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COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL RIGHTS 30th session 5-23 May 2003

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL COVENANT ON ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL RIGHTS

Note by the Secretary-General

The Secretary-General has the honour to transmit herewith the thirty-first report of the International Labour Organization under article 18 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, submitted in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution $1988(LX)^*$.

[23 April 2003]

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Introduction

The present report has been established according to the arrangements approved by the Governing Body of the International Labour Office ¹ to give effect to resolution 1988 (LX) of 11 May 1976 of the United Nations Economic and Social Council requesting specialized agencies to submit reports, in accordance with article 18 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, on the progress made in achieving the observance of the provisions of the Covenant falling within the scope of their activities. According to these arrangements, the International Labour Office is entrusted with the task of communicating to the United Nations, for presentation to the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, information on the results of the operation of various ILO supervisory procedures in the fields covered by the Covenant. It should remain open for the Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations to report on particular situations whenever it deems this desirable or when specifically requested to do so by the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

This report will follow the approach adopted since 1985, and will contain: (a) indications concerning the principal ILO Conventions relevant to articles 6-10 and 13 of the Covenant; and (b) indications concerning ratification of these Conventions and comments made by ILO supervisory bodies with regard to the application of these Conventions by the States concerned (insofar as the points at issue appear to have a bearing also on the provisions of the Covenant). The latter indications are based mainly on the comments of the Committee of Experts resulting from its examination of the reports on the Conventions in question. Account was also taken of the conclusions and recommendations adopted under constitutional procedures for the examination of representations or complaints and, in the case of article 8 of the Covenant, of the conclusions and recommendations of the Committee on Freedom of Association of the ILO Governing Body following examination of complaints alleging violation of trade union rights. Given the increased recourse to the Joint ILO/UNESCO allegations procedure concerning teaching personnel, information on cases examined there are added under article 13 of the Covenant, when relevant to the country reports being examined.

The list of countries for which information has been provided in the present report appears in the Contents. A recapitulatory list of States parties to the Covenant and of ILO reports containing information concerning them will be found in the Annex.

I. PRINCIPAL ILO CONVENTIONS RELEVANT TO ARTICLES 6-10 AND 13 OF THE COVENANT

The following is a list of the principal ILO Conventions relevant to articles 6-10 and 13 of the Covenant. Indications on the ratification of these Conventions by each State concerned are given in section II (indications concerning the situation of individual countries).

Article 6 of the Covenant

Unemployment Convention, 1919 (No. 2)

Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29)

Fee-Charging Employment Agencies Convention, 1933 (No. 34)

Employment Service Convention, 1948 (No. 88)

Fee-Charging Employment Agencies Convention, 1949 (No. 96)

Abolition of Forced Labour Convention, 1957 (No. 105)

Indigenous and Tribal Populations Convention, 1957 (No. 107)

Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (No. 111)

Social Policy (Basic Aims and Standards) Convention, 1962 (No. 117)

Employment Policy Convention, 1964 (No. 122)

Paid Educational Leave Convention, 1974 (No. 140)

Human Resources Development Convention, 1975 (No. 142)

Workers with Family Responsibilities Convention, 1981 (No. 156)

Termination of Employment Convention, 1982 (No. 158)

Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (Disabled Persons) Convention, 1983 (No. 159)

Employment Promotion and Protection Against Unemployment Convention, 1988

(No. 168), Part II

Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention, 1989 (No. 169)

Article 7 of the Covenant

Remuneration

Minimum Wage-Fixing Machinery Convention, 1928 (No. 26)

Minimum Wage-Fixing Machinery (Agriculture) Convention, 1951 (No. 99)

Minimum Wage-Fixing Machinery Convention, 1970 (No. 131)

Equal remuneration

Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951 (No. 100)

Safe and healthy working conditions

White Lead (Painting) Convention, 1921 (No. 13)

Marking of Weight (Packages Transported by Vessels) Convention, 1929 (No. 27)

Protection Against Accidents (Dockers) Convention, 1929 (No. 28)

Protection Against Accidents (Dockers) Convention, 1932 (No. 32)

Safety Provisions (Building) Convention, 1937 (No. 62)

Labour Inspection Convention, 1947 (No. 81)

Radiation Protection Convention, 1960 (No. 115)

Guarding of Machinery Convention, 1963 (No. 119)

Hygiene (Commerce and Offices) Convention, 1964 (No. 120)

Maximum Weight Convention, 1967 (No. 127)

Labour Inspection (Agriculture) Convention, 1969 (No. 129)

Benzene Convention, 1971 (No. 136)

Working Environment (Air Pollution, Noise and Vibration) Convention, 1977 (No. 148)

Occupational Safety and Health (Dock Work) Convention, 1979 (No. 152)

Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 1981 (No. 155)

Occupational Health Services Convention, 1985 (No. 161)

Asbestos Convention, 1986 (No. 162)

Safety and Health in Construction Convention, 1988 (No. 167)

Chemicals Convention, 1990 (No. 170)

Night Work Convention, 1990 (No. 171)

Labour Inspection (Seafarers) Convention, 1996 (No. 178)

Rest, limitation of working hours and holidays with pay

Hours of Work (Industry) Convention, 1919 (No. 1)

Weekly Rest (Industry) Convention, 1921 (No. 14)

Hours of Work (Commerce and Offices) Convention, 1930 (No. 30)

Forty-Hour Week Convention, 1935 (No. 47)

Holidays with Pay Convention, 1936 (No. 52)

Holidays with Pay (Agriculture) Convention, 1957 (No. 101)

Weekly Rest (Commerce and Offices) Convention, 1957 (No. 106)

Holidays with Pay Convention (Revised), 1970 (No. 132)

Part-time Work Convention, 1994 (No. 175)

Homework Convention, 1996 (No. 177)

Seafarers' Hours of Work and the Manning of Ships Convention, 1996 (No. 180)

Article 8 of the Covenant

Right of Association (Agriculture) Convention, 1921 (No. 11)

Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organize Convention, 1948 (No. 87)

Right to Organize and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949 (No. 98)

Workers' Representatives Convention, 1971 (No. 135)

Rural Workers' Organizations Convention, 1975 (No. 141)

Labour Relations (Public Service) Convention, 1978 (No. 151)

Collective Bargaining Convention, 1981 (No. 154)

Article 9 of the Covenant

Workmen's Compensation (Agriculture) Convention, 1921 (No. 12)

Workmen's Compensation (Accidents) Convention, 1925 (No. 17)

Workmen's Compensation (Occupational Diseases) Convention, 1925 (No. 18)

Equality of Treatment (Accident Compensation) Convention, 1925 (No. 19)

Sickness Insurance (Industry) Convention, 1927 (No. 24)

Sickness Insurance (Agriculture) Convention, 1927 (No. 25)

Old-Age Insurance (Industry, etc.) Convention, 1933 (No. 35)

Old-Age Insurance (Agriculture) Convention, 1933 (No. 36)

Invalidity Insurance (Industry, etc.) Convention, 1933 (No. 37)

Invalidity Insurance (Agriculture) Convention, 1933 (No. 38)

Survivor's Insurance (Industry, etc.) Convention, 1933 (No. 39)

Survivor's Insurance (Agriculture) Convention, 1933 (No. 40)

Workmen's Compensation (Occupational Diseases) Convention (Revised), 1934 (No. 42)

Unemployment Provisions Convention, 1934 (No. 44)

Maintenance of Migrants' Pension Rights Convention, 1935 (No. 48)

Social Security (Minimum Standards) Convention, 1952 (No. 102)

Equality of Treatment (Social Security) Convention, 1962 (No. 118)

Employment Injury Benefits Convention, 1964 (No. 121)

Invalidity, Old-Age and Survivor's Benefits Convention, 1967 (No. 128)

Medical Care and Sickness Benefits Convention, 1969 (No. 130)

Maintenance of Social Security Rights Convention, 1982 (No. 157)

Employment Promotion and Protection Against Unemployment, 1988 (No. 168)

Article 10 of the Covenant

(a) Maternity protection (re para. 2)

Maternity Protection Convention, 1919 (No. 3)

Maternity Protection Convention (Revised), 1952 (No. 103)

Maternity Protection Convention (Revised), 2000 (No. 183)

(b) Protection of children and young persons in relation to employment and work (re para. 3)

Minimum Age (Industry) Convention, 1919 (No. 5)

Minimum Age (Sea) Convention, 1920 (No. 7)

Minimum Age (Agriculture) Convention, 1921 (No. 10)

Minimum Age (Trimmers and Stokers) Convention, 1921 (No. 15)

Minimum Age (Non-Industrial Employment) Convention, 1932 (No. 33)

Minimum Age (Sea) Convention (Revised), 1936 (No. 58)

Minimum Age (Industry) Convention (Revised), 1937 (No. 59)

Minimum Age (Non-Industrial Employment) Convention (Revised), 1937 (No. 60)

Minimum Age (Fisherman) Convention, 1959 (No. 112)

Social Policy (Basic Aims and Standards) Convention, 1952 (No. 117)

Minimum Age (Underground Work) Convention, 1965 (No. 123)

Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138)

Night Work of Young Persons (Industry) Convention, 1919 (No. 6)

Night Work (Bakeries) Convention, 1925 (No. 20)

Night Work of Young Persons (Non-Industrial Occupations) Convention, 1946 (No. 79)

Night Work of Young Persons (Industry) Convention (Revised), 1948 (No. 90)

White Lead (Painting) Convention, 1921 (No. 13) (Article 3)

Radiation Protection Convention, 1960 (No. 115) (Article 7)

Maximum Weight Convention, 1967 (No. 127) (Article 7)

Benzene Convention, 1971 (No. 136) (Article 11)

Medical Examination of Young Persons (Sea) Convention, 1921 (No. 16)

Medical Examination (Seafarers) Convention, 1946 (No. 73)

Medical Examination of Young Persons (Industry) Convention, 1946 (No. 77)

Medical Examination of Young Persons (Non-Industrial Occupations) Convention,

1946 (No. 78)

Medical Examination (Fishermen) Convention, 1959 (No. 113) Medical Examination of Young Persons (Underground Work) Convention, 1965 (No. 124) Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182)

Article 13 of the Covenant

Human Resources Development Convention, 1975 (No. 142)

Reference is also made, when appropriate, to the ILO/UNESCO Joint Recommendation concerning the status of teachers, 1966, and to the work of the Joint ILO/UNESCO Committee which supervises their application.

II. INDICATIONS CONCERNING THE SITUATION OF INDIVIDUAL COUNTRIES

For each article of the Covenant under consideration, these indications show the state of the ratification of the corresponding Conventions by the country in question, and references to the relevant comments of the supervisory bodies with regard to the application of these Conventions. Full copies of the comments of the Committee of Experts are available at the secretariat (in English, French and Spanish) and should be consulted for further details.

The absence of any such reference signifies either that there are no comments at the present time regarding the application of a particular Convention, or that the comments that have been made deal with points not relating to the provisions of the Covenant or to matters (for example, simple requests for information) which it would not appear to be necessary to deal with at this stage, or again that the Government's reply concerning the application of a Convention on which comments had been made has not yet been examined by the Committee of Experts.

When references are made to the "observation" of the Committee of Experts, their texts are published in the report of the Committee for the same year (Report III (Part 1A) of the corresponding session of the International Labour Conference). In addition, comments have been formulated in requests for information addressed directly by the Committee of Experts to the Governments in question; such comments are not published but the text is made available to the interested parties.

A. Brazil

Information concerning Brazil has not yet been supplied to the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

The following relevant Conventions have been ratified and are in force for Brazil (for full names see the list of Conventions in Part I above): 6, 11, 12, 14, 16, 19, 26, 29, 42, 45, 81, 88, 98, 99, 100, 103, 105, 106, 107, 111, 113, 115, 117, 118, 119, 120, 122, 124, 127, 131, 132, 135, 136, 138, 140, 141, 142, 148, 154, 155, 159, 161, 162, 168, 170, 171 and 182. Most recently Brazil had ratified the Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention, 1989 (No. 169).

Article 6

In its 2001 observation on Convention No. 29, with regard to the existence of forced labour practices and the conditions under which they occur, the Committee of Experts noted that both national and international workers' organizations and the Government are in agreement in recognizing the existence of such practices. All agreed that despite the legislation that has been adopted to protect agricultural workers, there were still in many regions a high number of workers who, with their families, are subjected to degrading conditions of work and debt servitude.

In its comments of August 2001, the ICFTU, based on information provided by Anti-Slavery International and the Pastoral Land Commission, reiterated that the current system did not lead to the effective penalization of those who exact forced labour. By way of illustration, it referred to the case of the Brazil Verde estate, in which the Mobile Inspection Group had detected the existence of forced labour on various occasions. Repeated denunciations in 1988, 1989, 1992, 1993, 1997, 1999 and 2000 had not resulted in the conclusion of criminal proceedings commenced in 1997, and suspended in 1999, with no subsequent action being taken to reopen proceedings. A complaint had been lodged with the Organization of American States (OAS) against the Government of Brazil for negligence in investigating the practice of forced labour in the Brazil Verde estate. Between 1980 and 1998, of the 90 cases involving the use of slave labour denounced in Maranhão, criminal proceedings were only initiated in 14 of them, and resulted in only one case of conviction. The Committee noted that the praiseworthy action taken by the Labour Delegations, including inspection, has resulted in the release of hundreds of enslaved workers, but has not led to the conviction and punishment of those responsible.

In its previous observations, the Committee of Experts had suggested that the Government should consider the proposal by the Labour Prosecution Service concerning the need to adopt specific and unified legislation on forced labour establishing civil and penal liability and empowering the Labour Prosecution Service to instigate legal action against persons who subject workers to degrading conditions of work or slavery.

The Government, in response to these requests, referred in its report of 2001 to a single trial which was being held for violation of section 149 of the Labour Code, prohibiting the reduction of a person to a condition similar to that of slavery. The Government also referred

to the release of 960 workers (in 2001) who were the victims of forced labour practices. The Committee of Experts noted that the information provided by the Government did not contain evidence of compliance with Article 25 of the Convention, under which "the illegal exaction of forced or compulsory labour shall be punishable as a penal offence" and in accordance with which the Government has to ensure that the penalties imposed by law are really adequate and strictly enforced.

The Committee of Experts noted that the great majority of cases of forced labour occur in the rural sector and that violations of labour provisions (such as the registration of workers) can have a direct impact on the protection of workers against situations of degrading or slave labour. It noted with concern that, although the Government reiterates its commitment in its various statements continuing to take measures with a view to eradicating forced labour, particularly through the imposition of effective penalties, few penal sanctions have been imposed on those responsible and, furthermore, a step backwards has been taken with regard to the imposition of administrative sanctions in the rural sector by reducing such sanctions to insignificant fines. The Committee of Experts also noted with concern that competence was withdrawn from the Federal Police to take action in this field. Despite the measures taken by the Government, there remain important shortcomings in the application of the Convention. The situation of thousands of workers reduced to a condition that is similar to that of slavery in a situation characteristic of debt bondage requires measures that are commensurate with the magnitude and gravity of such situations.

In its 2002 Observation on Convention No. 107 the Committee noted that the recent ratification by Brazil of the Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention, 1989 (No. 169), results in the automatic denunciation of the present Convention. The Committee noted that the Government submitted to the National Congress a proposal for the consolidation of the legislation on indigenous peoples, to give effect to almost all the constitutional provisions on this subject and to provide a framework for indigenous policy in Brazil. In addition, the Committee dealt extensively with the following issues: the problem of the activities of independent gold miners in indigenous lands; the functioning and activities of the National Indian Foundation(FUNAI); financial assistance to villages and cities located on the borders with Venezuela and Guyana and is promoting the construction of medical care units and schools in the States of Amazonia and Roraima; information concerning grave problems arising out of the construction of a military base in Roraima, which is meeting with opposition from the Yanomami indigenous tribe and is reported to have a serious effect on this particularly vulnerable population; the four hydroelectric power plants to which were reported to be resulting in the displacement of Guaraní populations; the recognition of indigenous lands; the illegal employment of indigenous labour in the distilleries of Mato Grosso do Sul; and on the the health programmes for indigenous populations.

In its 2001 observation on Convention No. 111, the Committee noted from the Brazilian National Report on the Implementation of the Platform for Action of the Fourth United Nations World Conference on Women prepared for June 2000 (Beijng+5) that, while women's participation grows and they have greater occupational mobility, occupational segregation and the gender wage gap persist and the rate of women in unemployment had risen. The Committee of Experts noted also the statement of the Government that the situation of black women is often characterized by multiple discrimination on the basis of sex, race or

colour. According to a survey cited by the Government 90 per cent of Brazilians living under the poverty line were black or mulatto and 60 per cent of the mulatto and black population work in the informal sector, while that rate among the white population is 48 per cent. The illiteracy rate was 10.6 per cent among whites, 25.2 per cent among mulattos and 28.7 per cent among the black population. The Committee of Experts noted the announcement by the Ministry of Labour and Employment in July 2001 that 20 per cent of the budget of the Worker's Assistance Fund (FAT), which was R\$8.7 billion in 2000, would be invested in occupational training for the black and mulatto population, with preference given to women.

The Committee had previously noted the National Programme of Human Rights, the campaign "Brazil, Gender and Race – United for Equal Opportunities" and the establishment of Centres for the Prevention of Discrimination in Employment and Occupation, which undertake promotional activities and receive complaints. While noting that the number of complaints made to the centres has recently increased, the Committee observed that the number of discrimination complaints based on sex, race or colour remains relatively low. In the first half of 2001, the majority of complaints were based on disability discrimination, there were only four complaints because of racial discrimination (0.1 per cent) and 103 complaints of sex discrimination (3 per cent). The Government indicated that this is due to the difficulties in obtaining corroborating evidence of discrimination in such cases. The Committee pointed out that such evidentiary difficulties should not operate to bar the filing and pursuit of complaints. In this regard the Committee underscored the importance of establishing accessible and effective complaint mechanisms, procedures and remedies for victims of discrimination on grounds of sex and race. It also recalled the importance of promoting legal literacy campaigns to create awareness of workers' rights and the existence of complaint mechanisms.

In its 2001 observation on Convention No. 117, the Committee of Experts noted a draft supplementary law authorizing states and the federal district to institute a minimum wage for employees who do not have a minimum wage defined under federal law or in a collective agreement or contract.

In its 2001 observation on Convention No. 122, the Committee of Experts noted that the unemployment rate jumped from approximately 5.4 per cent (1996 and 1997) to almost 7.5 per cent (1998 and 1999). The expansion of some 4.5 per cent in the GNP (PIB) in 2000 and a decrease in inflation helped to decrease unemployment slightly (7.1 per cent in 2000, 4.6 per cent in Sao Paulo and 3.3 per cent in Rio de Janeiro). The Government had stated that its objectives concerning macroeconomic policies were to control inflation, promote sustainable growth and continuously improve living conditions. The process of opening up the economy had had positive effects on the accumulation of capital, reflected in improved efficiency and productivity of labour and a reduction in the long term of the external restrictions placed on economic growth through enhanced competitiveness of the national economy. The Government had taken steps to integrate public employment and income policies through the Employment Action Management Information System (SIGAE). The Committee requested information on how the structural reforms undertaken and the consequences of regional financial crises have affected the labour market.

Article 7

Equal remuneration

In its 2001 direct request on Convention No. 100, the Committee of Experts noted with interest that Bill No. 382-B/91 was adopted by the Brazilian Congress and promulgated as Act No. 9.799 of 26 May 1999. Section 373(A)(III) of the Act prohibits, inter alia, a person's sex from being used as a determining factor for purposes of remuneration and section 401(B) of the Act provides for an administrative fine of ten times the highest wage paid by the employer, as well as a ban precluding the employer from obtaining loans or financing from official financial institutions, in the event of violation of section 373(A)(III).

The Committee of Experts also noted with interest the information provided regarding the increasing number of awareness-raising activities carried out in the context of the Brazil Gender and Race Programme, including the training events for multipliers who, in turn, have organized presentations on equality issues relevant to the application of Convention No. 100 as well as the Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (No. 111). It noted with interest additional initiatives taken by the Government, including the establishment of the Volunteer Civil Service (to train young Brazilian men and women to act as multipliers and promote equality policies in the labour market), the guidelines for the National Occupational Qualification Plan (PLANFOR) for 1999-2002 (which provide for preferential access to training programmes for economically and socially vulnerable persons, including female heads of household), and activities designed to improve the gender dimensions of vocational training within PLANFOR.

With regard to the enforcement activities of the Labour Inspectorate regarding violation of the principle of equal remuneration, the Committee noted with interest the case brought by the Prosecutor's Office in the State of Piauí, alleging pay discrimination against female workers (ACP No. 003/95). The Conciliation and Trial Board in Teresina found pay discrimination in its ruling issued on 6 December 1995, and the judgement was confirmed. The Committee noted that this decision represents the first of its kind in Brazil.

Safe and healthy working conditions

In its 2002 observation on Convention No. 81, the Committee of Experts noted with interest that pursuant to Decree No. 3.129 of 9 August 1999, a body (Corregedoria) had been set up in the Ministry of Labour to be responsible for the probity of public employees. With regard to labour inspection and child labour, the Committee noted with interest the information on the activities carried out by the child labour and young workers' protection task forces. It noted that indicators on child and adolescent labour had been devised which can also be used in the informal sector. The Committee further noted Order No. 07 and Instruction No. 01 of 23 March2000, concerning the creation of the child labour and young workers' protection task forces (GECTIPA) which have a computer support system (ACTI) the main functions of which are: information dissemination; situation diagnosis; activity planning and evaluation; and the production of statistical tables and graphics. The Committee noted that, as part of the implementation of the Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138), and the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182), a tripartite committee has been established to draw

up a list of types of work that are potentially dangerous for the physical and mental health and the safety of children, with a view to classifying the worst forms of child labour. The Committee also noted that, in the same context, Ordinance No. 06 of 5 February 2001 has been adopted, dealing with premises and jobs, which are insalubrious for persons of less than 18 years of age.

In its 2001 observation on Convention No. 115, the Committee of Experts requested the Government to clarify which national body is actually responsible for regulating ionising radiation and indicate whether the procedure for revision of national legislation on protection against ionising radiation referred to previously has actually been initiated. The Committee also recalled its request to the Government to provide information on data registered within the framework of the actions taken to assess the situation in the nuclear industry and the changes that need to be made.

In its 2002 observation on Convention No. 155, the Committee of Experts noted with interest various laws and regulations which have a direct and indirect bearing on the application of the provisions of the Convention, and the statistical information on occupational accidents. The Committee also follow-up on observations made by the Democratic Federation of Shoemakers of the State of Rio Grande do Sul and the Union of Workers in the Shoe Industry of Dois Irmãos and MRRO Reuter concerning the occupational safety and health conditions in the shoe industry. It also noted information provided by the Government in reply to its observation of 2000 based on the comments submitted earlier by the Union of Workers from the Marble, Granite and Lime Industry of the State of Espíritu Santo (SINDIMARMORE) regarding the working conditions in the mining, marble and granite sector.

In its 2002 observation on Convention No. 161, the Committee considered information submitted by the Union of Workers from the Chemical, Petrochemical and related Industries of Triufio/RS (SINDIPOLO) concerning the occupational health condition in a specific enterprise.

The Committee of Experts furthermore addressed direct requests to the Government in 1998 on Conventions Nos. 45 and 88, in 1999 on Conventions Nos. 11, 154, and 161, in 2000 on Conventions Nos. 42, 119, and 148, in 2001 on Conventions Nos. 16, 98, 117, and 140, and in 2002 on Conventions Nos. 81, 141, and 161.

B. Iceland

Information concerning Iceland has been supplied to the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights previously in 1994 and 1998.

The following relevant Conventions have been ratified and are in force for Iceland (for full names see the list of Conventions in Part I above): 2, 11, 29, 87, 98, 100, 102, 105, 108, 111, 122, 138, 155, 156, 159, and 182.

Article 6

In its 2002 observation on Convention No. 111 the Committee of Experts noted with interest the adoption of Act No. 96/2000 on the equal status and equal rights of men and women, which extends the existing prohibition of sex-based discrimination and promotes gender equality in all spheres of society. It further noted the establishment of a new administrative and implementing structure, including the Equal Status Bureau responsible for the administration and monitoring of the implementation of the Act; the Equal Status Council responsible for making systematic efforts to equalize the status of women and men in the labour market; the Complaints Committee on Equal Status; and the equal status committees appointed by the local authorities. It also noted the provisions in the law on gender mainstreaming, equal pay for work of equal value, harmonization of occupational and family obligations, sexual harassment, shifting burden of proof from plaintiffs in cases of alleged discrimination, advertisements and education on equality issues. The Committee also noted the adoption of Act No. 95/2000 on maternity/paternity leave and parental leave and Act No. 27/2000 on the prohibition of redundancies due to family responsibilities. The Committee welcomed these legislative and administrative initiatives and requested the Government to provide information in future on their implementation and their impact in improving access to jobs, decision-making posts and conditions of work for both men and women in all regions of the country on the basis of equality.

Article 7

Equal remuneration

In its 2002 observation on Convention No. 100, the Committee of Experts noted with interest the adoption of the Act on Equal Status and Equal Rights of Women and Men (Act No. 96/2000), which came into effect on 6 June 2000 and is aimed at establishing and maintaining equal status and equal opportunities for women and men in all spheres of society.

Article 8

In its 2002 observation on Convention No. 98, the Committee of Experts noted the comments of the Icelandic Federation of Labour (IFL) concerning the application of the Convention, in particular criticizing Act No. 34/2001. The Committee notes that the IFL had lodged a complaint concerning this legislation before the Committee on Freedom of Association (Case No. 2170) and decided to examine the matter in the light of the future conclusions of the Committee of Freedom of Association.

The Committee of Experts furthermore addressed a direct request to the Government in 2001 on Conventions Nos. 102, and in 2002 on Conventions Nos. 100, 102, 111, and 122.

C. Israel

Information on Israel has been previously submitted to the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in 1998.

The following relevant Conventions have been ratified and are in force for Israel (for full names see the list of Conventions in Part I above): 1, 14, 19, 20, 29, 30, 48, 77, 78, 79, 81, 87, 88, 90, 98, 100, 101, 102, 105, 106, 111, 116, 117, 118, 122, 136, 138, 141, and 142.

Article 6

In its 2001 observation on Convention No. 111, the Committee of Experts noted the amendments made in April 2000 to the Equal Rights for Women Act of 1951. It noted with interest new section 1B, paragraph 2 on affirmative action, which provides that any provision or act which is designed to rectify a former or existing discrimination against women, or a provision or act which is designated for the advancement of the equality of women shall not be regarded as an infringement of equality or unlawful discrimination. It further noted that in any public body, there should be proper representation of women in the various types of posts and grading (section 6C(a)). In cases of similar qualification of candidates of both sexes, affirmative action shall be taken in favour of the female candidate wherever this is necessary to implement this provision.

In its 2001 direct request on Convention No. 111, the Committee of Experts noted the general trend of declining labour force participation by Israeli men (Jews and non-Jews alike) coupled with increasing participation by Jewish women. It also noted that labour force participation of Arab Israeli women had not changed much, from 13.5 per cent in 1995 to 13.4 per cent in 1999. The Committee noted from the report the special measures taken by the Government to enhance the access of employment of ultra-orthodox Jewish women and Arab women, including the training programmes under the Bureau of Training and Workforce Development in the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs. In addition, the Unit for the Advancement of Women and Girls, established within the Division for Training and Development of the Ministry of Labour and Welfare, organized workshops for Jewish women and two for Arab women within the project on reduction of women's poverty through employment in 2001. The Committee noted that the Government plans to assess the success of these programmes over the next two years.

The Committee noted that the labour force participation rate of members of the Muslim and Druze communities had decreased from 40.1 per cent in 1995 to 38.4 per cent in 1999 and that final conclusions and statistics concerning vocational training programmes for minority groups were not yet available. It also noted the decision taken in October 2000 by the Government regarding a multi-year plan for development of Arab Sector Communities according to which the Government of Israel regards itself obligated to act to grant equal and fair conditions to Israeli Arabs in the socio-economic sphere, in particular in the areas of education, housing and employment.

The Committee noted with interest the promulgation of the Equal Rights for People with Disabilities Law in 1998 which contains the general prohibition of discrimination of persons

in employment because of their disability and that section 3 of the Law provides that any act intended to correct previous or present discrimination against persons with disabilities, or which is intended to promote the equality of persons with disabilities, shall not be deemed to be prohibited discrimination.

Article 8

In its 2001 direct request on Convention No. 98, the Committee of Experts noted with interest the entry into force, on 1 January 2001, of Amendment No. 6 to the Collective Agreements Law, 5727-1957, which reinforces the rights of workers' organizations as regards entry in the workplace for the purpose of promoting the right to organize or the interests of workers, and extends the protection granted to workers in connection with the right to organize.

The Committee of Experts furthermore addressed direct requests to the Government in 2001 on Conventions Nos. 77, 81, and 122, and in 2002 on Conventions No. 100, 105 and 118.

D. Luxembourg

Information on Luxembourg has been previously submitted to the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in 1990

The following relevant Conventions have been ratified and are in force for Luxembourg (for full names see the list of Conventions in Part I above): 1, 2, 3, 6, 11, 12, 13, 14, 16, 17, 18, 19, 24, 25, 26, 27, 29, 30, 73, 78, 81, 87, 88, 90, 96, 98, 100, 102, 103, 105,111, 121, 130, 132, 135, 138, 142, 151, 155, 158, 159, 175, and 182.

Article 7

Equal remuneration

In its 2001 direct request on Convention No. 100, the Committee of Experts noted the Government's indication that wage differences between men and women did not originate from unequal direct remuneration for the same work but rather from career breaks for family reasons and in the lack of promotion and career progress. The Committee requested the Government to provide information on the activities carried out by the equality representatives, established under the Act of 7 July 1998 in staff committees of public and private sector companies with over 15 workers, which have an important function in raising awareness both in employers and in employees with regard to the sharing of family responsibilities by fathers.

Safe and healthy working conditions

In its 2002 observation on Convention No. 81, the Committee noted that, following a preparatory mission of the ILO in April-May 2002, a tripartite audit of the inspectorate of labour and mines was conducted in the country with support from an ILO team in July of the same year. It requested the Government to provide information on the measures taken or

envisaged as a result of the recommendations of the above tripartite mission as regards the organization and operation of the labour inspection system in terms of the application of the Convention.

Article 8

In its 2000 direct request on Convention No. 87, the Committee recalled the need to amend section 6(1) of the Act of 6 May 1974 in order to allow foreign workers who are not nationals of Luxembourg or other States of the European Union to serve on joint enterprise committees, at least after a reasonable period of residence in the host country. In this regard, the Committee noted the Government's statement to the effect that it is in the process of preparing a revision of all legislation on staff representative structures, including joint enterprise committees. In this context, the advisability of allowing foreign workers who are not nationals of a European Union State to participate in joint enterprise committees after a certain period of residence in Luxembourg would also be analysed.

Article 10

Protection of children and young persons in relation to employment and work

In its 2001 direct request on Convention No 138, the Committee noted that section 10(3) and (4) of the Act of 23 March 2001 provides that, in certain conditions, the minister responsible for labour or his deputy may authorize the employment of young people in dangerous work. Under section 1, paragraph 1(3), of the Act of 23 March 2001, the term "young person" applies to all young people aged between 15 years and 18 years who are not subject to compulsory education imposed by the applicable legislation. The Committee recalled that Article 3, paragraph 3, of the Convention authorizes the recruitment of young people for dangerous work as from the age of 16 years, not 15 years, on particular conditions. The Committee therefore requested the Government to take all the measures necessary in order to bring legislation into conformity with the Convention on this point.

The Committee of Experts furthermore addressed direct requests to the Government in 2002 on Conventions Nos. 13, 26, 29, 30, 73, 87, 100, and 138.

E. New Zealand

Information on New Zealand has been previously submitted to the UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in 1994.

The following relevant Conventions have been ratified and are in force for New Zealand (for full names see the list of Conventions in Part I above): 2, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15, 16, 17, 26, 29, 32, 42, 44, 47, 58, 59, 88, 99, 100, 101, 105, 111, 122, and 182.

Article 6

In its 2001 direct request on Convention No. 29, commenting on the obligations imposed on social security beneficiaries, the Committee noted with interest the Government's indication

that it intends to take a more facilitative approach to assisting people to find work, with less emphasis on compulsion and more on obtaining sustainable results through working with beneficiaries on an individual level to build their capacities and make the most of opportunities. Regarding the conditions of employment of inmates of privatised prisons, the Committee noted the Government's indication that section 20(1) and (2) of the Penal Institutions Act, 1954, requires that each inmate (excluding those awaiting trial or on remand) shall be employed in such work as may be directed by the superintendent of the institution. The Committee requested additional information on the issue of consent and hoped that the necessary measures would be taken to ensure that prisoners in privatised institutions would be offered arm's length conditions of employment, including wages that would be acceptable to workers having access to the free labour market, as well as accident insurance. The Committee also raised questions and commented on the private use of labour in state prisons with specific reference to the Inmate Employment Programme.

In its 2002 observation on Convention No. 122, the Committee noted the Government's statement that in the year to September 2001, employment has been at an all time high, and all ethnic groups have experienced employment growth. Labour market participation also has gone up, in particular for older workers. GDP grew by 2.2 per cent for the year to September 2001. Solid economic growth has also led to robust growth in employment: unemployment fell from 6.4 per cent in March 2000 quarter to 5.4 per cent in March 2001 quarter and 5.3 per cent in March 2002 quarter. Concerning training, including training of youth, the Committee noted the Government's intention to focus on foundation skills and sustainable employment. This will include focusing eligibility for training on lack of foundation skills and difficulty in finding and sustaining employment. The Committee noted with interest that the welfare system has been replaced by a programme entitled "From Social Welfare to Social Development". This programme aims to increase skill levels and move more people into paid work through local partnerships and individualized assistance. It also notes that the Government has committed to moving more people with disabilities into the open labour market, and has developed some programmes aimed at reaching this objective.

In its 2002 observation on Convention No. 111, the Committee noted with interest that the Employment Relations Act (ERA), which entered into force on 2 October 2000, prohibits direct and indirect discrimination against employees by their employers or representatives on the same grounds as those listed in the Human Rights Act (HRA) of 1993 and provides for a personal grievances procedure. The Act also provides protection and remedies in respect to sexual and racial harassment. Employees concerned have the choice of whether to lodge a complaint under the Human Rights Act or to pursue a personal grievance under the ERA.

The Committee recalled that the Human Rights Amendment Act 1999 deferred the expiry of section 151 which provided for a temporary exemption for government compliance with the prohibition of discrimination on a number of grounds, including political opinion, to 31 December 2001. It noted with satisfaction that section 151 has now expired and that the prohibition of discrimination in employment on the basis of political opinion and the other grounds listed in section 22 of the HRA, as amended by the Human Rights Amendment Act 2001, now also applies to government employment. Noting from the Government's report that the State Services Commission and the Ministry of Justice were considering what exemptions, if any, would apply to employment discrimination in the public sector concerning political

neutrality of public servants, the Committee asked the Government to provide information on any legislative, administrative or other measures taken in this regard.

The Committee noted with interest the data provided in the Government's report on the presence of Equal Employment Opportunities (EEO) provisions in collective employment contracts and agreements. The information collected by the Government covers 21 per cent of the labour force, and shows that 17 per cent of the contracts contain EEO provisions and 2 per cent contain explicit provisions relating to Maori. The Committee also noted the EEO Trust Diversity Survey 2000 showing that in the private sector 76 per cent of the employees on both individual and collective employment agreements in the year 2000 are covered by an EEO Policy, 17 per cent by an EEO Plan, and 21 per cent by both.

Article 7

Remuneration

In its 2002 observation on Convention No. 99, the Committee noted that the applicable regulations on minimum wage fixing procedures are general in scope and apply to all sectors of the economy, including agriculture. Referring to the observations under Convention No. 26, the Committee recalled that, according to previous comments from the New Zealand Council of Trade Unions (NZCTU), studies conducted by the Government show that breaches of the provisions on minimum wages are common in agriculture. While noting the specific characteristics of labour in the agricultural sector, the Committee recalled that, under the Convention, states which ratify it must make such provision for supervision, inspection and sanctions as may be necessary and appropriate to conditions in the agricultural sector. The Committee therefore requested the Government to provide detailed information on the conditions in which the Convention is applied in the agricultural sector.

In its 2002 observation on Convention No. 26, the noted with interest the adoption in October 2000 of the Employment Relations Act, as well as the new Minimum Wage Regulations in 1999, and the draft legislation that has been introduced into Parliament to amend the Minimum Wage Act.

The Committee noted that since 2000 the Government had adopted measures related to the minimum wage of young workers. It has also extended the adult minimum wage to young persons of 18 and 19 years of age and had reviewed the rate of the minimum wage applicable to young workers. Since then, this usage has been set at 80 per cent of the adult minimum wage, compared with 60 per cent before. The minimum wages currently applicable to young persons and to adults are respectively: 6.40 dollars an hour, 51.20 dollars for a working day of eight hours and 256 dollars for a working week of 40 hours for the former; and 8 dollars an hour, 64 dollars for a working day of eight hours and 320 dollars for a working week of 40 hours for the latter. These hourly rates are also applicable to additional hours worked over 40 hours a week. While noting these favourable developments, the Committee was bound to reiterate that, even though minimum wage instruments contain no provisions providing for the fixing of different minimum wage rates on the basis of such criteria as sex, age or disability, the general principles laid down in other instruments have to be observed in order to prevent any discrimination, inter alia, on grounds of age, and particularly the principles contained in

the Preamble to the Constitution of the ILO, which specifically refers to the application of the principle of "equal remuneration for work of equal value". With regard to age, the Committee recalled that the quantity and quality of work carried out should be the decisive factor in determining the wage paid.

Equal remuneration

In its 2001 observation on Convention No. 100, the Committee, with reference to previous comments concerning the negative impact of the Employment Contracts Act, 1991 (ECA) on the application of the Convention, noted with interest the repeal of the ECA and its replacement by the Employment Relations Act, 2000 (ERA), which came into effect on 2 October 2000. The Committee, however, noted that the ERA retains the "substantially similar" employment requirement reflected in earlier legislation and its definition of employment discrimination appears to be restricted to cases where employees work for the same employer (see ERA, section 104(1)).

The Committee also noted that no equal pay complaints were heard by the Employment Tribunal or the Employment Court during the reporting period, nor were any equal pay cases brought under the EPA. The Government's report indicated that 52 complaints of sex discrimination were brought under the HRA, four of which involved complaints of sex-based salary discrimination. In this context, the Committee noted the NZCTU's statements pointing to structural and financial impediments to monitoring compliance with existing legislation. The Committee asked the Government to indicate the measures that have been taken or are contemplated to disseminate information to the public regarding the principle of equal remuneration for work of equal value and to inform the public of the right to bring a complaint of pay discrimination.

According to the Government's report, recent surveys from Statistics New Zealand show a further reduction in the pay gap between women and men during the reporting period. Figures from the firm-based Quarterly Employment Survey show an increase in the ratio of women's to men's earnings from 82.1 per cent in June 1997 to 83.9 per cent in June 1999. The Government suggested that this shift reflects a longer term and gradual change in the labour market and indicated that a research project analysing the components of the male-female earnings gap is being carried out by the Department of Labour. According to the report, the evidence collected by the project so far indicates that a range of social and economic trends contributed to the reduction of the gender pay gap between 1984 and 1999, including: a narrowing of the male-female gap in educational attainment; a reduction of the male-female gap in terms of work experience; a decrease in the number of employed women responsible for the care of dependent children; convergence in the industrial and occupational composition of male and female employment; and shifts in the relative demand for differently skilled labour. The NZCTU indicated that the statistical evidence contained in the report is insufficient to support the Government's statement that there is a gradual long-term closing of the gender earnings gap.

Article 9

In its 2001 observation on Convention No. 17, the Committee noted that the Accident Insurance Act, 1998, No. 114 came into force on 1 July 1999. In this regard, it noted that draft legislation on injury prevention and rehabilitation is currently before Parliament and, once adopted, would replace the aforementioned Accident Insurance Act, 1998. The Government indicated that the provisions of the Bill relating to medical treatment are largely the same as those contained in the Accident Insurance Act. The Committee recalled that Article 9 of the Convention provides that injured workmen shall be entitled to medical aid and to such surgical and pharmaceutical aid as is recognized to be necessary in consequence of accidents and that the cost of such aid shall be defrayed either by the employer, by accident insurance institutions, or by sickness or invalidity insurance institutions. The Committee also noted that the need to take measures to give effect to Article 9 of the Convention is recognized by the Regulations Review Committee of Parliament. The Government had made an undertaking to this end with the Review Committee and is now closely following the situation, which would be re-examined in August 2002. The Committee noted, nevertheless, that the Government had not taken the opportunity of the adoption of new legislation in 1998 or the preparation of a new bill in this field to take appropriate measures with the aim of abolishing any financial participation by the victims of occupational accidents in the cost of the care provided for them. The Committee found this all the more regrettable since the NZCTU emphasized once again the number of people concerned in paying part of the cost of benefits. In this regard, the Government recognized that the system of contract between the Accident Compensation Corporation (ACC) and the health-care providers was at an experimental stage and that time was required before extending the scope of such contracts. In these circumstances, the Committee trusted that in August 2002 the situation would be examined and assessed in the light of the obligations under Article 9. The Committee hoped that the Government would not fail to take all the necessary measures to ensure improved application of this provision of the Convention.

The Committee of Experts furthermore addressed direct requests to the Government in 1998 on Conventions Nos. 47 and 59, in 2000 on Conventions Nos. 52 and 101, and in 2001 on Conventions Nos. 17, 32, 81, 100, and 122.

ANNEX

Index of countries on which the ILO has supplied information since 1978

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Notes

¹ Decisions of the Governing Body at its 201st session (November 1976) and at its 236th session (May 1987).

² Information on the procedures and machinery for the implementation of ILO standards, including the operation of its supervisory bodies, can be found in <u>United Nations Action in the Field of Human Rights</u> (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.94.XIV.11), chap. II, sect. C.1. Further information can be found on the ILO's Internet website at www.ilo.org.

³ There are, in addition, particularly for articles 7 and 9, a number of Conventions dealing with corresponding matters in particular occupational sectors (e.g. road transport, seafarers, fishermen, dock workers, plantation workers, nursing personnel) or with particular categories of workers (e.g. migrant workers, workers in non-metropolitan territories). These Conventions are not included in the present list but are taken into account in the indications concerning the situation in individual countries.