



**International covenant  
on civil and  
political rights**

Distr.  
LIMITED

CCPR/C/78/L/RUS  
26 March 2003

Original: ENGLISH

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HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE  
Seventy-seventh session

**List of issues to be taken up in connection with the consideration of the  
fifth periodic report of the Russian Federation (CCPR/C/RUS/2003/5),  
adopted by the Human Rights Committee on 20 March 2003**

**Constitutional and legal framework (art. 2)**

1. Please provide information on existing procedures to ensure that decisions of the Constitutional Court are implemented and that local authorities comply with federal law. Also, please provide information as to the mechanisms in place to ensure that all presidential decrees and laws are in conformity with international human rights instruments to which the State is party.
2. Please provide information on the procedures established to ensure that the recommendations of the Commissioner for Human Rights of the Russian Federation, whose mandate was created pursuant to a federal constitutional act of 1997, are taken into account and implemented. What is being done to tackle the impeding factors, mentioned in the report (para. 23), which hamper the effectiveness of the Commissioner's efforts?
3. Please provide information on the procedures established in the State party to ensure compliance with the views adopted by the Committee under the first Optional Protocol.
4. Please clarify whether a state of emergency has been declared in Chechnya.

**Gender equality, prohibition of discrimination and slavery-like practices (arts. 3 and 8)**

5. What measures have been taken to strengthen programmes aimed at providing assistance to women in extreme poverty? Please comment on why none of the many draft bills on domestic violence have as yet been enacted into law.

6. Has the Political Parties Act of 2001 (paragraph 32 of the report) improved the representation of women in State and local government bodies? If not, please explain the reasons. Are other measures envisaged to improve representation of women in government bodies?

7. Please provide information on the issue of trafficking of persons. What measures has the State party taken to combat such practices, in the light of article 8 of the Covenant?

**Right to life and prevention of torture (arts. 6 and 7)**

8. Does the State party have specific plans to abolish capital punishment by law and to ratify the Second Optional Protocol to the Covenant? If so, what is the expected time frame?

9. In the light of the measures undertaken to address the practice of violent hazing of conscripts in the armed forces (paragraphs 52-54 of the report), please provide detailed information on investigations into such incidents, including their current status.

10. Please provide information on whether there has been any follow-up to the proposals made by the Civil Forum in November 2001 concerning measures to eradicate torture. (paragraph 51 of the report).

11. How does the new Code of Criminal Procedure (paragraphs 59 and 64-68 of the report) ensure that effect is given in practice to the principle that evidence obtained under torture is inadmissible?

12. In the light of numerous and continued allegations of serious human rights violations against the Chechen civilian population by soldiers and Chechen fighters, please provide information on the investigations that have been undertaken into such violations, including their current status. Please give details about the sentences handed down to the 30 servicemen who by April 2002 had been found guilty of offences against the Chechen civilian population (paragraph 48 of the report). Please provide information also on the status of investigations into three incidents of reported large-scale abuses and killings of civilians in Chechnya in the locations of Alkhan Yurt, in December 1999, Staropromyslovskii district of Grozny, in January 2000, and Novye Aldy district of Grozny, in February 2000? Have there been criminal investigations and prosecutions relating to these incidents?

13. In the light of continuing reports of disappearances of Chechen civilians who had been taken into custody by Russian soldiers, what measures has the State party taken to prevent such incidents and to trace those who have disappeared?

**Treatment of prisoners and other detainees, liberty and security of the person, and right to a fair trial (arts. 9, 10 and 14)**

14. Please provide detailed information on the follow-up to the Committee's recommendations, in its previous concluding observations (para. 35), regarding: (a) making public the prison rules; (b) the establishment of a visitors committee for correctional institutions; (c) the immediate end to the practice of food deprivation as a form of punishment in prisons.

15. Please clarify how the rights under the Covenant and the Code of Criminal Procedure are protected for people held in remand centres in Chechnya. Please clarify the respective powers and responsibilities of the military and civilian law-enforcement bodies.

16. What measures are envisaged to stop the practice of arbitrarily detaining persons at checkpoints in Chechnya for extorting purposes?

17. What measures are being taken to address substandard prison conditions, including severe overcrowding? In particular, what is being done to reduce the frequency and duration of pre-trial detention, to introduce alternative forms of punishment and to prevent prisoners from contracting fatal illnesses in detention?

18. What measures have been taken to strengthen the capacity of the judiciary, including renovating court buildings and increasing the number of judges, so as to tackle the problem of backlog of cases, which according to the report (paras. 102 and 103) is commonplace?

**Freedom of movement (art. 12)**

19. Please comment on media and NGO reports that many displaced Chechen families who returned to Chechnya last year from tent camps in Ingushetia were pressured into doing so by the authorities. According to information before the Committee, a majority of displaced families prefer to remain in these camps rather than returning to Chechnya.

**Freedom of thought (art. 18)**

20. Please provide additional information on how the right to substitute alternative civilian service for military service is guaranteed under the Alternative Civilian Service Act of June 2002. In particular, please indicate the length of such alternative civilian service and its remuneration. Also, please clarify whether all charges brought against conscientious objectors have been dropped (paragraphs 39 and 135 of the report).

21. Please comment on allegations that the Federal Law on "Counteraction to Extremist Activities" of July 2002 might impact negatively on the right to freedom of religion or belief, on account of its broad definition of "extremist activity".

**Freedom of expression, freedom of association, involvement in public affairs  
(arts. 19, 2 and 25)**

22. Please provide information on the role of government officials and State-owned corporations in the closure of the television stations NTV and TV-6, known for their independence and critical reporting?

23. Please comment on allegations of serious abuses, including violent attacks and murders, of journalists investigating cases of corruption, alleging involvement of local government officials, brought to the Committee's attention. In this context, please provide information on the measures taken to protect journalists and to ensure that cases of abuse are properly investigated and that perpetrators are prosecuted.

24. Please provide information on the current status of the amendments to the law on mass media and on combating terrorism, which were adopted by the Duma and subsequently vetoed by the President in November 2002.

**Non-discrimination, prohibition of advocacy of hatred and protection of minorities  
(arts. 2, 20, 26 and 27)**

25. The Committee is concerned about reports that the passport system (registration by place of residence), which has replaced the Soviet *propiska* system, results in a de facto denial of rights, including the rights to acquisition of citizenship, employment, marriage registration, participation in elections, medical care, secondary and higher education and pensions and allowances, of a large number of people residing in the State party's territory. Please provide information on measures taken to ensure that the lack of registration does not impede the enjoyment of the above rights.

26. The Committee expresses its concern about reports that the population of Meskethian Turks living in Krasnodar Krai are subjected to discriminatory treatment and harassment by the local authorities and Cossack paramilitary units. Please explain what measures, if any, are being taken to redress this situation.

27. The Committee is concerned about allegations that individuals belonging to certain ethnic minorities, in particular those originating from the Caucasus and Central Asia and the Roma, are subjected to harassment and discriminatory treatment by law enforcement authorities. Please provide information on measures taken to protect these and other vulnerable groups from such abuse.

28. Violent assaults against asylum seekers and racially motivated attacks on foreigners are said to have increased in recent years. Please provide information on any measures taken to protect minority groups in this regard.

**Dissemination of information regarding the Covenant (art. 2)**

29. Please indicate the steps taken to disseminate information on the submission of the reports and their consideration by the Committee, in particular the Committee's concluding observations. Please also provide information on efforts undertaken to disseminate knowledge about the Covenant and its Optional Protocol, as well as other international human rights norms, among judicial authorities, government officials, schoolteachers and general public?

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