

Cultural Rights,⁷⁶ which will be entrusted from 1987 on with the important task of overseeing the implementation of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights;

5. *Urges* the Secretary-General to take determined steps, within existing resources, to give publicity to the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and to ensure that it receives full administrative support in order to enable it to discharge its functions effectively;

6. *Affirms* the importance and relevance, to programmes and activities being undertaken throughout the United Nations system, of reports submitted by States parties to the International Covenants on Human Rights to the Human Rights Committee and the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights;

7. *Decides* to discuss at its forty-second session, under the item entitled "International Covenants on Human Rights", the question of the indivisibility and interdependence of economic, social, cultural, civil and political rights.

97th plenary meeting
4 December 1986

41/118. Efforts and measures to promote the eradication of illiteracy

The General Assembly,

Recalling that in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights² and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights²² the inalienable right of everyone to education is recognized,

Mindful of the fact that the eradication of illiteracy is one of the paramount objectives of the International Development Strategy for the Third United Nations Development Decade,⁷⁷

Recognizing that the elimination of illiteracy constitutes a prerequisite for ensuring the right to education,

Emphasizing that widespread illiteracy, especially in many developing countries, seriously hinders the process of economic and social development and cultural and spiritual advancement,

Emphasizing further that this situation is utterly incompatible with what is required by the great advances in the scientific and technical revolution that mankind is witnessing,

Convinced that the process of education can make an indispensable contribution to the achievement of social progress, mutual understanding and co-operation among nations,

Mindful of the fact that the eradication of illiteracy calls for world-wide co-operation and joint efforts,

Considering that the complete elimination of illiteracy in all regions of the world should be recognized as a priority objective of the international community,

Convinced that the elaboration of a global strategy for the eradication of illiteracy and the organization of a world-wide literacy campaign will promote deeper understanding by the world public of the various aspects of the problem of illiteracy and help to intensify efforts to spread literacy and education,

Taking into consideration the appeal made by the General Conference of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization in its resolution 2.2,⁷⁸

adopted at its twenty-third session, concerning the proclamation of an international literacy year,

1. *Approves* the appeal made by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization to proclaim an international literacy year;

2. *Invites* the Economic and Social Council to consider in 1987 the question of declaring 1989 as the international literacy year and to inform the General Assembly of its recommendation at its forty-second session;

3. *Requests* the Director-General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization to prepare, in co-operation with other interested organizations, his suggestions on the observance of the international literacy year and to submit them to the General Assembly at its forty-second session, through the Economic and Social Council;

4. *Encourages* the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization to prepare, in accordance with General Conference resolution 4.6,⁷⁸ a plan of action designed to assist all States in eradicating illiteracy by the year 2000, whereby the impetus given by the international literacy year will be duly furthered.

97th plenary meeting
4 December 1986

41/119. International Covenants on Human Rights

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 33/51 of 14 December 1978, 34/45 of 23 November 1979, 35/132 of 11 December 1980, 36/58 of 25 November 1981, 37/191 of 18 December 1982, 38/116 and 38/117 of 16 December 1983, 39/136 and 39/138 of 14 December 1984 and 40/115 and 40/116 of 13 December 1985,

Taking note of the report of the Secretary-General⁷⁹ on the status of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights,²² the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights²² and the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,²²

Noting with appreciation that, following its appeal, more Member States have acceded to the International Covenants on Human Rights,²⁴

Recognizing the important role of the Human Rights Committee in the implementation of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Optional Protocol thereto,

Taking note of the approach adopted by the Human Rights Committee at its twenty-eighth session⁸⁰ in reviewing its activities, setting priorities and seeking savings that would not affect the Committee's vital work,

Taking into account the useful work of the Sessional Working Group of Governmental Experts on the Implementation of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights,

Bearing in mind the important responsibilities of the Economic and Social Council in relation to the International Covenants on Human Rights,

⁷⁸ See United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, *Records of the General Conference, Twenty-third Session*, vol. I, Resolutions, sect. III.

⁷⁹ A/41/509.

⁸⁰ See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-first Session, Supplement No. 40 (A/41/40)*.

⁷⁶ See Economic and Social Council resolution 1985/17 of 28 May 1985.

⁷⁷ See resolution 35/56, annex, sect. II.

Welcoming the establishment, pursuant to Economic and Social Council resolution 1985/17 of 28 May 1985, of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights to oversee the implementation of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights,

Noting with concern the critical situation with regard to delays in the submission of reports due under the International Covenants on Human Rights,

Noting that 1986 marks the twentieth anniversary of the adoption of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,

1. *Takes note with appreciation* of the report of the Human Rights Committee on its twenty-sixth, twenty-seventh and twenty-eighth sessions,⁸⁰ and expresses its satisfaction with the serious and constructive manner in which the Committee is continuing to undertake its functions;

2. *Expresses its appreciation* to the States parties to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights that have submitted their reports to the Human Rights Committee under article 40 of the Covenant and urges States parties that have not yet done so to submit their reports as speedily as possible;

3. *Urges* those States parties to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights that have been requested by the Human Rights Committee to provide additional information to comply with that request;

4. *Commends* the States parties to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights that have submitted their reports under article 16 of the Covenant and urges States that have not yet done so to submit their reports as soon as possible;

5. *Notes with satisfaction* that the majority of States parties to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and an increasing number of States parties to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, have been represented by experts for the presentation of their reports, thereby assisting the Human Rights Committee and the Economic and Social Council in their work, and hopes that all States parties to both Covenants will arrange such representation in the future;

6. *Again urges* all States that have not yet done so to become parties to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, as well as to consider acceding to the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights;

7. *Invites* the States parties to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights to consider making the declaration provided for in article 41 of the Covenant;

8. *Emphasizes* the importance of the strictest compliance by States parties with their obligations under the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and, where applicable, the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights;

9. *Stresses* the importance of avoiding the erosion of human rights by derogation and underlines the necessity of strict observance of the agreed conditions and procedures for derogation;

10. *Recommends* to States parties that they continually review whether any reservation made in respect of the provisions of the International Covenants on Human Rights should be upheld;

11. *Urges* States parties to continue to pay active attention to the protection and promotion of civil and political rights, as well as economic, social and cultural rights;

12. *Urges* States parties to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the specialized agencies and other relevant United Nations bodies to extend their full support and co-operation to the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights;

13. *Requests* the Secretary-General to keep the Human Rights Committee informed of the relevant activities of the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council, the Commission on Human Rights, the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination and the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, and also to transmit the annual reports of the Human Rights Committee to those bodies;

14. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its forty-second session a report on the 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;

15. *Again urges* the Secretary-General, taking into account the suggestions of the Human Rights Committee, to take determined steps, within existing resources, to give more publicity to the work of the Committee and, similarly, to the work of the Economic and Social Council, to maintain satisfactory programmes of meetings and to improve the administrative and related arrangements to enable them to carry out effectively their respective functions under the International Covenants on Human Rights;

16. *Welcomes* the progress already made with a view to the publication of the official public records of the Human Rights Committee in bound volumes and looks forward to further progress in this regard;

17. *Encourages* all Governments to publish the texts 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 in as many languages as possible and to distribute them and make them known as widely as possible in their territories;

18. *Requests* the Secretary-General to ensure that the Centre for Human Rights of the Secretariat effectively assists the Human Rights Committee and the Economic and Social Council in the implementation of their respective functions under the International Covenants on Human Rights.

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41/120. Setting international standards in the field of human rights

The General Assembly,

Recalling the extensive network of international standards in the field of human rights, which it, other United Nations bodies and the specialized agencies, have established,

Emphasizing the primacy of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,² the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights²² and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights²² in this network,