



**Convention on the  
Rights of the Child**

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**COMMITTEE ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD**

**CONSIDERATION OF REPORTS SUBMITTED BY STATES PARTIES  
UNDER ARTICLE 44 OF THE CONVENTION**

**Second periodic reports of States parties due in 1998**

**CYPRUS\***

[15 September 2000]

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\* For the initial report submitted by the Government of Cyprus, see CRC/C/8/Add.24; for its consideration by the Committee, see documents CRC/C/SR.309-311 and CRC/C/15/Add.59.

The annexes referred to in the report may be consulted in the files of the secretariat of the Committee.

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## I. GENERAL INFORMATION

1. Cyprus signed the Convention on the Rights of the Child on 5 October 1990 and ratified it by Law No. 243 of 1990 (Official Gazette of the Republic, No. 2566, 28 December 1990).
2. The Department of Social Welfare Services (of the Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance) coordinated the preparation of the initial report (CRC/C/8/Add.24) and a written reply (CRC/C/11/WP.3) to the questions set out by the Committee on the Rights of the Child. The two documents were submitted to the Committee in 1994 and 1996, respectively.
3. Governmental and non-governmental bodies contributed to the preparation of both reports.
4. The Committee on the Rights of the Child held three meetings on the Cyprus report on 4 and 5 June 1996. Representatives of Cyprus went to Geneva and discussed the report.
5. On the whole, the concluding observations of the Committee (CRC/C/15/Add.59) were encouraging as concerns the standing of Cyprus in relation to the implementation of the Convention.
6. The Committee expressed concerns and made recommendations to the Government of Cyprus on some issues which required further processing in order to improve conformity with the provisions of the Convention.
7. According to article 44 of the Convention every five years States parties should submit a progress report to the Committee as regards further measures adopted towards the implementation of the Convention.
8. The present report has been monitored by the National Institution for the Protection of Human Rights. As mentioned in previous reports, the Government of Cyprus regrets the fact that, owing to the continuing Turkish occupation of 1974, it cannot secure the implementation of the Convention in almost half of the island. The report refers only to the government-controlled area of Cyprus.
9. The following section of this report presents, article by article, the progress made in the implementation of the Convention.

## II. IMPLEMENTATION OF SPECIFIC ARTICLES OF THE CONVENTION

### Article 1

10. The Committee recommended more harmonization of national laws with the Convention by:
  - (a) Changing the age of criminal responsibility (7 years);
  - (b) Treating 16-18-year-old offenders as children, not as adults.

11. As far as these recommendations are concerned there has been further development regarding the age of criminal responsibility, which has been raised from the age of 7 to the age of 10. There is no criminal responsibility up to the age of 10. There is criminal responsibility between the ages of 10 and 12 if it is proved that during the act or omission, the child had the capacity to know that he ought to have avoided the act or omission ((Amendment) Law No. 15 (1)/1999).

## **Article 2**

12. The Committee recommended that the Cyprus authorities take the necessary measures to ensure that children born out of wedlock enjoy all their fundamental rights.

13. The family legislation regarding children, for example the children (Relationship and Legal Status) Law of 1991 (187/1991), the Adoption Law 1995 (19 (1)/1995), the Relations between Parents and Children Law, 1990 (216/1990), the Family Courts Law, 1990 (23/1990) and the Family Courts (Religious Groups) Law, 1994 (87 (1)/1994) are in conformity with the Convention.

14. The Ministry of Justice and Public Order monitors this legislation and had close cooperation with the Office of the Attorney-General of the Republic, the Law Commissioner, the House of Representatives, the Supreme Court and other official public services to promote the continuing improvement of the above legislation.

15. The rights of children born out wedlock are secured by the Family Law and, in particular, by the Children (Relationship and Legal Status) Law of 1991 (No. 187/1991).

## **Article 3**

16. The Republic of Cyprus secures the provision of article 3 as indicated in the initial and supplementary reports. However, according to the Committee this principle is not fully respected in matters relating to adoption.

17. This does not hold true since the most basic principle embedded in the legislation and practices of the Department of Social Welfare Services is to serve the best interests of the child. In particular, the Adoption Law of 1995 (19 (1) of 1995) includes this principle as a basic prerequisite of the adoption process. Article 5 (1) (b) of the Law states that “the Court shall make the adoption order, if it is satisfied that the making of the adoption order will be in the interest of the adopted taking into consideration his wishes, if his age and his spiritual capability permit that”.

#### **Article 4**

18. The Department of Social Welfare Services is in the process of computerization. This is expected to promote:

- (a) Quicker and more efficient delivery of services;
- (b) Monitoring of services.

19. The police also collect and file data and information regarding vulnerable groups of children, for example children who are victims of sexual abuse and exploitation, drug users, etc.

20. It is worth mentioning that since 1999 the police have kept full statistical data regarding young offenders. Thus, five cases were reported to the police for the year 1997 regarding the defilement of girls between 13 and 16 years and two true cases of girls under 13 years of age. (See also annex II.)

21. Since June 1998, according to a circular by the General Attorney, the officers of the social welfare services of the Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance, the Ministry of Health, the Police and the Ministry of Education and Culture are obliged to inform the General Attorney within seven days as regards any reports/complaints/cases of abuse.

22. Recently the Advisory Committee for the Prevention and Combat of Violence in the Family started a study regarding systematic data collection on compulsory reports to the General Attorney.

23. The computerization of the Department of Social Welfare Services, which is at the last stage, will help the collection of information and data regarding children. This will contribute to the formation of policy and the creation of necessary services.

24. The Department of Social Welfare Services continues to foster instrumental assistance to families in need. For example, the number of home caregivers hired either by the Government or NGOs (subsidized by the Government) is steadily on the rise. Services have expanded to more geographical areas.

25. The most basic principle embedded in the legislation and practices of the Department of Social Welfare Services is the aim to serve the best interests of the child. Adoption Law 19 (1) of 1995 includes this principle as a basic prerequisite of the adoption process (art. 5 of the Adoption Law 19 (1)/95).

#### **Article 5**

26. Since September 1997, the Department of Social Welfare Services has operated the Centre for Family Guidance. A psychologist and a welfare officer offer their services to families with multiple and complex problems who are in need of specialized counselling. Cases are referred by welfare officers who are already involved with those families.

### Article 6

27. In response to the list of issues brought up in connection with the consideration of the initial report of Cyprus, here are the following latest health indicators:

- (a) Life Expectancy at birth: (1994-1996) - males: 75.3 years, females: 79.8 years; (1996-1997) - males: 75 years, females: 80 years;
- (b) Total fertility rate: (1993-1996): 2.18; (1997) 2.004, (1998) 1.918;
- (c) Crude birth rate: (1996) 14.9/1,000 population, (1997) 14.2, (1998) 13.4;
- (d) Infant mortality: (1996) 8.3 infant deaths per 1,000 live birth, (1997) 8, (1998) 7.

28. The Ministry of Education and Culture, through its services for adult education, organizes lectures and debates on problems concerning pre-marital and parenthood counselling. Moreover the Ministry subsidizes the Pancyprian School for Parents, which provides adult education in cooperation with the teachers union, the organization of primary school inspectors and the parents' committees which function in every school.

29. In-service training seminars are organized by the Cyprus Pedagogical Institute in cooperation with the Ministry of Education and Culture (Department of Primary and Secondary Education) to help teachers acquire new ideas and improve their teaching competence. Special programmes are organized with the purpose of effectively meeting all the needs of exceptional children, including the gifted and the talented.

30. Furthermore, primary school inspectors, within the context of their visits to schools, stress the point that a variety of learning activities may be organized, with relevant adaptation of the school programme so that all children may benefit from it.

31. The primary school teachers organize individual teaching activities of various levels in order to meet the needs of all children, including the gifted and the talented. Furthermore, all children in primary schools have the opportunity to satisfy and improve their talents, since a variety of interesting activities are organized in music, art, drama, physical education and athletics.

### Article 7

32. No further development.

### Article 8

33. Regarding the birth registration of children, it is the same whether they live in rural or urban areas. No problems have been observed. See also article 2.

### Article 9

34. In Cyprus there is still a category of children whose right to regular contact with their parents is utterly violated. These are the children whose parents live in the part of Cyprus which is occupied by the Turkish military forces since 1974. In the occupied area, secondary education is not allowed for the Greeks and the Maronites.

35. As a result, children must either be deprived of secondary education or be separated from their parents in order to attend secondary school in the free area under the control of the Government of the Republic of Cyprus. They either live in a boarding house run by the State (only for boys) or with relatives.

36. Younger children are allowed by the occupying forces to visit their parents during festive periods only (Christmas/Easter). Older children are not allowed to visit their families at all while those wishing to return to their homes, on completion of their education, are prevented from doing so.

37. The number of children whose fundamental rights are violated due to their ethnic origin is shown below:

**Table 1**

#### Children in the occupied areas aged 0-18 years

	Boys	Girls	Total
Greek	26	30	56
Maronites	1	-	1
Total	27	30	57

**Table 2**

#### Children separated from their families in order to receive secondary education in the government-controlled area

	Boys	Girls	Total
Greek Cypriot	20	14	34
Maronites	4	4	8
Total	24	18	42

**Table 3**

**Students attending third-level education not allowed to visit  
their parents in the occupied area**

Students at the University of Cyprus	5
Students abroad	2
Students at Cyprus colleges	5

**Article 10**

38. The Republic of Cyprus secures the provision of article 10 as it has been indicated in the initial and supplementary reports. There is no further development.

**Article 11**

39. The Republic secures the provision of article 11 as it has been indicated in the initial and supplementary reports. There is no further development.

**Article 12**

40. See article 15.

**Article 13**

41. See article 15.

**Article 14**

42. See article 15.

**Article 15**

43. According to the report of the Committee on the Rights of the Child, there is need for more involvement of children in decisions within the family and in administrative and judicial procedures regarding them.

44. Participation and respect of children's views on issues which affect them is promoted adequately through the general family legislation and particularly through the Relations between Parents and Children Law of 1990 (216/1990).

45. The judges of the Family Court put a lot of effort in order to create the appropriate circumstances which help a child and allow him/her to express his/her opinions; for example, the communication between a judge and a child may be secured without the presence of the parents.

46. Through legislation and administrative procedures, the Department of Social Welfare Services involves children in decisions concerning them.

47. As far as the above principles are concerned, revision of the legislation regarding the child has already been started by a committee which is monitored by the Law Commissioner. The purpose of this committee is the harmonization of legislation regarding the child with international conventions and with the International Convention on the Rights of the Child, in particular.

48. It is worth mentioning that one of the most important targets of the Department of Social Welfare Services is to secure the best interest of the child and at the same time to respect his/her opinion.

49. Children's involvement in the decision-making procedures constitutes an integral part of the policy of the Department of Social Welfare Services. The department considers the participation of children (depending on their age and capabilities) in personnel meetings on issues that involve their placement in an institution or a foster family.

#### **Article 16**

50. The Republic secures the provision of article 16 as it has been indicated in the initial and supplementary reports. (However, the rights provided for in articles 12 to 16 are utterly violated for the Greeks and Maronites who live in the Turkish-occupied areas of Cyprus, including the children.)

51. There is no further development.

#### **Article 17**

52. The Republic secures the provision of article 17 as it has been indicated in the initial and supplementary report.

53. There is not any further development.

#### **Article 18**

54. The Republic secures the provision of article 18 as it has been indicated in the initial and supplementary reports. However, there are further developments in the following areas: the Department of Social Welfare Services continues to expand supportive services to assist parents in their child-rearing responsibilities e.g. childcare centres and home care.

55. Regulations (157/97 Order) have been passed according to the Centres for the Protection and Care of Children Law of 1996 (2 (1)/96). These regulations set minimum standards on safety, hygiene, health, child-space ratio, and staff qualifications at day-care centres for school-age children.

56. The Department of Social Welfare Services increasingly subsidizes a growing number of programmes/services for children. Emphasis is laid on reinforcing community day-care centres (for pre-schoolers and school-age children) which remain open in the afternoon to provide care to children of working parents. In 1997, an amount of £C 683,000 (42.4 per cent of the total) was provided to such centres in the form of governmental grants.

57. In total, there are 397 day-care centres of which 104 are run by communities, 11 by the Government and 282 by the private sector. It is interesting to note that, according to the latest statistics, the care of children under 11 years of age, 1996-97 is as follows:

**Table 4**

Care of children under 11 years of age 1996-1997	Percentage
Care by a household member	57
Care by relative/friend without payment	16
Care in household with payment	2.0
Care at kindergarten/day-nursery	15.5
Other	1.6
No care	6.2

Note: It is worth mentioning that the overwhelming majority of the children without any care is 7 years of age and over.

#### **Article 19**

58. The report of the Committee recommends that a study be conducted relevant to the issue of protection of children from abuse and neglect.

59. Accordingly, the Advisory Committee for the Prevention and Combat of Violence in the Family (appointed by the Council of Ministers and selected both from the public and the private sector) has already initiated a comprehensive study to improve the understanding of the nature and scope of child neglect and abuse in Cyprus.

60. Recently a new Law of 2000 (No. 3 (1) of 2000) has been enacted under the title Combating of Trafficking in Persons and Sexual Exploitation of Children. Under this law, certain if not all forms of modern slavery are considered offences entailing severe punishment. Acts which have been made offences under this law are the trafficking of children, exploitation of women and children by prostitution, the use of children for the production of pornographic films and other publications. An important provision of the law is the appointment of a guardian for the protection of the victim.

#### **Article 20**

61. The Republic secures the provision of article 20 as it has been indicated in the initial and supplementary reports.

## Article 21

62. The Republic of Cyprus recognizes and permits the system of adoption. The Adoption Law of 1995 (19 (1)) of 1995, which repealed the Adoption of Children Law, Cap 274, provides for adoption. The Adoption Law is divided into six parts: preliminary provisions; provisions relating to the requirements and procedure for adoption; the protection of the minor to be adopted; provisions which deal with placement and adoption; and provisions which deal with the effects of adoption.

63. Some of the most important provisions embodied in this Law are those referring to:

(a) The possibility of placement of a minor through the Department of Social Welfare Services or directly;

(b) The abolition of the precondition for adoption through the church and;

(c) The possibility by the adopted person to be informed about his/her origin through the Department of Social Welfare Services.

64. It is interesting to note that the Adoption Law of 1995 (19 (1) of 1995) includes the principle of the best interests of the child as a prerequisite for the adoption process (art. 5).

## Article 22

65. The provisions of this article are secured under the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees (Geneva, 1951) which was adopted by the Government of the United Kingdom before Cyprus' independence. That Convention is binding on the Republic of Cyprus together with the Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees, which was adopted by the General Assembly at its twenty-first session. The Protocol was ratified by Law 73 of 1968.

66. There is a Law No. 6 (1) of 2000 providing for the protection of refugees. The law consists of six parts:

- Part I contains introductory provisions defining, inter alia, the term “refugee” and laying certain basic principles for the treatment of refugees;
- Part II contains provisions relating to the entry of asylum-seekers into the Republic and the issue of permission for temporary residence;
- Part III contains procedural matters regarding the recognition of the status refugee, i.e. where it is made, how applications manifestly ill-founded are treated, examinations of the applicant, right of recourse of the applicant if dissatisfied with the decision of the Authority and other related matters.
- Part IV deals with the rights and obligations of refugees. It also contains provisions about the rights of the refugees' families;

- Part V establishes an Authority for the recognition of the status of refugees. It consists of the director of the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Justice and Public Order or their representatives; and
- Part VI contains final provisions including provisions for deportation and for making regulations.

### **Article 23**

67. The Republic of Cyprus secures the provisions of article 23 as indicated in the initial and supplementary reports.

68. Moreover, the de-institutionalization of mentally disabled children is highly encouraged by the Department of Social Welfare Services. In the past few years, both governmental and non-governmental sectors have expanded the operation of small units in the community (about five persons) for mentally disabled children.

69. Social integration is further promoted through the provision of specialized care and other supportive services, education and vocational training.

70. The Ministry of Education and Culture continues to have its own representative in the Committee for the Protection of Individuals with a Learning Disability/Mental Handicap, an autonomous legal entity, protected and set up through the Mentally Retarded Persons Law of 1989 (117/89). Its main aim is the safeguarding of the rights of persons with mental disabilities.

71. According to the Special Education Law of 1979 (47/1979) and relevant regulations, special education is free and compulsory. It is provided through integration of disabled children in the ordinary school system or at special schools.

72. Any child between the ages of 5 and 18, suspected of having learning and/or behaviour problems, may be referred to the proper authorities for possible special education placement. Before such decision is reached, the child must undergo medical and psychological examinations. For this purpose, the legislation requires the establishment of district psychopedagogical committees consisting of a psychiatrist a clinical psychologist, an educational psychologist, a welfare officer and a representative of the Ministry of Education. They identify the number of persons with disabilities, the form and degree of the disability and they suggest the kind of immediate and long-term education programmes and facilities needed.

73. The government policy is not to segregate disabled children but to give them the opportunity to learn and grow together with all other children. They learn as much as their abilities and potentialities allow them to learn, in an ordinary environment which satisfies their psychological and physical needs. Extra help is offered to these children by special teachers.

74. The Department of Primary Education uses the services of experienced and specialized teachers, called coordinators of special education or special needs advisers, to coordinate the programmes provided in special education. Teachers' advisers provide support on issues related to daily practice. The special-needs advisers work under the guidance of the inspectors of special education.

75. The Department of Primary Education has recently established small units in regular schools for children with a hearing impairment, autistic and mentally retarded children for better fulfilment of their special needs.

76. Another area of concern to the Ministry of Education and Culture, beyond the need to improve the professional competence of teachers, is the provision of adequate teaching materials for children with special needs. New technology such as computers has also been introduced in special education programmes.

77. The table in annex 1 indicates persons 19 years and younger with a long-term disability (census of population 1992).

#### **Article 24**

78. The Republic secures the provisions of article 24 as indicated in the initial and supplementary reports.

79. According to the Ministry of Health, the health of children in Cyprus has improved in recent years as indicated by the existing data. Infant mortality has decreased appreciably and current figures are seven deaths for 1,000 live births in 1998, compared to 8.3 in 1996 and eight in 1997.

80. The results of the latest survey (1997) on immunization coverage in pre-school children, showed that all EPI antigens were very satisfactory, though there was room for improvement in the cases of measles and hepatitis B. More specifically, coverage for OPV (polio) and DPT3 (Diphtheria, Pertussis, Tetanus) was 97.7 per cent for MMR (Measles, Mumps, Rubella) 90 per cent and for HBV (Hepatitis B) 88 per cent.

81. School curricula have been revised, providing, among other things, health education in its most comprehensive sense. The governmental decision on a school programme which promotes health involves all children at all levels of education.

82. Health and hygiene are taught and promoted through a combined effort and are incorporated in the whole programme of the schools and mainly in science, home economics, physical education and social studies.

83. Great emphasis is given to health education in the new curriculum of primary education (1994, chapter "Health Education"). Some of the objectives are that nursery and primary schools have to help children:

- (a) To develop positive attitudes and skills in relation to health;

- (b) To learn basic knowledge about their bodies, the care of their bodies and elementary first-aid knowledge and skills;
- (c) To acquire skills which will help them to protect themselves from danger, in order to keep their physical, spiritual, psychological and social health;
- (d) To cultivate attitudes of neatness and health;
- (e) To conduct, communicate, accept and respect people with special needs in their social environment;
- (f) To develop healthy nourishing habits and attitudes;
- (g) To become well-informed consumers; and
- (h) To acquire knowledge about various substances such as salt, sugar, alcohol, nicotine etc. and about the damage that the use of these substances could cause to their health.

84. Health and hygiene education is reinforced by various activities such as in-service seminars, the publishing of relevant teacher books and textbooks for children, the personal interest of the primary school inspectors etc. It is also reinforced by the involvement of the parents and the community through parental guidance programmes, family planning education and health preventive care.

85. The Ministry of Health, in collaboration with the Ministry of Education and Culture, runs the school health service for all levels of education. These services offer general screening of all primary and secondary school children aiming at the early detection and diagnosis of various health problems for early treatment and prevention, if possible. Every child is entitled to medical examinations concerning the general condition of its health.

86. The dental services have launched a nationwide campaign for the prevention and treatment of cavities in primary schoolchildren. Such campaigns have occurred in the past but they have been recently strengthened following the results of a survey concluded in 1992.

87. The Audiology Centre, which has been in operation since 1991, offers services for the secondary prevention in matters of hearing impairments in children (and adults).

88. During the last three years a scientific study has taken place among children of the sixth grade in elementary schools, concerning their health condition. The findings of this research, which is taking place in cooperation between the Ministry of Education and Culture, the Ministry of Health and the University of Crete, are expected to help in the planning of the improvement of the children's health condition.

89. Special attention has been given by the Government of Cyprus to the provision of educational opportunities to every child. Pursuing this policy the Ministry of Education and Culture continues to run special schools for those children who suffer from such physical, mental, social or emotional problems, which do not allow them to study and benefit from the ordinary school curriculum.

90. During the period 1996-98 the following special schools have been in operation:

- (a) Five schools for trainable children;
- (b) One school for the deaf;
- (c) One school for the blind;
- (d) One school for emotionally disturbed children; and
- (e) One school for spastic children.

91. The operation of special schools is still considered necessary because of the severity and the uniqueness of the needs of some children that cannot be met in an ordinary school. The number of children attending special schools, however, has drastically decreased over the last years, because of the integration programmes.

92. As has been mentioned in the initial report, self-care activities, occupational therapy, speech therapy, communication skills, functional academic skills and other subjects aiming at the development of the mental abilities of children to the maximum of their potential are included in the curriculum. In addition, special schools and units strive to ensure the provision of the highest attainable standard of health among their children. Moreover, special programmes are designed to ensure that the disabled child has effective access through the school system to training, health-care services, rehabilitation services, preparation for employment, exercise and recreation opportunities.

93. All special schools and units are staffed by specially trained teachers. During the last years the Ministry of Education and Culture has employed specialists, such as speech therapists, remedial teachers, gymnastics masters, psychologists etc., thus improving and completing the provision of services to special education children.

94. The financing of general education programmes for special schools and units also comes under the responsibility of the Ministry of Education and Culture. In certain special cases, some additional services may be provided with the close cooperation of the Ministry, the Parents' Association and other charity bodies.

95. In addition to the educational provision in special schools run by the Government, the Ministry of Education and Culture covers the needs, in teaching staff, in the following establishments run by other governmental or private bodies:

- (a) The Vocational Rehabilitation centre;

(b) The Homes for severely retarded children which are run by the Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance;

(c) Hospitals and other institutions which are run by the Ministry of Health; and

(d) Some charity (non-profit) organizations

96. The enrichment of programmes (in the above institutions) with educational objectives, in addition to the vocational ones, is considered very important and it is the intention of the Ministry to continue the provision of teachers to those programmes.

97. Seminars are organized for teachers by the Ministry of Education and Culture with the aim of improving their teaching competence in special education. Seminars are also organized for parents. Specialists from Cyprus, as well as from abroad, conduct these seminars. The number of teachers who have participated in international seminars and other short-term courses (concerning new methods and approaches in special education) has increased during the last five years. This has greatly facilitated the exchange of knowledge and experience between Cypriots and educationists from abroad.

98. Progress has been made with respect to the process for amending the Special Education Law of 1979 (47 of 1979), in order to harmonize it with new perspectives and trends. The bill has been discussed and approved by the Council of Ministers and has been forwarded to the House of Representatives for final approval. It is expected that a new law for Special Education will be enforced soon.

99. As part of the special-education policy of the Ministry of Education and Culture, the Department of Primary Education has recently established small units for the hearing impaired, autistic and mentally retarded children in ordinary schools for better fulfilment of their special needs. A part of the teaching programme is offered by a specialized teacher in a special class while the rest of their needs are satisfied in the ordinary class.

100. The Department of Primary Education uses the services of experienced and specialized teachers, called coordinators of special education or special needs advisers to coordinate the programmes in special education and advise teachers on issues related to their everyday practice. The special needs advisers are working under the guidance of the inspector for special education. By the next school year the number of special education inspectors will be increased from one to two.

101. Another area of concern for the Ministry of Education and Culture, beyond the need to improve the professional competence of the teachers, is the provision of adequate teaching materials for children with special needs. New technology such as computers has also been introduced in special educational programmes.

102. The Ministry of Education and Culture, in its effort to provide a continuation of the work done in schools and to relieve parents in employment, has started and has been operating in recent years an afternoon programme for children attending special schools. The programme is offered free of charge and covers a wide variety of activities like dance, swimming, physical

education, music therapy, art, entertainment, etc. The above subjects are taught by specialists like psychologists, social workers, physiotherapists and others. The cost of running the programme is covered by the Ministry and the parents' associations, on an equal basis.

103. Special-education programmes for slow learners and children from deprived areas are also provided in secondary education as follows:

(a) A considerable amount of teaching time assigned to gymnasium above their curriculum needs is used for supporting children with learning difficulties. "Withdrawal system" is used for teaching small groups of children with learning difficulties. Slow learners are withdrawn from the regular class and are offered special support in the subjects of mathematics and language;

(b) The Department of Secondary Education operates small groups for hearing impaired children in ordinary schools. A part of the teaching programme is offered in special classes while the rest is offered in ordinary classes; and

(c) In some deprived areas the department offers smaller groups for the newcomers in language and mathematics as a kind of support to the less able children.

#### **Article 25**

104. The Republic of Cyprus secures the provisions of article 25 as indicated in the initial and supplementary reports.

#### **Article 26**

105. The Republic secures the provisions of article 26 as indicated in the initial and supplementary reports.

106. Furthermore, the Children and Young Persons Employment Law prohibits:

(a) The employment of children under the age of 15 in any occupation;

(b) The employment of children under the age of 16 in any industrial occupation, but allows children between the age of 15 and 16 to be engaged as apprentices for the purpose of learning a trade or calling to any person who holds a special license issued by the Minister of Labour and Social Insurance. (see section 3 of the Children and Young Persons Employment Law, Cap. 175 as amended by Law No. 21 (1) of 2000); and

(c) The employment of persons under the age of 18 underground or in a mine.

107. Therefore, no person can be insured under the Social Insurance Legislation in respect of any employment which is prohibited under the Children and Young Persons Employment Law. Persons under the age of 18, who are employed in accordance with the provisions of the Children and Young Persons Law, are insured in the same manner as adults, either as employees or self-employed and enjoy the same benefits.

108. In addition, it should be noted that under the social insurance legislation, beneficiaries of long-term and short-term periodical benefits are entitled to increases in respect of their minor children.

109. The term “minor” is defined as:

- (a) A person under the age of 15 years;
- (b) An unmarried male person between the age of 15 and 25 who is receiving full-time education or is attending a course of training approved by the Director or is in active service in the National Guard under the National Guard Laws;
- (c) An unmarried female person between the ages of 15 and 23 who is receiving full-time education or is attending a course of training approved by the Director and;
- (d) An unmarried person who is over the age of 15 and is permanently incapable of self-support.

110. Social insurance legislation also provides for the payment of orphans benefit in respect of a minor:

- (a) Whose parents have both died and one of them was insured;
- (b) Whose parents were separated and the one under whose care he/she was has died;
- (c) One of whose parents died and the surviving parent is not entitled to a widow’s pension; or
- (d) Whose widowed mother, who was in receipt of widow’s pension, remarried.

111. Finally, it may be noted that families with at least four dependent children are entitled to a family benefit under the Child Benefit Law. The term “dependent” for purposes of this law has the same meaning as the term “minor” under the social insurance laws.

### **Article 27**

112. The Republic secures the provisions of article 27 as indicated in the initial and supplementary reports.

113. Home-help services are expanded both at a State and a non-governmental level in order to serve more families in need of instrumental assistance.

## Article 28

114. The Republic secures the provisions of article 28 as indicated in the initial and supplementary reports.

115. Education for ages 5 to 15 is free and compulsory and free for ages 15 to 18.

116. Primary and secondary education covers almost 100 per cent of the children and is available to all children irrespective of race, colour, religion or ethnic group of origin. Children coming from low-income families and children in rural areas are treated in the same way as all other children. Primary schools have been established and operate in all towns and villages. In very few villages where the number of pupils does not permit the operation of primary schools, adequate transportation is provided by the State so as to facilitate pupils to attend nearby schools.

117. According to relevant regulations, the principals of schools are responsible to report to the Ministry of Education and Culture any irregular attendance, dropping out of schools or complete non-attendance. Those who violate the law are prosecuted. There are also supportive measures if the family is in a state of need.

118. It should be noted that, with the permission of the director of primary education, and on the basis of the suggestion of psychopedagogical district committees, primary school enrolment and attendance may be delayed in cases of illness, handicaps or delayed development. These children attend alternative pre-school or special education programmes geared to the child's potential and the enhancement of their development.

119. The provision of the Compulsory Education Law relating to the prosecution of parents whose children have irregular attendance or no attendance has remained mostly inoperative since school attendance is almost 100 per cent.

120. School discipline is maintained by developing self-discipline through programmes for social, moral and emotional development. Decent human relations, positive modelling, creating the appropriate social climate in the school, developing the child's self-image, making teachers conscious of the extensive effects of the hidden curriculum, democratic class management and participation of the students in the school administration are among the measures employed to achieve the form of school discipline which safeguards the child's dignity and self-respect.

121. All forms of corporal punishment have been strictly forbidden in schools since the early 1960s. The implementation of school rules by the children is achieved through persuasion. When a child is found guilty of a very serious fault or misbehaviour and does not benefit from the efforts of the teachers through persuasion, the headmaster of the school, in cooperation with the inspector, the educational psychologist of the school and the parents of the child, plans an individual programme and special strategies to help the child.

122. Violation of the relevant regulations constitutes an offence and offenders undergo the consequences of their actions as decided by the directors of education or the Educational Service Committee.

123. International cooperation in matters relating to education, in particular with a view to contributing to the elimination of ignorance and illiteracy throughout the world and facilitating access to scientific and technical knowledge and modern teaching methods, is achieved through the following:

(a) Participation of teachers in international conferences and seminars on the above subjects is organized by international organizations such as the Council of Europe, UNESCO, the Commonwealth, the Fulbright Office, the Cyprus American Scholarship programme and other countries of the world with which Cyprus has signed conventions for educational, cultural and scientific exchange and cooperation;

(b) Exchange of consultants with the aforementioned countries;

(c) Cooperation with universities abroad which offer courses to teachers for further professional studies and training in the area of scientific and technical knowledge, instructional technology, curriculum development, educational administration and modern teaching methods;

(d) Connection of the Pedagogical Institute, which organizes seminars for in-service training of teachers, with the European Academic and Research Network;

(e) Participation of students in international contests in the area of academic and scientific knowledge, literature and arts;

(f) Participation of students in international conferences, seminars and activities organized at home or abroad which promote exchange of knowledge and contribute to international understanding and sensitivity to the needs of developing countries; and

(g) Participation in the Socrates Programme.

124. Cyprus is already connected to the European Academic and Research Network (EARN) and all private and public educational institutions and research organizations may benefit from this connection.

125. Financial aid is provided where necessary by school committees and by the Government.

126. Concerning secondary education, the Comprehensive Lyceum started operating in three Lykeia in Nicosia in September 1995. Comprehensive Lyceum is a combination of general secondary and technical education. Pupils in the same premises can choose lessons that better suit their interests, ability and needs. In the first form there is a common core of lessons, 31 periods a week. In the second and third forms the pupils can choose 18 and 20 periods per week respectively from a large range of subjects according to their preferences and abilities thus forming up their own programme.

127. Our secondary education system is changing to comprehensive. This change is a step forward towards the idea of equality of opportunity and the integration of pupils from different social and economic backgrounds in the same school. It offers social justice and serves the rights of the child in the field of education.

128. The Department of Primary Education introduces various innovations and gives emphasis to a number of areas for the improvement of both quantity and quality of the education offered to children as follows:

(a) New school buildings have been built and equipped while others have been extended and improved because of the continuing effects of the Turkish invasion in 1974 and the internal movements and redistribution of the population, especially between urban and rural areas;

(b) Training seminars are organized by the Cyprus Pedagogical Institution in cooperation with the Ministry of Education and Culture (Department of Primary and Secondary Education) to help teachers acquire new ideas and improve their teaching competence. Special programmes are organized with the purpose of effectively meeting all the needs of exceptional children, including the gifted and the talented.

(c) The Curriculum Development Service is now in a position to produce books for teachers and pupils as well as other educational material. During the last three years, new books have been produced for science courses for all grades and for maths for the first three grades of primary schools. On the other hand, school curricula are being revised on the basis of suggestions made by teachers, inspectors and school boards;

(d) There has been an increasing awareness of the need to update study material and to use the appropriate methodology so as to help pupils to acquire basic skills of study and correct attitudes;

(e) An integrated nine-year educational programme has been introduced in schools;

(f) The Ministry of Education and Culture has been expanding pre-primary education to meet the needs of pre-school children. Where places are limited, priority is given to children of working parents;

(g) More children with special needs are now integrated into the ordinary educational system. Also, new small units for children with special needs have been established in ordinary schools;

(h) It is recognized that home-school cooperation assists children to get the most from the educational programmes and to maximize their potential. For this reason most of the schools try to educate the parents properly by organizing a school for parents. They also try to gain their close cooperation;

(i) During the last five years a new subject, "Design and Technology", started developing in the elementary school curriculum for both sexes. Teachers were trained with seminars; the new subject was introduced to the curriculum of the University of Cyprus for the new teachers. A strategic plan for design and technology has been prepared and is now in progress. The plan which is expected to reach its final stage in 2001 includes among others the following:

- In-service training for 300 teachers;
- Preparation of teachers' and pupils' books on the subject;
- Equipment of the schools with the necessary facilities; and
- Appointment of 10 counsellors as inspectors for the subject;

(j) At the same time, home economics, a subject traditionally applied to girls only, started being taught to both sexes;

(k) The subject of the English language was traditionally taught to the fifth and sixth grades of elementary school only. Since 1993-94 it has been introduced at the fourth grade too;

(l) A number of computers have been introduced to several primary schools on an experimental basis since 1993. The programme is gradually expanding in more schools;

(m) As from school year 1997-98, the maximum number of children in the first grade of elementary school will be reduced from 32 to 30 and the second grade from 34 to 32. In small schools, the number of pupils in classes with a combination of two or more grades was also reduced to 24. The policy of establishing a combination of classes of two grades in schools with more than six teachers has been abandoned since September 1997;

(n) Another innovation is the decision of the Ministry of Education and Culture to change the age of first enrolment of children at elementary school from 5 years, 6 months, to 5 years, 8 months, as from September 1998;

(o) New material for teaching initial reading and writing is currently being prepared by a special committee. The aim of this effort is to promote reading and writing skills, on the one hand, and to eliminate illiteracy as much as possible, on the other hand;

(p) Cyprus participates in the programme "Ecological Schools" of the organization "Environmental Education in Europe" together with 15 other schools. It is worth mentioning that environmental education is emphasized in all primary schools; and

(q) In addition to the initial report, as far as dental health prevention is concerned, the Ministry of Health adds that in the screening programme, children of the fifth and sixth class of elementary school are targeted for cavities and periodontal diseases. The children are examined in schools by governmental dentists. Those detected with problems are referred to the private dentists. The cost of treatment is covered by the Government.

## Article 29

129. The Republic secures the provisions of article 29 as indicated in the initial and supplementary reports.

130. The provisions of this article are well covered by the aims and objectives of education in Cyprus. This is proved through the philosophy, the goals, the objectives, the methodological guidelines and the context of the curriculum.

131. The aim of education in Cyprus, as stated in the national report of the Ministry of Education and Culture, Department of Education 1990-1992, is “the development of free and democratic citizens with a fully developed personality, mentally and morally refined, healthy, active and creative who will contribute with their work and their conscientious activity in general to the social, scientific, economic and cultural progress of our country and to the promotion of cooperation, mutual understanding and love among men and people for the prevalence of freedom, justice and peace”.

132. The cornerstone of the objectives of primary education is the all-round and balanced development of the personality of the children, through the creation of such situations that will help them to acquire knowledge, to develop correct attitudes and skills so as to help them to become responsible members of society.

133. The basic aim of primary education is to organize teaching and learning activities so as to give to all children the proper guidance and assistance, without any discrimination based on age, sex, family or social origin, nationality or mental abilities and potentialities so as to help them:

(a) To acquire the necessary knowledge and develop positive attitudes and suitable skills in the following learning areas: social coexistence, cooperation, solidarity, humanistic values, human rights and obligations, natural environment, freedom, democracy, justice and peace. The objective for the development of positive attitudes and suitable skills in the aforementioned areas pervades every subject of the curriculum and every aspect of school life;

(b) To face successfully the various problems and challenges they meet in school life and society; and

(c) To promote cooperation, mutual understanding and love among people of all countries.

134. School curricula in Cyprus help children to maximize their potential, enhance their physical, mental and emotional social abilities and cultivate their talents.

135. Another objective of the curriculum is the development in the child of respect for his or her parents, the elderly, all human beings and living creatures in general.

136. Furthermore, in the chapter relating to methodological guidelines, great emphasis is given to the principle that every teaching activity in school should concentrate on the educational effort of satisfying the needs, the interests and the inclinations of each child as a unique personality.

### Article 30

137. According to its article 28, the Constitution provides inter alia that:

- All persons are equal before the law, the administration and justice and are entitled to equal protection thereof and treatment thereby;
- Every person shall enjoy all the rights and liberties provided for in the Constitution without any direct or indirect discrimination against any person on the ground of his community, race, religion, language, sex, political or other convictions, national or social descent, birth, colour, wealth, social class, or on any ground whatsoever, unless there is express provision to the contrary in this Constitution; and
- All textbooks used in public schools deal with minority cultures in a non-discriminatory way. History, civics, Greek literature, philosophy and other curricula and textbooks should:
  - (a) Present historical events from various points of view and in an objective manner;
  - (b) Stress the fact that the world culture is the result of collective human effort, struggle and sacrifice;
  - (c) Stress the interdependence of people and their need to communicate and cooperate;
  - (d) Train pupils to respect and protect other people's rights;
  - (e) Encourage pupils to avoid dogmatism and make use of dialogue to reach mutual understanding;
  - (f) Encourage tolerance and mutual respect;
  - (g) Promote brotherly relations and good neighbourliness between people of different ethnic origin;
  - (h) Promote democratic values and respect for other cultures;
  - (i) Develop critical thinking;
  - (j) Encourage moral reasoning;
  - (k) Develop the ability to understand controversial issues of society;
  - (l) Challenge stereotypical thinking with evidence; and
  - (m) Contribute to greater mutual understanding between communities in conflict.

138. Furthermore, the right of religious groups to set up and operate their own schools is also safeguarded and such schools are financially assisted by the State.

139. The State covers all the tuition fees of the Turkish-Cypriot pupils who attend private schools, and subsidizes the tuition fees of the pupils who belong to the religious groups of the Maronites, the Armenians and the Latins and attend the first six classes of private schools of secondary education.

140. Several cultural events have been planned for the year 2000. These special events will give the opportunity to the minorities to provide and present their culture in various fields, e.g. music, dance, etc.

141. It is interesting to note that Cyprus has ratified the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages by Law No. 39 (III) of 1993.

142. It is worth mentioning that the President of the Republic proceeded, at the beginning of his second term of office, to the appointment of a Presidential Commissioner who is responsible for the religious groups of Maronites, Armenians, and Latins, proving thus in a practical way the Government's interest in the welfare of the religious minorities of Cyprus.

143. The Commissioner's terms and conditions of service are of ministerial level. The Presidential Commissioner is Mr. Manolis Christofides, who is a lawyer, ex-member of the House of Representatives and ex-Government spokesman. A harmonious relationship and close cooperation with the three religious minority groups has been established. Several separate meetings have been held between the Presidential Commissioner and each religious group's representative at the House of Representatives.

144. The meetings continue to be held on a regular basis with the participation of the representatives of the religious groups in the House of Representatives, the church authorities and prominent people representing associations and other bodies on behalf of each religious minority group. At each meeting, the focus is on the examination of several matters or demands raised by each group. The relevant ministerial representatives are present at the meetings depending upon the issues under consideration.

145. In this way, the Government ensures: (a) absolute and direct coordination with the religious minority groups, (b) the avoidance of bureaucratic procedures, and (c) the fast and effective solution of problems that might arise.

### **Article 31**

146. The provisions of article 31 are secured as has been indicated in the initial and supplementary reports.

147. However it is worth mentioning that at school, children have daily intervals between classes, during which they can play and rest.

148. Art, music and physical education are subjects included in the school programme and emphasized in the curriculum. In all classes, students are provided with a variety of musical instruments, art materials and equipment for physical education. Children are motivated through the organization of art exhibitions, sports events and games within their school and among schools in the area.

149. One class period a week is devoted to free activities. Children are encouraged to participate according to their interests in extracurricular activities (drama, choir and orchestra, arts and crafts, sports, games and dances, volunteering and social work, gardening and environmental care, etc.).

150. According to a circular addressed to headmasters by the Ministry of Education and Culture, children have to attend theatre performances in their area, at least three times a year as part of the school programme. They are also encouraged to attend cultural activities organized in their community and visit museums, art exhibitions and places of interest.

151. Children participate in festivals, fairs and other recreational and cultural activities organized by the schools, parents' associations, municipalities and other cultural organizations.

152. The schools organize visits, trips and educational camping which combine learning with leisure activities and pleasure.

153. Parents' associations in cooperation with the school administration organize extra lessons in music, art and dancing in the afternoons which children can attend with very low fees.

154. The Ministry of Education and Culture in collaboration with the organization "Sports for All" organizes sports and games in the afternoon at the local schools for children of the area.

155. Children organize and present programmes to their parents on certain occasions such as Christmas, national holidays, celebrations on mother's day or at the end of the school year. The programmes include acting, songs, poems and dances.

### **Article 32**

156. According to the report of the Committee on the Rights of the Child there are children in Cyprus who work as domestic servants. No scientific or empirical data exist to substantiate the above allegation. Relevant legislation and practices in Cyprus do not allow child labour. The Children and Young Persons (Employment) Law, chapter 175 (as amended by 61 of 1964, 18 of 1968, 239 of 1990, 87 (I) of 1999, and 21 (I) of 2000), as the title implies, contains provisions aiming at the protection of employed children (see art. 26).

157. There are also a number of relevant international instruments, which have been ratified by the Cyprus Government and, under article 169.3 of the Constitution, have more force than any domestic law. These instruments include:

- (a) The ILO Minimum Age Convention, 1973, No. 138;

- (b) The ILO Minimum Age (Underground Work Convention 1965, No. 123); and
- (c) Article 7, paragraphs 1, 3, 7 and 8, of the European Social Charter.

158. The effective enforcement of existing legislation regarding work for children in Cyprus is secured by the labour inspection service of the Department of Labour and the Police. At present the existing legislation is considered adequate. Based on police data, there does not seem to be an issue of exploitation regarding children's employment.

159. The Government recognized the need to amend the legislation dealing with employment in order to bring it in line with the relevant Directive of the European Union (Council Directive 94/33/EC of June 1994 on the Protection of Children at Work), ILO Convention No. 138 and article 7, paragraphs 1, 3, 7, and 8, of the European Social Charter. Thus a new law has been recently drafted regarding children and young persons' employment, which will consolidate and improve the existing law (basic and amended) and bring it in line with the acquis communautaire.

### **Article 33**

160. The problem of illegal use, possession and trafficking of narcotics concerns all persons regardless of their age. However, it remains one of the most serious problems and one of the major concerns of the authorities in many countries. Despite the fact that Cyprus is at the crossroads of drug traffickers and the fact that a large number of tourists visit the island every year, we are still not facing a real problem of drug trafficking and addiction.

161. The police are taking steps in the field of prevention, information and education in cooperation with voluntary associations and other governmental departments. Preventive work is effected in cooperation between the police, social services, schools and non-governmental associations.

162. The Law Commissioner and the Ministry of Justice and Public Order have recently decided to revise the legislation regarding narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances. The Care and Treatment of Drug Addicts Law 1992 (No. 57 (I) 1992) provides for the treatment of drug addicts.

163. In particular, the law provides that a person under the age of 18 may, upon application to the Court, be ordered to be confined in a detoxification and rehabilitation centre.

164. Also, the Ministry of Education and Culture continues to have its own representative in every committee related to the rights of children, such as the Committee for the Protection and Welfare of Children, which is a representative body of all governmental and non-governmental organizations concerned with the welfare of children. It is very active in disseminating information of the situation in our country. The Ministry participates in all the annual and other activities of this Committee. The Ministry of Education and Culture has also its own

representative in the Committee for the Family. On protection from drugs, the Ministry focuses its attention on primary prevention. The school-based programme is organized around the following principles:

- (a) Affirmation and integration of the pupils' personality, development of self-esteem and consolidation of self-image;
- (b) Valid and timely information about psychoactive substances;
- (c) Elimination of the causes driving pupils towards taking addictive substances;
- (d) Development of a partnership spirit for mutual respect of a person's personality and uniqueness;
- (e) Acquisition of communication skills for understanding different values and perceptions; and
- (f) Development of conflict-resolution skills, self-discipline and social adjustment.

165. Based on the above principles, the Ministry of Education and Culture has already organized 25 seminars focusing on anti-drug education. These seminars will continue to take place at Ayia Napa campsite (a highly touristic area of Cyprus) especially arranged in accordance with the above-mentioned principles. The general aim of such seminars is to develop "peer groups" among students whose lifestyle and behaviour will influence other young persons' groups.

166. The methodology applied in the seminars is the active participation of the students, through group work. The pupils are encouraged to discuss their own feelings and share their views on a wide range of issues through role play. Teaching in these seminars is done by psychiatrists, psychologists, biologists, specialists in education and others. More than 1,250 pupils attended the seminars and all of them are very active in schools, working closely with school health committees participating in school anti-drug activities. The number of pupils exceeds 5 per cent of the pupil population of the third grade in schools.

167. Evaluation and assessment of the seminars are done through questionnaires answered by the students at the end of each seminar and necessary corrections and adjustments are endorsed.

168. The Ministry of Education and Culture also uses two mobile units called "Mentor", which visit the schools and pupils of the second grade (Gymnasium); they attend a 90-minute programme conveying messages for healthy lifestyle and anti-drug resistance. More than 5,000 pupils have until now participated in the programme.

169. A pilot health programme is applied in 12 selected schools (elementary, gymnasias, lyceum and technical schools). This programme is part of a greater programme adopted by European institutions and is applied in close cooperation with the Ministry of Health, the Council of Europe, the European Commission and the World Health Organization. This programme is

geared towards an holistic view of health and teaching of children on how to care and promote their health. The schools employed in the programme are part of the European Network of Health Promoting Schools. The programme's curriculum focuses on various health issues and mainly on the use and misuse of substances.

170. In order to increase awareness and involvement of school staff in health education programmes and especially in programmes against drug abuse various steps have been taken such as:

(a) Introduction of health education issues into the pre-service training curriculum of teachers attending courses at the Pedagogical Institute;

(b) Introduction of various health education themes into the curricula of the in-service training of headmasters and assistant headmasters of schools;

(c) Special training of all counsellors and career guidance teachers;

(d) Ideas, methods and practices are disseminated to schools for implementation and promotion of anti-drug campaigns; and

(e) Since 1992 more than 2,000 educators have participated in voluntary seminars. Many of them (40 per cent) attended seminars on the use and abuse of substances. In these seminars lectures were given by experts visiting Cyprus and local government and private specialists. These trained educators are used in schools to help pupils to develop their self-esteem, knowledge and skills in order to make positive health choices and to adopt a healthy lifestyle.

171. Emphasis has very recently been given to an anti-drug educational programme through the Life Education Centre (LEC) Cyprus, which was established in 1997 by a wide range of people from different walks of life, with the cooperation of the Ministry of Education and Culture and the Ministry of Health. The aims of LEC are:

(a) To educate and sensitize children about the destructive effects of drugs on human life;

(b) To make children aware of themselves, the function of their body and how this function is affected by harmful substances; and

(c) To develop children's decision-making skills, to build their self-esteem and to help them reach their full potential.

172. The above are expected to be met through a series of seven graded programmes, each one dealing with a different theme, for children aged 6-13. The programmes are presented in a mobile unit by five educators who have undergone intensive training in Life Education Centres in Britain.

173. Several evaluation surveys were conducted, especially on issues such as the use and abuse of substances:

(a) Smoking (1994): This survey was conducted among pupils of the lyceum, 3rd grade (age 17-18);

(b) Alcohol, tobacco, and drug use (1995): This survey was part of a project covering pupils 15-16 years old. The purpose was to collect comprehensive data on drug and alcohol use;

(c) Individual school surveys are also conducted, either as complements to other investigations or as part of particular school programmes regarding drug habits and other behaviour; and

(d) A committee which consists of inspectors, psychologists, psychiatrists, biologists and health educators monitors the whole health education programme.

174. The full-time and three part-time educators are responsible for the implementation of the health education programme. In addition to their salaries, the State spends more than £C 20,000 per year for seminars. Also, the State contributes and sponsors many seminars conducted by individual schools.

175. Most of the money used for these purposes comes from the programme “Plant trees - fight drugs”. The money was collected mostly by the effort and work of pupils. Various environmental practices and programmes are promoted to actively involve pupils in well-being activities.

176. The Service of Educational Psychology in cooperation with other services of the Ministry and other social agencies of the society provide support to students who, for various reasons, face the danger of becoming victims of exploitation either within the family or in society. This service participates in and closely cooperates with the various preventive programmes of governmental services in order to face specific circumstances in schools, families, etc.

#### **Article 34**

177. In general, Cyprus does not face problems regarding child exploitation. The existing legislation for the protection of children at work is most effective.

178. However, a draft law for the protection of persons against exploitation was prepared by the Law Commissioner and was enacted into law quite recently under the title Combating of Trafficking in Persons and Sexual Exploitation of Children Law (No. 3 (I)/2000). It provides for the protection of women and children from exploitation. Under this law, certain if not all forms of modern slavery are considered offences entailing severe punishment. Acts considered offences under the new law are the trafficking of children, the exploitation of women and children by prostitution, the use of children for the production of pornographic films and other publications. An important provision of the law is the appointment of a guardian for the protection of the victim.

179. It is interesting to note that the Children's Law, chapter 352/section 55, provides, that it is unlawful for a person having the custody, charge or care of a girl under the age of 16 years to cause or encourage the seduction, the unlawful carnal knowledge or prostitution of or the commission of an indecent assault upon that girl.

180. The Ministry of Education and Culture contributes to the prevention and combating of the exploitation of children. It focuses its attention on primary prevention and the school-based programme is organized around the same principles mentioned relative to article 33 above.

181. Finally there are no reports that children are used for pornographic recordings or publications.

### **Article 35**

182. There are no incidents of sale of children in any form in Cyprus. In cases of adoption, where it is more likely to sell children, the procedure laid down by the relevant law (the Adoption Law No. 19 (I) of 1995) is strictly followed and no sale transaction occurs. Needless to say that a legal adoption is always sanctioned by the court. Before the enactment of the present adoption law there was another law which was also strictly adhered to.

183. The Convention for Protection of Children and Cooperation in Respect of Intercountry Adoption was ratified by Law No. 26 (III) of 1994.

184. The agency responsible for all matters related to the abuse and exploitation of children is the Department of Social Welfare Services of the Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance.

185. The reasons for not having instances of sale of children are attributed to the strong family structure of the Cypriot family and the legal provisions for the protection of children (see also article 34).

### **Article 36**

186. The Government in Cyprus is very sensitive and watches closely the issue of child exploitation. In particular the Ministry of Education, with a view to protecting children from exploitation at the primary education level, intervenes in the manner described under article 29 above.

187. The Children's Law (chap. 352/sect. 57) provides for child protection in case a child under 16 is encouraged or allowed to be used for begging (see also article 32).

### **Article 37**

188. The following enactments constitute certain provisions for child protection:

- (a) The Children's Law (chap. 352/sect. 54): Cruelty to persons under 16; and

(b) The Violence in the Family (Prevention and Protection of Victims) Law of 1994 (47 (I) of 1994): Use of violence against a minor or in the presence of a minor.

189. This was enacted in 1994 but soon certain problems were encountered in its full and effective implementation. To amend the situation, an amending draft law has been prepared providing, inter alia, for the taking of testimony of victims of violence by electronic means, the protection of victims while giving evidence in court, the setting up of a fund to meet certain immediate needs of victims and the establishment of a shelter where victims can have physical and legal protection. The draft law is now at the House of Representatives and is at the final stage of its enactment.

#### **Article 38**

190. The Government of Cyprus secures the provisions of the initial and supplementary reports.

#### **Article 39**

191. The Government of Cyprus secures the provisions of the initial and supplementary reports.

192. The Department of Social Welfare Services provides preventive and therapeutic services to families with children and juvenile offenders, as well as support to the elderly and the disabled or other persons with special needs.

193. Additionally, the department, through the Community Development Programme, offers technical and financial assistance to Community Welfare Councils and NGOs for programmes which support the family and vulnerable groups at a local level (e.g. day-care centres for the children, persons with disabilities and the elderly, single-parent families, former prisoners, AIDS victims, drug addicts, etc.).

#### **Article 40**

194. The Government of Cyprus secures the provisions of the initial and supplementary reports.

195. The Probation of Offenders Law 46 (I) of 1996 introduced community service as an alternative non-custodial sanction which is combined with the offender's consent to the probation order. This is expected to increase the prospects for rehabilitation, especially for young offenders.

#### **Article 41**

196. The Republic secures the provisions of article 41 as it has been indicated in the initial and supplementary reports. There are no further developments.

## Article 42

197. According to the report of the Committee on the Rights of the Child, there is a need for more public awareness on the participatory rights of the children in Cyprus. The following actions have been taken towards that end:

(a) Every year, through its "Children's Week", the Pancyprian Committee for the Protection and Welfare of Children continues its instrumental role in educating the public as well as professionals working with children about the principles and provisions of the Convention;

(b) Children's Week has a different theme each year. The theme for 1997 was "Consumerism: Effects on Children";

(c) The prospective computerization of the Department of Social Welfare Services will allow a better flow of information both within and outside the Department on issues, policies and principles regarding children;

(d) The Department of Social Welfare Services participates in seminars, TV and radio programmes to promote public awareness and sensitization to children's rights, to family issues and services;

(e) The establishment and operation of the National Institution for the Protection of Human Rights in 1998 contributes to the dissemination of information with regard to the Convention but also with regard to all conventions dealing with human rights. Thus the Institution has currently prepared:

- (i) a handbook about human rights;
- (ii) a compilation of the treaties of human rights which are applicable in Cyprus;
- (iii) an anthology of the human rights cases dealt with by the Commissioner for Administration;
- (iv) an anthology of the cases of the Supreme Court relating to human rights;
- (v) a special edition of the concluding observations of the monitoring committees established under international institutions; and
- (vi) a seminar about the teaching of human rights in secondary education. This seminar took place in Nicosia and Limassol. It will soon be organized for primary education as well.

**Article 44**

198. The report of the Committee on the Rights of the Child recommended that more attention be paid to:

(a) Systematic and comprehensive data collection, appropriate indicators and monitoring mechanisms; and

(b) Wider dissemination of the Cyprus report of the public and to the authorities (e.g. the Parliament).

199. The prospective computerization of the Department of Social Welfare Services is expected to improve the mechanisms of data collection.

200. The Department of Social Welfare Services has already published (in 1999) both the initial and supplementary reports (submitted to the Committee on the Rights of the Child) regarding the implementation of the present Convention.

201. The Advisory Committee for the Prevention and Combat of Violence in the Family (appointed by the Council of Ministers and selected both from the public and the private sectors) has already initiated a comprehensive study to improve the understanding of the nature and scope of child neglect and abuse in Cyprus.

202. Finally, despite the fact that the various provisions regarding the rights of the child are not contained in a comprehensive legislation, effort has been made to collect all the relevant provisions and bind them in an edition especially for the rights of the child.

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