its first annual report to the General Assembly at its thirty-second session, through the Economic and Social Council, covering the activities of the Committee at its two sessions held in 1977. 4/

3/ For the decisions of the States parties to the Covenant, see: International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Official Records: First Meeting of States Parties, Decisions (CCPR/SP/7).

4/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-second Session, Supplement No. 44 (A/32/44).

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	
Barbados		5 January 1973 <u>a/</u>
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 <u>a/</u>
Chile	16 September 1969	10 February 1972
China <u>b/</u>		
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
Denmark	20 March 1968	6 January 1972
Ecuador	29 September 1967	6 March 1969
Egypt	4 August 1967	
El Salvador	21 September 1967	
Finland	11 October 1967	19 August 1975
German Democratic Republic	27 March 1973	8 November 1973
Germany, Federal Republic of	9 October 1968	17 December 1973
Guinea	28 February 1967	

a/ Accession.

b/ See foot-note 2 above.

<u>State</u>	<u>Date of Signature</u>	<u>Date of receipt of the instrument of ratification or accession</u>
Guyana	22 August 1968	15 February 1977
Honduras	19 December 1966	
Hungary	25 March 1969	17 January 1974
Iceland	30 December 1968	
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	
Jamaica	19 December 1966	3 October 1975
Jordan	30 June 1972	28 May 1975
Kenya		1 May 1972 a/
Lebanon		3 November 1972 a/
Liberia	18 April 1967	
Libyan Arab Jamahiriya		15 May 1970 a/
Luxembourg	26 November 1974	
Madagascar	14 April 1970	22 September 1971
Mali		16 July 1974 a/
Malta	22 October 1968	
Mauritius		12 December 1973 a/
Mongolia	5 June 1968	18 November 1974
Morocco	19 January 1977	
Netherlands	25 June 1969	
New Zealand	12 November 1968	
Norway	20 March 1968	13 September 1972
Panama	27 July 1976	8 March 1977
Peru	11 August 1977	
Philippines	19 December 1966	7 June 1974
Poland	2 March 1967	18 March 1977

<u>State</u>	<u>Date of Signature</u>	<u>Date of receipt of the instrument of ratification or accession</u>
Portugal	7 October 1976	
Romania	27 June 1968	9 December 1974
Rwanda		16 April 1975 a/
Senegal	6 July 1970	
Spain	28 September 1976	27 April 1977
Surinam		28 December 1976 a/
Sweden	29 September 1967	6 December 1971
Syrian Arab Republic		21 April 1969 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/
Uruguay	21 February 1967	1 April 1970
Venezuela	24 June 1969	
Yugoslavia	8 August 1967	2 June 1971
Zaire		1 November 1976 a/

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	
Austria	10 December 1973	
Barbados		5 January 1973 <u>a/</u>
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 <u>a/</u>
Chile	16 September 1969	10 February 1972
China <u>b/</u>		
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
Denmark	20 March 1968	6 January 1972
Ecuador	29 September 1967	6 March 1969
Egypt	4 August 1967	
El Salvador	21 September 1967	
Finland	11 October 1967	19 August 1975
German Democratic Republic	27 March 1973	8 November 1973
Germany, Federal Republic of	9 October 1968	17 December 1973

a/ Accession.

b/ See foot-note 2 above.

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<u>State</u>	<u>Date of signature</u>	<u>Date of receipt of the instrument of ratification or accession</u>
Guinea	28 February 1967	
Guyana	22 August 1968	15 February 1977
Honduras	19 December 1966	
Hungary	25 March 1969	17 January 1974
Iceland	30 December 1968	
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	
Jamaica	19 December 1966	3 October 1975
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>
Mauritius		12 December 1973 <u>a/</u>
Mongolia	5 June 1968	18 November 1974
Morocco	19 January 1977	
Netherlands	25 June 1969	
New Zealand	12 November 1968	
Norway	20 March 1968	13 September 1972
Panama	27 July 1976	8 March 1977
Peru	11 August 1977	
Philippines	19 December 1966	
Poland	2 March 1967	18 March 1977

<u>State</u>	<u>Date of signature</u>	<u>Date of receipt of the instrument of ratification or accession</u>
Portugal	7 October 1970	
Romania	27 June 1968	9 December 1974
Rwanda		16 April 1975 a/
Senegal	6 July 1970	
Spain	28 September 1976	27 April 1977
Surinam		28 December 1976 a/
Sweden	29 September 1967	6 December 1971
Syrian Arab Republic		21 April 1969 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/
Uruguay	21 February 1967	1 April 1970
Venezuela	24 June 1969	
Yugoslavia	8 August 1967	2 June 1971
Zaire		1 November 1976 a/

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>
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
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	
Italy	30 April 1976	
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	
Norway	20 March 1968	13 September 1972
Panama	27 July 1976	8 March 1977
Peru	11 August 1977	
Philippines	19 December 1966	
Senegal	6 July 1970	
Surinam		28 December 1976 <u>a/</u>

a/ Accession.

b/ See foot-note 2 above.

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<u>State</u>	<u>Date of signature</u>	<u>Date of receipt of the instrument of ratification or accession</u>
Sweden	29 September 1967	6 December 1971
Uruguay	21 February 1967	1 April 1970
Venezuela	15 November 1976	
Zaire		1 November 1976 a/

ANNEX IV

Membership of the Human Rights Committee

<u>Name of member</u>	<u>Country of nationality</u>	<u>Term expires on 31 December</u>
Mr. Mohamed Ben-Fadhel	Tunisia	1978
Mr. Ole Mogens Espersen	Denmark	1978
Sir Vincent Evans	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	1980
Mr. Manouchehr Ganji	Iran	1980
Mr. Bernhard Graefrath	German Democratic Republic	1978
Mr. Vladimir Hanga	Romania	1980
Mr. Haissam Kelani	Syrian Arab Republic	1980
Mr. Luben G. Koulishchev	Bulgaria	1980
Mr. Rajsoomer Lallah	Mauritius	1978
Mr. Andreas V. Mavrommatis	Cyprus	1980
Mr. Fernando Mora Rojas	Costa Rica	1978
Mr. Anatoly Petrovich Movchan	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics	1980
Mr. Torkel Opsahl	Norway	1978
Mr. Julio Prado Vallejo	Ecuador	1978
Mr. Fulgence Seminega	Rwanda	1978
Mr. Walter Surma Tarnopolsky	Canada	1980
Mr. Christian Tomuschat	Federal Republic of Germany	1978
Mr. Diego Uribe Vargas	Colombia	1980