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COMMITTEE ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

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WRITTEN REPLIES BY THE GOVERNMENT OF ICELAND TO THE LIST OF ISSUES (CRC/C/OPSC/ISL/Q/1) TO BE TAKEN UP IN CONNECTION WITH THE CONSIDERATION OF THE INITIAL REPORT OF ICELAND SUBMITTED UNDER ARTICLE 12, PARAGRAPH 1, OF THE OPTIONAL PROTOCOL TO THE CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD ON THE SALE OF CHILDREN, CHILD PROSTITUTION AND CHILD PORNOGRAPHY (CRC/C/OPSA/ISL/1)*

[Replies received on 16 May 2006]

*In accordance with the information transmitted to States parties regarding the processing of their reports, the present document was not formally edited before being sent to the United Nations translation services.

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Please provide statistical data (including by sex, age, urban/rural areas) for the years 2003, 2004 and 2005 on:

the number of children trafficked to and from Iceland;

the number of reported cases related to the offences defined in article 3.1 and the Protocol;

the number of cases prosecuted and sanctioned in criminal courts; and

the number of child victims provided recovery assistance as defined in article 9.3 of the Protocol.

During the years 2003 to 2005, no record is of children trafficked to and from Iceland, and no reported cases of sale of children or child prostitution. Similarly, during the same period, there were no cases prosecuted and sanctioned with relation to sale of children or child prostitution. With respect to child pornography the number of cases reported (the National Commissioner of the Police), prosecuted (the Director of Public Prosecutions) and sanctioned (district courts and the Supreme Court) was the following (table 1):

Table 1.

Number of cases reported, prosecuted and sanctioned related to offences defined in Article 210, paragraph 4, of the Icelandic Penal Code.

Year	Reported (National Commissioner of the Police)	Total (Director of Public Prosecutions)	Withdrawn	Prosecuted	Acquitted in district courts	Convictions in district courts	Appeal		
							Acquitted in Supreme Court	Convictions in Supreme Court	Number
1999		3	1	2	0	2	1	0	1
2000	4	5	0	5	0	5	1	0	1
2001	11	4	1	3*	0	2	0	0	0
2002	17	6	0	6**	0	5	2***	0	1
2003	15	13	2	11	1	10	0	0	0
2004	15	5	0	5	1	4	0	0	0
2005	18	12	4	10	1	7	1	0	1
Alls		48	8	42	3	35	5	0	4

*1 prosecution withdrawn (deceased)

**1 prosecution withdrawn (deceased)

Year 2005: Two prosecutions pending

d) the number of child victims provided recovery assistance as defined in article 9.3 of the Protocol.

According to information provided by the Child Protection Agency and Children's House there were no Icelandic children victims of sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography.

Please provide information on budget allocation both at the national, regional and local level for the implementation of the rights contained in the Optional Protocol.

Currently, no comprehensive statistical data are available on budget allocation both at the national and local level for the implementation of the rights contained in the Optional Protocol.

Please provide more information on the content of the National Policy on the Information Society for the period 2004-2007, especially with regard to measures taken to ensure the safe use of the Internet by children (Paragraph 51 of the State party report).

The policy of the Government of Iceland on the Information Society 2004-2007 emphasizes the safe use of Internet by children. Regarding responsibility, and its main objectives and implementation, the policy states:

Parents are facing the fact that with the advent of new communications media children now have virtually unlimited access to information and various types of material in their homes and everywhere. Although this promises huge potential for self-development and education, it also entails various hazards. Parents and schools will have to cope with the new situation and assume responsibility for the computer, Internet and telephone usage of their children. ...

Special attention shall be paid to the welfare of children in these times of change. Parents and schools must be encouraged to shoulder responsibility for the computer, Internet and telephone usage of their children as the younger ones seek routes through the complications of the information society.

Responsibility: Ministry of Education, Science and Culture; Ministry of Justice.

On Security, and its main objectives and implementation, the policy stipulates:

A committee shall be appointed to discuss the division of work between public bodies in security matters having to do with the utilisation of information and telecommunications technology, protection against electronic terrorism, junk mail, consumer protection and such ethical issues as immoral material on the Internet, etc. Furthermore, the committee is to present suggestions on requirements for revising Acts of Parliament concerning the integration of information technology, telecommunications and the mass media. The committee shall complete its assignment no later than 2005.

Responsibility: Ministry of Communications. ...

Support shall be given to communicating guidelines and educational materials on security matters, consumer protection, the protection of privacy, and controversial ethical issues related to the ever-growing use of technology. Such information shall be accessible on the World Wide Web no later than 2005.

Responsibility: Ministry of Communications / Post and Telecom Administration.

A committee dealing with network and information security has been working for almost an year and is about to finish its work. A final report is expected this summer. It is premature to list up its outcome but one of the most important suggestions, concerning safe use of Internet, is:

One portal shall be created for all information and communication between citizen and government concerning security, protection against electronic terrorism, junk mail, consumer protection and such ethical issues as immoral material on the Internet. This includes safe use of Internet by children.

The policy of the Government of Iceland on the Information Society 2004-2007 has been published in English (see enclosed). It is also available at the website of the Prime Minister's Office (<http://eng.forsaetisraduneyti.is/information-society/English/nr/1327>).

Please provide information on whether Iceland considers adopting a National Action Plan related to issues covered by the Optional Protocol.

The Government of Iceland has adopted various measures to prevent and criminalize sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, and to assist victims, cf. information in its initial report to the committee. The Government continues to address issues covered by the Optional Protocol. For instance, two bills submitted by the government to the present parliament (session 2005-2006) contain provisions strengthening the right and protection of children.

A bill amending the Penal Code (with regard to Sexual Offences) proposes that young age of victims should influence the determination of a sentence in case of a rape. It is commented in the explanations to the bill that young victims have little psychological or physical strength to defend themselves, and relatively little violence or minor threat can appear major to children. To underline the seriousness of sexual offences against children the bill proposes that if a victim is younger than 18 it should influence the determination of a sentence as an aggravating factor.

Another bill amending the Penal Code (implementing the European Convention on Cybercrime) proposes an amendment to article 210, paragraph 4, of the Penal Code. The amendment underscores that the provision covers not only procurement of child pornography through a computer system for oneself, but also for another person, cf. article 9, paragraph 1(d), of the European

Convention on Cybercrime.

A cooperation between the National Commissioner of Police and Internet Service Providers in Iceland is under consideration, with respect to establishment of content filters, preventing users to access web-sites containing child pornography. It is hoped that the alliance will realize in few months.

Please provide information on the results of the activities of the committee referred to in paragraph 53 of the State party's report (preparation of a comprehensive and cohesive public policy on children and teenagers). Has the final report been presented to the Althingi and if so, what further actions have been taken?

The Committee on public policy on children and teenagers published its report in March 2005 and it was submitted to Althingi on April 1st 2005. The report included several proposals, including that the government should seriously consider recommendations made by the Committee on the Rights of the Child in January 2003. The Prime Minister has given a Committee on the Position of the Icelandic Family (established in February 2005) the mandate to review the above proposals and integrate them with the latter's recommendations, aiming at strengthening the position of the family. The new Committee is also given the mandate of preparing a comprehensive and cohesive public policy on children and teenagers.

Please provide more information on compensation awarded to child victims of offences under the Optional Protocol, as described in article 9.4 (State party report paragraph 45).

Currently, no statistical data are available on compensation awarded to child victims of offences under the Optional Protocol, as described in article 9.4. The information will be submitted to the Committee during the consideration of the report of Iceland.

In paragraph 62 of the State party's report it is stated that Iceland is preparing the necessary legal amendments and other measures to ratify the international instruments signed. Please provide information on any progress in this respect.

The Government is preparing the necessary legal amendments and other measures to provide for the ratification of the international instruments listed in paragraph 62 of its initial report. With respect to the European Convention on Cybercrime, a bill has been submitted to the parliament (session 2005-2006), proposing necessary changes to several legal codes, in order to implement the convention and facilitate its ratification.

Please provide information on financial or other support given to international efforts, e.g. by international or national NGOs, to prevent and combat sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography.

The Ministry of Social Affairs financially supported Save the Children in Iceland, of ISK 6.3 million during two years, supporting a hot line in the organization's campaign against child pornography on the Internet. It may be added, that in 2005 the Government increased its financial contributions to UNICEF by 60 percent.
