



Economic and Social  
Council

E/C.12/Q/YEM/1  
5 June 2002

Original: ENGLISH

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COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC, SOCIAL  
AND CULTURAL RIGHTS  
Pre-sessional working group  
21-24 May 2002

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

**List of issues to be taken up in connection with the consideration  
of the initial report of YEMEN concerning the rights covered by  
articles 1 to 15 of the International Covenant on Economic,  
Social and Cultural Rights (E/1990/5/Add.54)**

## **I. GENERAL INFORMATION**

1. Article II of the Constitution specifies that Islam is the religion of the Yemeni State. However, the population is divided into different Islamic communities such as the Shafeis, the Zaidis, the Ismaili and the Baharas. What effects do these groupings have on the peaceful and harmonious development of Yemeni society?
2. According to the report, Arabic is the official language of Yemen, to be used in communication, education and information. However, there exist minorities whose languages are Amharic and Saktarian. Can these languages be used in official communications with the authorities?
3. Yemen has one of the world's highest rates of population growth at 3.7 per cent. What is the impact of this population growth on the enjoyment of economic, social and cultural rights?

### **General legal framework within which human rights are protected**

4. Please explain what the Government's policy is if or when there is a contradiction between Shariah and international human rights law.
5. What is the status of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights vis-à-vis Yemeni legislation? Can the provisions of the Covenant be invoked before the Yemeni courts?
6. The report asserts that some 2,000 civil or non-governmental societies and associations for the defence of human rights exist in Yemen. Has the Government sought or relied on their help in the preparation of public policies on economic, social and cultural rights?
7. Has the Government taken any measures to better acquaint the civil service, government employees, the judiciary and the police with the provisions of the Covenant?

## **II. ISSUES RELATING TO THE GENERAL PROVISIONS OF THE COVENANT (arts. 1-5)**

### **Article 2 - Non-discrimination**

8. In the light of the fact that Yemeni society has different racial, religious, linguistic and ethnic groups, as well as many traditional tribal groupings, please explain the measures and policies taken by the State party to ensure the principle of non-discrimination and equality as provided for in the Covenant.
9. According to reliable sources, social indicators show the relative status of Yemeni women to be among the lowest in the world. What legislation and administrative measures are in place to improve the status of Yemeni women?

**Article 3 - Equal rights of men and women**

10. The report acknowledges that any discrimination or differentiation that exists is a matter of traditional cultural values which may disappear in time as a result of economic, educational and cultural development. In this regard, what progress has been achieved towards full equality between women and men in the enjoyment of economic, social and cultural rights?

11. Please give examples of new legislation passed by the State party in order to protect the rights of women and the status of the family in civil society.

**III. ISSUES RELATING TO SPECIFIC PROVISIONS  
OF THE COVENANT (arts. 6-15)**

**Article 6 - Right to work**

12. Please indicate what policies and measures the Government envisages taking to effectively combat unemployment. Please provide comparative statistics on unemployment over the past five years.

**Article 7 - Right to just and favourable conditions of work**

13. Please provide information about the laws and regulations (their number, year, articles), if any, guaranteeing equal pay for equal work for men and women, minimum wages, job security and health protection of workers, equal chances for promotion for all, daily and weekly limitation of working hours, and periodic holiday with pay.

**Article 8 - Trade union rights**

14. Please provide detailed information in accordance with the Committee's reporting guidelines in relation to article 8 of the Covenant. Where possible, please ensure that the information provided is particularly specific.

**Article 9 - Right to social security**

15. Please provide information on the categories of workers who do not belong to or benefit from the social security law.

16. Please provide information on the development of the Social Protection Fund of 1996 and in particular whether its financial assistance to the needy is considered to be adequate. What percentage of the gross national product (GDP) is spent on social security?

**Article 10 - Protection of the family, mothers and children**

17. What legal and/or administrative measures are being employed to protect the family from break-up in cases of polygamy, arbitrary divorce and the use of violence against women or children?

18. How are children protected against violence and sexual exploitation?
19. What is the incidence of child labour in Yemen?
20. What groups of women in Yemeni society do not have access to proper care during pregnancy and childbirth?

#### **Article 11 - Right to an adequate standard of living**

21. Please provide information on the percentage of the population living below the poverty line and also indicate how the poverty line is defined.
22. Please indicate whether the State party has a national strategy plan to combat poverty.

#### **Right to adequate housing**

23. Please provide statistical information on the housing situation in Yemen and indicate any concrete measures adopted to alleviate the housing shortage that exists in the country.
24. Please provide information with regard to homelessness and housing that lacks access to water and sanitation facilities. Please also include information on the number of people living in unsafe housing or other conditions which affect their health.

#### **Right to adequate food**

25. Please indicate to what extent hunger and malnutrition exist in Yemen. What is the situation of the more vulnerable and disadvantaged groups, such as poor people, women and children, older persons and persons with disabilities?

#### **Article 12 - Right to physical and mental health**

26. Please provide information on the measures undertaken to address the high rate of maternal mortality, which is attributed to, inter alia, teenage pregnancies, insufficient time between births, an inefficient referral system and the lack of emergency obstetric services and transport.
27. Please describe the international assistance received by the State party and the use to which it was put.
28. Please provide information on the negative effects of khat on the health of the population and its impact on food production, considering that khat is planted rather than crops.
29. Please indicate what measures have been taken to combat sexually transmitted diseases and to increase awareness, especially among the young, of their dangers. How widespread is the problem of HIV/AIDS in the country?

**Article 13 - Right to education**

30. Please provide information on progress achieved in raising the school attendance rate for children between 6 and 15 years of age from 56 per cent in 1994 to 90 per cent in 2006, and in reducing the illiteracy rate among girls from 76 per cent in 1994 to less than 40 per cent in 2006 and for boys from 36.7 per cent in 1994 to 20 per cent in 2006.
31. Please describe the conditions of teaching staff at all levels. How are teachers' salaries compared to other civil servants?
32. What qualifications are required for teachers in the different levels of formal education?
33. To what extent is human rights education integrated into the school curricula?
34. What efforts has the State party made to establish a system of basic education and functional literacy programmes for those persons who have not received any form of education?
35. Please provide statistical information on the extent of school dropouts, disaggregated by sex, age and areas of residence (rural and urban), as provided in article 14 of the Covenant.

**Article 14 - Right to free and compulsory education**

36. Please provide information on the measures that have been adopted by the State party in order to achieve compulsory education free of charge for all.

**Article 15 - The right to take part in cultural life and enjoy the benefits of scientific progress and the protection of intellectual property**

37. What measures are being taken by the authorities to promote and protect the culture of Yemen's minorities?
38. Please provide information on the number of cultural institutions, libraries, radio and television stations, movie companies, as well as newspapers and other periodical publications.

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