

Rights", the question of the indivisibility and interdependence of economic, social, cultural, civil and political rights.

93rd plenary meeting
7 December 1987

42/103. 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, 40/115 and 40/116 of 13 December 1985, 41/32 of 3 November 1986 and 41/119 and 41/121 of 4 December 1986,

Taking note of the report of the Secretary-General⁹² on the status of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights,¹³ the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights¹³ and the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,¹³

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,

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

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,

Welcoming the submission to the General Assembly of the annual report of the Human Rights Committee⁹³ and the first report of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights,⁹¹

Noting with concern the critical situation with regard to overdue reports from States parties to the International Covenants on Human Rights,

1. Takes note with appreciation of the report of the Human Rights Committee on its twenty-ninth and thirtieth sessions,⁹³ and expresses its satisfaction with the serious and constructive manner in which the Committee is continuing to carry out its functions;

2. Further takes note with appreciation of the report of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, including the suggestions and recommendations of a general nature approved by the Committee;

3. 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;

4. 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 the request;

5. 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 parties that have not yet done so to submit their reports as soon as possible;

6. 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 in the presentation of their reports, thereby assisting the respective monitoring bodies in their work, and hopes that all States parties to both Covenants will arrange such representation in the future;

7. 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, and to consider acceding to the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights;

8. 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;

9. 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;

10. 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 under article 4 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, bearing in mind the need for States parties to provide the fullest possible information during states of emergency, so that the justification for and appropriateness of measures taken in these circumstances can be assessed;

11. Appeals to States parties to review whether any reservation made in respect of the provisions of the International Covenants on Human Rights should be upheld;

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

13. 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;

14. Requests the Secretary-General to keep the Human Rights Committee and the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights informed of the relevant activities of the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council, the Commission on Human Rights, the Commission on the Status of Women, the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, the newly established Committee against Torture and, where appropriate, other functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council and the specialized agencies, and also to transmit the annual reports of the Human Rights Committee and the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights to those bodies;

15. Also requests the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its forty-third session a report on the status of the International Covenant on Economic, So-

⁹² A/42/450.

⁹³ Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-second Session, Supplement No. 40 (A/42/40).

cial and Cultural Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights;

16. *Also requests* the Secretary-General, within existing resources, to ensure that the Human Rights Committee and the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights are able to hold the necessary sessions and are provided with administrative support and summary records;

17. *Further requests* the Secretary-General to ensure that the Centre for Human Rights of the Secretariat effectively assists the Human Rights Committee and the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in the implementation of their respective mandates;

18. *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 that Committee and, similarly, to the work of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights;

19. *Invites* the Human Rights Committee and the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights to explore further ways of expediting consideration of periodic reports;

20. *Welcomes* the publication of the first volumes of the official public records of the Human Rights Committee and looks forward to the early publication of further volumes;

21. *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.

*93rd plenary meeting
7 December 1987*

42/104. International Literacy Year

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 41/118 of 4 December 1986,

Recalling Economic and Social Council resolution 1987/80 of 8 July 1987, in which the Council recommended that the General Assembly proclaim 1990 as International Literacy Year,

Recalling that in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights² and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights¹³ 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,⁹⁴

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 people throughout the world of the various aspects of the problem of illiteracy and help to intensify efforts to spread literacy and education,

Taking note with appreciation of the programme for International Literacy Year submitted by the Director-General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization,⁹⁵

Taking into account the guidelines for international years and anniversaries adopted by the General Assembly in its decision 35/424 of 5 December 1980,

1. *Proclaims* 1990 as International Literacy Year;

2. *Invites* all States to ensure adequate nation-wide preparation for International Literacy Year;

3. *Recommends* that the specialized agencies, regional commissions and other organizations of the United Nations system consider in their respective forums the contributions that they could make to the success of International Literacy Year;

4. *Invites* interested intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to exert efforts in their respective fields to contribute adequately to the preparation and implementation of national and international programmes for International Literacy Year;

5. *Invites* the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization to assume the role of lead organization for International Literacy Year;

6. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its forty-fourth session an item entitled "Preparation and organization of International Literacy Year".

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42/105. Reporting obligations of States parties to United Nations instruments on human rights

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 41/121 of 4 December 1986 and other relevant resolutions,

Reiterating the fundamental importance it attaches to the fulfilment of reporting obligations under international instruments on human rights,

Recognizing that effective periodic reporting by States parties to relevant treaty bodies not only enhances international accountability in relation to the protection and promotion of human rights, but also provides States parties with a valuable opportunity to review policies and programmes affecting the protection and promotion of human rights and to make any appropriate adjustments,

⁹⁴ See resolution 35/56, annex.

⁹⁵ See E/1987/113.