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COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND  
CULTURAL RIGHTS  
Pre-sessional working group  
3-7 December 2001

**LIST OF ISSUES TO BE TAKEN UP IN CONNECTION WITH THE  
CONSIDERATION OF THE INITIAL REPORT OF THE  
SOLOMON ISLANDS CONCERNING THE RIGHTS COVERED  
BY ARTICLES 1 TO 15 OF THE INTERNATIONAL COVENANT  
ON ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL RIGHTS  
(E/1990/5/Add.50)**

**I. GENERAL FRAMEWORK WITHIN WHICH THE  
COVENANT IS IMPLEMENTED**

1. Please indicate the main obstacles the State party is encountering in giving full effect to the rights provided for in the Covenant and what action the Government of National Unity, Reconciliation and Peace has taken in order to make progress in this regard. Please provide information on the peace agreement signed in October 2000 and its effects on the enjoyment of economic, social and cultural rights.
2. Please provide information on State bodies which ensure the protection of human rights, and in particular economic, social and cultural rights, in the Solomon Islands.
3. Please indicate what specific measures the Government has taken to give effect to the recommendations formulated by the Committee at its twenty-fourth session, on 11 May 1999, and please indicate which recommendations remain to be implemented.

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4. Please indicate whether the State party intends to adopt and implement a national action plan for human rights, in keeping with the recommendation of the World Conference on Human Rights (para. II.71 of the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action)?

5. Please indicate whether the State party intends to establish a national human rights institution, in accordance with the Paris principles, for the purpose of promoting human rights, including economic, social and cultural rights?

6. Please provide information on the results of the advisory services and technical cooperation offered by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in the course of the last two years.

7. What is the position of the Government on the recommendation of the 1993 World Conference on Human Rights concerning the elaboration of an optional protocol to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights that would permit the submission of complaints about violations of the rights contained in the Covenant?

8. Please provide information indicating why the State party has ratified so few of the conventions of the International Labour Organization (ILO) and information on any efforts or plans to proceed with ratifications.

9. Please explain why the State party has not acceded to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, and whether it plans to ratify these instruments in the near future.

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

### **Article 1. Self-determination**

10. Please indicate what measures the State party has taken to implement the Committee's recommendation contained in paragraph 26 of its concluding observations of 14 May 1999 (E/C.12/1/Add.33), with regard to the excessive exploitation of the country's fishing and forestry resources.

### **Article 2. International cooperation**

11. Is the State party concerned to ensure that account is taken of obligations under the Covenant when negotiating obligations with international financial institutions?

**Article 2. Non-discrimination**

12. Please provide updated information, legislative or otherwise, on measures adopted to combat discrimination, with regard to the rights provided for in the Covenant, against persons with disabilities, the mentally ill and older persons.

13. Please provide information on efforts to prevent discrimination against or between ethnic groups.

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

14. Please provide updated information on measures, legislative or otherwise, adopted to ensure the equal right of men and women to the enjoyment of economic, social and cultural rights and, in particular, the measures designed to eliminate existing disparities in this regard between rural and urban areas.

15. Please provide information on the results achieved following the adoption of the “national policy on women”. Please indicate what measures the State party is taking to incorporate a gender perspective into public policy, education programmes and national legislation.

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

**Article 6. Right to work**

16. Please provide information on the current unemployment situation in both rural and urban areas, as well as the extent of underemployment. In view of the very high unemployment rate, please indicate the legislative or other measures taken by the State party to create new employment, particularly for women and young people.

17. Please indicate what measures the State party has adopted to eliminate child labour, with particular reference to children who do unpaid work and work which is dangerous and/or which constitutes a health hazard for children.

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

18. Please provide updated information on how the minimum wage is determined and whether it is sufficient for sustaining a decent standard of living. Please provide information on categories of workers that are excluded from the minimum wage and on what basis. What measures, legislative or otherwise, have been taken to guarantee payment of the minimum wage? Please provide more information on the mechanism for setting and readjusting the minimum wage.

19. Please provide information on the measures, legislative or otherwise, that have been taken to guarantee equal pay for work of equal value for men and women.

20. Please provide information on the measures, legislative or otherwise, the State party is taking to implement its legislative and administrative provisions on labour conditions with regard, *inter alia*, to health, illness and holidays for workers in the public and private sectors.

#### **Article 8. Trade union rights**

21. Please provide more information on trade union membership in the past five years, especially in the forestry and plantation sectors.

22. Please provide information on the right to strike, including with regard to public officials, information on the conditions under which unions can be formed, the number of unions that exist and the level of independence of unions.

#### **Article 9. Right to social security**

23. Please provide additional information on the social security system, old age and disability benefits, women's benefits, occupational accidents and diseases, etc. in both the public and the private sectors. Are the social security benefits available sufficient to sustain a minimum standard of living?

24. Please provide further information on groups of persons who do not enjoy social security protection and on the measures the State party has taken to provide social protection for these population sectors, especially in rural areas.

#### **Article 10. Protection of the family, mothers and children**

25. Please provide updated information on the measures, legislative or otherwise, the State party has taken to protect members of the family, particularly women and children, from domestic violence.

26. Please provide further information on the custom of "arranged marriages", on whether the minimum age for entering into marriage is respected and on the reason for the low minimum age for marriage.

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

27. Please provide information on the measures the Government is taking to combat extreme poverty, bearing in mind that 80 per cent of families rely on subsistence production, according to data supplied in the report of the State party.

28. Please provide further information on what measures the State party is taking to ensure the availability to all persons of adequate housing, including with regard to sanitation and running water facilities.

**Article 12. Right to health**

29. Please give statistics for the last five years on malnutrition, with particular emphasis on children and other vulnerable groups, on programmes intended for these groups and on measures taken to address the problems identified.

30. Please provide additional information on funds earmarked by the State party for the health sector and the priorities set and results achieved with the implementation of the National Health Plan 1999-2003.

31. Please describe specific programmes designed to reduce and prevent infant mortality, maternal mortality and perinatal and neonatal mortality. Please also provide up-to-date statistics in this regard.

32. Please provide further information on the prevalence of, and measures taken to combat, malaria, other endemic diseases, and sexually transmitted diseases and HIV/AIDS. Please report on the services available to deal with mental health cases.

**Articles 13 and 14. Right to education**

33. Please explain why primary education is not obligatory, in contravention of article 13, and the measures the State party intends to adopt to remedy this alarming situation. Please also provide information on the reasons for the very low enrolment in primary, secondary and tertiary education.

34. Please provide information on the budgetary allocation, as a percentage of GNP, allocated to education and whether this amount is sufficient to meet requirements, as stipulated by the Convention.

35. Please provide further information on human rights education in schools, universities, and for the judiciary and the police.

**Article 15. Right to take part in cultural life**

36. Please report on measures taken to promote and safeguard the values and cultural identity of the country's different ethnic groups.

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