

INTERNATIONAL
CONVENTION
ON THE ELIMINATION
OF ALL FORMS OF
RACIAL DISCRIMINATION



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COMMITTEE ON THE ELIMINATION
OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION
Eighteenth session

CONSIDERATION OF REPORTS SUBMITTED BY STATES PARTIES
UNDER ARTICLE 9 OF THE CONVENTION

Fifth periodic reports of States Parties due in 1973

Addendum

UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS^{1/}

[14 April 1978]

1/ For previous reports submitted by the Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the summary records of meetings of the Committee at which such reports were considered, see:

- (1) Initial report - CERD/C/R.3/Add.12 (CERD/C/SR.41 and 56);
- (2) Second periodic report - CERD/C/R.30/Add.19 (CERD/C/SR.137);
- (3) Third periodic report - CERD/C/R.70/Add.12 (CERD/C/SR.193);
- (4) Fourth periodic report - CERD/C/R.90/Add.14 (CERD/C/SR.298).

Since 1976, when the Soviet Union submitted its fourth periodic report in accordance with article 9 of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, an event of historic importance has taken place in the life of the peoples of the USSR.

On 7 October 1977 the Supreme Soviet of the USSR adopted the new Constitution (Fundamental Law) of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the text of which is annexed hereto.

The new Constitution of the USSR, which was created by whole Soviet people, incorporates the results of the 60-year development of the Soviet State, consolidates the revolutionary conquests of the Soviet system, demonstrates the remarkable successes achieved in the establishment of an advanced socialist society, and expresses the will and interests of the workers of the many nations and nationalities of the Soviet Union.

The provisions strengthening the principle of national and racial equality, designed to prevent national and racial discrimination in whatsoever form, occupy an important place in the Fundamental Law of this advanced socialist State.

Article 34 of the USSR Constitution reads: "Citizens of the USSR are equal before the law, without distinction of origin, social or property status, race or nationality, sex, education, language, attitude to religion, type and nature of occupation, domicile, or other status.

The equal rights of citizens of the USSR are guaranteed in all fields of economic, political, social and cultural life."

The principle of national and racial equality and the guarantee that it will be safeguarded is given concrete expression in article 36 of the Constitution, which reads:

"Citizens of the USSR of different races and nationalities have equal rights.

Exercise of these rights is ensured by a policy of all-round development and drawing together of all the nations and nationalities of the USSR, by educating citizens in the spirit of Soviet patriotism and socialist internationalism, and by the possibility of using their native language and the languages of other peoples of the USSR.

Any direct or indirect limitation of the rights of citizens or establishment of direct or indirect privileges on grounds of race or nationality, and any advocacy of racial or national exclusiveness, hostility or contempt, are punishable by law."

According to article 64 of the Constitution of the USSR, it is the duty of every citizen of the USSR "to respect the national dignity of other citizens, and to strengthen friendship among the nations and nationalities of the multinational Soviet State."

Article 45 of the Constitution of the USSR, on the right of citizens to education, proclaims the right of citizens to be taught in their own language, as a guarantee that all nationalities of the country will have equal access to knowledge.

Under the Soviet Constitution, the equality of rights without distinction as to nationality and race is granted not only to citizens of the USSR, but also to other persons living in the Soviet Union. Article 37 provides that: "Citizens of other countries and stateless persons in the USSR are guaranteed the rights and freedoms provided by law, including the right to apply to a court and other state bodies for the protection of their personal property, family, and other rights."

These Constitutional rules are strictly binding on all citizens, officials and organizations. Article 4 of the USSR Constitution states that: "The Soviet State and all its bodies function on the basis of socialist law, ensure the maintenance of law and order, and safeguard the interests of society and the rights and freedoms of citizens."

During the period 1976-1977, several legislative measures were enacted in the Soviet Union as a basis for further improving the system of practical guarantees of the equality of all races and nationalities.

In 1976, the Union Republics enacted public education laws developing and supplementing, in accordance with local and national peculiarities, the Fundamentals of the Legislation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the Union Republics concerning Public Education adopted in 1973. Pursuant to article 21 of the Fundamentals, the laws of the Republics laid down that: "Pupils at general education schools shall be given the opportunity of being taught in their mother tongue or in the language of another people of the USSR. Parents or persons acting in their stead have the right to select for their children, at their discretion, a school with the appropriate language of instruction" (article 29, Public Education Act of the Georgian Soviet Socialist Republic).

In 1976 the USSR Act on the Preservation and use of Historical and Cultural Monuments was adopted. One of the basic aims of the Act is to preserve the rich historical and cultural heritage of the peoples and nationalities of the USSR and to utilize historical and cultural monuments for educating citizens to respect the national traditions both of their own people and of other peoples and nationalities living in the USSR.

In the Soviet Union much is being done to educate citizens in the spirit of friendship among all the nations and nationalities of the country and of opposition to racial prejudices, as provided for in article 7 of the Convention.

In the USSR the provisions of Soviet legislation concerning the equality of all races and nationalities are studied at school. At all 10-year secondary schools and industrial trade schools these matters were studied in 1976 and 1977 as part of courses on "The Foundations of the Soviet State and Law" and

on "Questions of Soviet Law". These subjects are taught in the languages of all the peoples of the USSR, and textbooks on them are published in the languages of all the Union Republics. The study of Soviet Law and its provisions on the equality of all races and nationalities is continued at the higher educational establishments of the USSR.

As in the past, the periodic press and other information media of the Soviet Union play an important part in educating the citizens of the USSR in a spirit of opposition to policies, practices and manifestations of racism and racial discrimination.

In 1976-1977 there was again a great deal of public activity in the Soviet Union in support of the peoples struggling against colonialism and racism. On 21 March every year, public meetings and gatherings are held throughout the country to mark the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. From 25 to 31 May, a Week of Solidarity with the Struggle of the Peoples of Southern Africa is observed in the USSR, when public meetings and gatherings are organized and exhibitions and seminars are held. The Soviet public also observes days of solidarity with peoples struggling for their freedom and independence including Zimbabwe Day on 17 March, Southern Africa Freedom Day on 26 June, the Day of Solidarity with the Struggling Peoples of Southern Africa on 16 June, the Day of Solidarity with the Struggle of the People of Namibia on 26 August, and the International Day of Solidarity with Political Prisoners in Southern Africa on 11 October.

The Soviet Union has always strictly observed the decisions and recommendations of the United Nations and other international bodies concerning economic, diplomatic and other sanctions aimed at the international isolation of racist régimes.