

## FINLAND

### CERD

#### OBJECTIONS MADE TO OTHER STATES PARTIES RESERVATIONS AND DECLARATIONS

*(Ed. note: for the text targeted by the following objections, see the Reservations and Declarations of the State which is the subject of the objection)*

7 July 1989

With regard to reservations made by Yemen concerning article (c) and article 5 (d) (iv), (vi) and (vii):

"The Government of Finland formally, and in accordance with article 20 (2) of the Convention, objects to the reservations made by Yemen to the above provisions.

In the first place, the reservations concern matters which are of fundamental importance in the Convention. The first paragraph of article 5 clearly brings this out. According to it, the Parties have undertaken to guarantee the rights listed in that article "In compliance with fundamental obligations laid down in article 2 of the Convention". Clearly, provisions prohibiting racial discrimination in the granting of such fundamental political rights and civil liberties as the right to participate in public life, to marry and choose a spouse, to inherit and to enjoy freedom of thought, conscience and religion are central in a convention against racial discrimination. Therefore, the reservations are incompatible with the object and purpose of the Convention, as specified in paragraph 20 (2) thereof and in article 19 (c) of the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties.

Moreover, it is the view of the Government of Finland that it would be unthinkable that merely by making a reservation to the said provisions, a State could achieve the liberty to start discriminatory practices on the grounds of race, colour, or national or ethnic origin in regard to such fundamental political rights and civil liberties as the right to participate in the conduct of public affairs, the right of marriage and choice of spouse, the right of inheritance and the freedom of thought, conscience and religion. Any racial discrimination in respect of those fundamental rights and liberties is clearly against the general principles of human rights law as reflected in the Universal Declaration on Human Rights and the practice of States and international organizations. By making a reservation a State cannot contract out from universally binding human rights standards.

For the above reasons, the Government of Finland notes that the reservations made by Yemen are devoid of legal effect. However, the Government of Finland does not consider that this fact is an obstacle to the entry into force of the Convention in respect of Yemen."

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6 February 1998

With regard to the general reservation made by Saudi Arabia upon accession:

"The Government of Finland is of the view that this general reservation raises doubts as to the commitment of Saudi Arabia to the object and purpose of the Convention and would recall that according to paragraph 2 of article 20 of the Convention, a reservation incompatible with the object and purpose of the Convention shall not be permitted. The Government of Finland would also like to recall that according to the said paragraph a reservation shall be considered incompatible or inhibitive if at least two thirds of the States Parties to the Convention object to it. It is in the common interest of States that treaties to which they have chosen to become parties are respected, as to their object and purpose, by all parties and that States are prepared to undertake any legislative changes necessary to comply with their obligations under the treaties.

The Government of Finland is further of the view that general reservations of the kind made by Saudi Arabia, which do not clearly specify the provisions of the Convention to which they apply and the extent of the derogation therefrom, contribute to undermining the basis of international treaty law.

The Government of Finland therefore objects to the aforesaid general reservation made by the Government of Saudi Arabia to the [Convention].

#### **DECLARATION RE: ARTICLE 14**

16 November 1994

"Finland recognizes the competence of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination to receive and consider communications from individuals or groups of individuals within the jurisdiction of Finland claiming to be victims of a violation by Finland of any of the rights set forth in the said Convention, with the reservation that the Committee shall not consider any communication from an individual or a group of individuals unless the Committee has ascertained that the same matter is not being examined or has not been examined under another procedure of international investigation or settlement."