

ISRAEL

CCPR A/53/40 (1998)

297. The Committee considered the initial report of Israel (CCPR/C/81/Add.13) at its 1675th to 1677th meetings, on 15 and 16 July 1998, and at its 1694th meeting, on 28 July 1998, adopted the following observations.

A. Introduction

298. The Committee welcomes the initial report submitted by the Government of Israel, and notes with satisfaction that it was largely prepared in accordance with the Committee's guidelines concerning the form and contents of initial reports. The Committee regrets, however, the considerable delay in the submission of the report, which was received five years after the date on which it was due.

299. The Committee notes that the report, while providing extensive information on prevailing legislation in the field of human rights in Israel, lacks sufficient information on the implementation of the Covenant in practice and on the factors and difficulties impeding its effective implementation. This was partly rectified by the oral information provided by the delegation during the examination of the report, which enabled the Committee to embark on a frank and constructive dialogue with the State party. The Committee expresses satisfaction that the Government had widely disseminated the report among non-governmental organizations prior to its consideration by the Committee.

B. Factors and difficulties affecting the implementation of the Covenant

300. The Committee notes the security concerns of the State party, the frequent attacks on the civilian population, the problems linked to its occupation of territories and the fact that the State party is officially at war with a number of neighbouring States. However, the Committee draws attention to article 4 of the Covenant, which permits no derogation from certain basic rights even in times of public emergency.

C. Positive factors

301. The Committee notes with satisfaction that Israeli society is a democratic one in which sensitive issues are openly debated and that an active non-governmental community has taken firm root. It expresses appreciation for the wide dissemination of the initial report of Israel among professionals in the justice system who work directly in matters relating to the promotion and protection of human rights and among non-governmental organizations. It welcomes indications that the inter-ministerial network of persons that have worked together on the drafting of the present report may soon be institutionalized.

302. The Committee welcomes the fact that the report includes many references to decisions of the Supreme Court upholding rights protected under the Covenant.

303. The Committee welcomes the recent establishment of the Public Defender's Office. It also welcomes efforts to implement the recommendations of the Kremnitzer Committee, which address questions of police violence, and of the Goldberg Committee regarding rules of evidence. It welcomes the progressive steps which have led to the amendment of the Criminal Code and to the establishment of the Department for Investigation of Police Misconduct within the Ministry of Justice to review complaints of maltreatment by members of the police and security forces. The Committee takes note that the State Comptroller's Office is responsible for acting as Ombudsman, and would welcome further information on its activities, particularly as regards measures to combat discrimination.

304. The Committee notes with satisfaction the establishment of bodies in various ministries to address questions relating to the status of women, and particularly welcomes the activities of the Knesset Committee for the Advancement of the Status of Women. It also notes with satisfaction the establishment of a national authority on the advancement of women with a wide range of responsibilities, the amendment of the Equal Employment Opportunities Law placing the burden of proof on the employer in civil sexual harassment suits, and the enactment of the Equal Pay (Male and Female Employees) Law.

D. Principal subjects of concern and recommendations

305. The Committee notes with regret that, although some rights provided for in the Covenant are legally protected and promoted through the Basic Laws, municipal laws, and the jurisprudence of the courts, the Covenant has not been incorporated in Israeli law and cannot be directly invoked in the courts. It recommends early action in respect of recent legislative initiatives aimed at enhancing the enjoyment of a number of the rights provided for in the Covenant, including proposals for new draft Basic Laws on due process rights and on freedom of expression and association. It also recommends that consideration be given to enacting further laws to give effect to any rights not already covered by the Basic Laws.

306. The Committee is deeply concerned that Israel continues to deny its responsibility to fully apply the Covenant in the occupied territories. In this regard, the Committee points to the long-standing presence of Israel in these territories, Israel's ambiguous attitude towards their future status, as well as the exercise of effective jurisdiction by Israeli security forces therein. In response to the arguments presented by the delegation, the Committee emphasizes that the applicability of rules of humanitarian law does not by itself impede the application of the Covenant or the accountability of the State under article 2, paragraph 1, for the actions of its authorities. The Committee is therefore of the view that, under the circumstances, the Covenant must be held applicable to the occupied territories and those areas of southern Lebanon and West Bekaa where Israel exercises effective control. The Committee requests the State party to include in its second periodic report all information relevant to the application of the Covenant in territories which it occupies.

307. The Committee expresses its deep concern at the continued state of emergency prevailing in Israel, which has been in effect since independence. It recommends that the Government review the necessity for the continued renewal of the state of emergency with a view to limiting as far as possible its scope and territorial applicability and the associated derogation of rights. In this regard,

the Committee draws attention to article 4 of the Covenant, which permits no derogation from articles 6, 7, 8 (paras. 1 and 2), 11, 15, 16 and 18, and requires that permitted derogations be limited to the extent strictly required by the exigencies of the situation.

308. The Committee expresses serious concern about deeply imbedded discriminatory social attitudes, practices and laws against Arab Israelis that have resulted in a lower standard of living compared with Jewish Israelis, as is evident in their significantly lower levels of education, access to health care, access to housing, land and employment. It notes with concern that most Arab Israelis, because they do not join the army, do not enjoy the financial benefits available to Israelis who have served in the army, including scholarships and housing loans. The Committee also expresses concern that the Arabic language, though official, has not been accorded equal status in practice, and that discrimination against members of the Arab minority appears to be extensive in the private sector. In this regard, the Committee urges the State party to take steps without delay to ensure equality to Arabs and to proceed as soon as possible with the planned formulation of a draft law on discrimination in the private sector and to adopt it at an early date.

309. The Committee is concerned that Palestinians in the occupied territories who remain under the control of Israeli security forces do not enjoy the same rights and freedoms as Jewish settlers in those territories, in particular in regard to planning and building permits and access to land and water. The Committee is also concerned at the policies of confiscation of lands and settlement in the occupied territories. The Committee recommends that coordinated and targeted efforts be made to establish basic standards that are applicable equally to all persons under the jurisdiction of Israel.

310. The Committee is also concerned at the discrimination faced by Bedouins, many of whom have expressed a desire to continue to live in settlements in the Negev which are not recognized by the Israeli Government and which are not provided with basic infrastructure and essential services. The Committee recommends that members of Bedouin communities should be given equality of treatment with Jewish settlements in the same region, many of which are also dispersed and populated by small numbers of people.

311. The Committee expresses concern about the situation of women who, despite the advances noted in paragraph 304, continue to face discrimination in many aspects of life, including in military service and in religious institutions, and that they are underrepresented in the conduct of public affairs. The Committee notes that no clear plan of action exists which addresses the situation of the most disadvantaged group of women, namely, those belonging to the Arab minority. The Committee recommends that targeted measures be considered to accelerate progress towards equality, in particular for Arab women.

312. The Committee regrets that women brought to Israel for purposes of prostitution, many under false pretences or through coercion, are not protected as victims of trafficking but are likely to be penalized for their illegal presence in Israel by deportation. Such an approach to this problem effectively prevents these women from pursuing a remedy for the violation of their rights under article 8 of the Covenant. The Committee recommends that serious efforts be made to seek out and punish the traffickers, to institute rehabilitation programmes for the victims and to ensure that they are able to pursue legal remedies against the perpetrators.

313. With respect to article 6 of the Covenant, the Committee is concerned about the number of Palestinians who have been killed by the security forces, as well as all persons who have been the victims of terrorist attacks. The Committee expresses concern at the use of rubber-coated metal bullets by the security forces in the occupied territories in dispersing demonstrations. This type of rubber bullet is reported to have killed many Palestinians, including children. The Committee urges the State party to enforce rigorously the strict limitations on the operational rules as to the use of firearms and the use of rubber bullets against unarmed civilians. It requests that the next periodic report include precise information on the number of deaths, including those caused by rubber bullets, the number of complaints arising from their use and the number of defence and security personnel that have been punished or disciplined as a result.

314. The Committee regrets the introduction by the Government of a draft law which would deny victims compensation for excesses committed by members of the security forces against Palestinian residents of the occupied territories. It requests that detailed information on these matters be included in the next periodic report of the State party.

315. The Committee is deeply concerned that under the guidelines for the conduct of interrogation of suspected terrorists authority may be given to the security service to use "moderate physical pressure" to obtain information considered crucial to the "protection of life". The Committee notes that the part of the report of the Landau Commission that lists and describes authorized methods of applying pressure remains classified. The Committee notes also the admission by the State party delegation that the methods of handcuffing, hooding, shaking and sleep deprivation have been and continue to be used as interrogation techniques, either alone or in combination. The Committee is of the view that the guidelines can give rise to abuse and that the use of these methods constitutes a violation of article 7 of the Covenant in any circumstances. The Committee stresses that article 7 of the Covenant is a non-derogable prohibition of torture and all forms of cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. The Committee urges the State party to cease using the methods referred to above. If legislation is to be enacted for the purpose of authorizing interrogation techniques, such a law should explicitly prohibit all forms of treatment prohibited by article 7.

316. Further in relation to article 7 of the Covenant, the Committee notes that prisoners may be segregated in Israel as a preventive measure for the protection of security, the maintenance of order or to guarantee the safety of the prisoner. Noting that segregation involves substantial isolation and may be extended over long periods of time, the Committee recalls its General Comment 20 (44) in which it noted that prolonged solitary confinement of a detained or imprisoned person may violate article 7. The Committee recommends that efforts be made to avoid prolonged isolation of segregated prisoners.

317. The Committee remains concerned that despite the reduction in the number of persons held in administrative detention on security grounds, persons may still be held for long and apparently indefinite periods of time in custody without trial. It is also concerned that Palestinians detained by Israeli military order in the occupied territories do not have the same rights to judicial review as persons detained in Israel under ordinary law. A specific concern of the Committee is that at least some of the persons kept in administrative detention for reasons of State security (and in particular some Lebanese) do not personally threaten State security but are kept as "bargaining chips" in order to promote negotiations with other parties on releasing detained Israeli soldiers or the bodies of

deceased soldiers. The Committee considers the present application of administrative detention to be incompatible with articles 7 and 16 of the Covenant, neither of which allows for derogation in times of public emergency. The Committee takes due note that Israel has derogated from article 9 of the Covenant. The Committee stresses, however, that a State party may not depart from the requirement of effective judicial review of detention. The Committee recommends that the application of detention be brought within the strict requirements of the Covenant and that effective judicial review be made mandatory.

318. While acknowledging the security concerns that have led to restrictions on movement, the Committee notes with regret the continued impediments imposed on movement, which affect mostly Palestinians travelling in and between East Jerusalem, the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, and which have grave consequences affecting nearly all areas of Palestinian life. The Committee considers this to raise serious issues under article 12. In regard to persons in these areas, the Committee urges Israel to respect the right to freedom of movement provided for under article 12, including the right to return to one's country.

319. In regard to Palestinians who are resident in East Jerusalem, the Committee is concerned that the increasingly restrictive conditions for maintaining the right to permanent residence, the denial of requests for family reunification and the difficulty experienced by non-Jews in obtaining building permits and accommodation have resulted in increasing numbers being forced to move to the occupied territories. The Committee expresses its profound concern at the effect of the unpublished directive of the Ministry of the Interior, under which Palestinians may lose their right to live in the city if they cannot prove that East Jerusalem has been their "centre of life" for the past seven years. The Committee notes that this policy is being applied retroactively to both Palestinians who live abroad and to those who live in the West Bank or in nearby Jerusalem suburbs, but not to Israeli Jews or to foreign Jews who are permanent residents of East Jerusalem. The Committee recommends that the rules and procedures relating to permanent residency status be applied without discrimination.

320. The Committee deplores the demolition of Arab homes as a means of punishment. It also deplores the practice of demolitions, in part or in whole, of "illegally" constructed Arab homes. The Committee notes with regret the difficulties imposed on Palestinian families seeking to obtain legitimate construction permits. The Committee considers the demolition of homes to conflict directly with the obligation of the State party to ensure without discrimination the right not to be subjected to arbitrary interference with one's home (art. 17), the freedom to choose one's residence (art. 12) and equality of all persons before the law and equal protection of the law (art. 26).

321. The Committee is also concerned that the Israel Lands Administration (ILA), responsible for the management of 93 per cent of land in Israel, includes no Arab members and that while ILA has leased or transferred land for the development of Jewish towns and settlements, few Arab localities have been established in this way until recent years. The Committee recommends that urgent steps be taken to overcome the considerable inequality and discrimination which remain in regard to land and housing.

322. The Committee regrets that the authorities appear to be placing obstacles in the way of family reunion in the case of marriages between an Israeli citizen and a non-citizen who is not Jewish (and

therefore not entitled to enter under the Law of Return). These obstacles, which include long waiting periods for entry permits, a "probation" period of over five years' residence to establish that the marriage is genuine and a further waiting period for citizenship, are applied even more rigorously in the case of Arab citizens, particularly those who marry persons resident in the occupied territories. The Committee considers such obstacles to be incompatible with articles 17 and 23. It is recommended that the Government reconsider its policies with a view to facilitating family reunion of all citizens and permanent residents.

323. The Committee is concerned that Arab women citizens of Israel have in some cases been required to relinquish their citizenship should they marry a Palestinian and apply for residence in the occupied territories. It welcomes the Israeli Government's response that this policy no longer applies and recommends that those already affected be made fully aware of the relevant legal provisions and that their status be restored.

324. The Committee is concerned at the preference given to the Jewish religion in the allocation of funding for religious bodies, to the detriment of Muslims, Christians, Druze and other religious groups. The Committee recommends that regulations and criteria for funding be published and applied to all religious groups on an equal basis.

325. The Committee is concerned that the application of religious law to determine matters of personal status, including marriage and divorce, and the absence of provision for civil marriage effectively deny some persons the right to marry in Israel, and result in inequality between men and women. It is also concerned that the minimum age of marriage for girls, fixed by law at 17, may be reduced by the religious courts, and that no minimum age is fixed for men. The lack of provision for civil burial is also a matter of concern. The Committee urges early implementation of measures currently under consideration to facilitate civil marriages and civil burial for those who do not belong to a religion. It recommends that the State party take into account international standards for the age of majority in its current review of the minimum marriageable age for men and women.

326. The Committee recommends that the Government consider ratifying the Optional Protocol to the Covenant.

327. The Committee requests that the Government of Israel submit its second periodic report by June 2000. It also requests that the next report include information on the implementation of the Covenant in all lands over which Israel exercises effective control during the period covered by the report.

328. The Committee recommends the publication and distribution of the concluding observations of the Committee to public bodies, media agencies, and non-governmental organizations working in the area of human rights.

CCPR A/58/40 (2003)

85. Israel

(1) The Committee considered the second periodic report of Israel (CCPR/C/ISR/2001/2) at its 2116th, 2117th and 2118th meetings (see CCPR/C/SR.2116-2118), held on 24 and 25 July 2003, and adopted the following concluding observations at its 2128th-2130th meetings (CCPR/C/SR.2128-2130), held on 4 and 5 August 2003.

Introduction

(2) The Committee welcomes the second periodic report submitted by Israel and expresses its appreciation for the frank and constructive dialogue with a competent delegation. It welcomes the detailed answers, both oral and written, that were provided to its written questions.

Factors and difficulties affecting the implementation of the Covenant

(3) The Committee has noted and recognizes the serious security concerns of Israel in the context of the present conflict, as well as the difficult human rights issues relating to the resurgence of suicide bombings which have targeted Israel's civilian population since the beginning of the second intifada in September 2000.

Positive factors

(4) The Committee welcomes the positive measures and legislation adopted by the State party to improve the status of women in Israeli society, with a view to promoting gender equality. In this context, it welcomes in particular the amendment to the Equal Rights for Women Law (2000), the Employment of Women Law (Amendment 19), the adoption of the Sexual Harassment Law (1998), the Prevention of Stalking Law (2001), the Rights of Victims of an Offence Law (2001), and other legislative measures designed to combat domestic violence. It also welcomes the establishment of the Authority for the Advancement of the Status of Women but would appreciate further, up-to-date information on its responsibilities and functioning in practice.

(5) The Committee welcomes the measures taken by the State party to combat trafficking in women for the purpose of prostitution, in particular the Prohibition on Trafficking Law enacted in July 2000 and the prosecution of traffickers since that date.

(6) The Committee notes the efforts to increase the level of education for the Arab, Druze and Bedouin communities in Israel. In particular, it notes the implementation of the Special Education Law and the Compulsory Education Law Amendment (2000).

(7) The Committee also notes the State party's information about the significant measures taken for the development of the Arab sector, in particular through the 2001-2004 Development Plan.

(8) The Committee welcomes legislation adopted by the State party in respect of persons with

disabilities, in particular the enactment of the Equal Rights for People with Disabilities Law (1998). It expresses the hope that those areas where the rights of disabled people, acknowledged by the delegation as not being respected and requiring further improvements, will be addressed as soon as possible.

(9) The Committee notes the efforts by the State party to provide better conditions for migrant workers. It welcomes the amendment to the Foreign Workers Law and the increase in penalties imposed on employers for non-compliance with the law. It also welcomes free access to labour courts for migrant workers and the provision of information to them about their rights in several foreign languages.

(10) The Committee welcomes the Supreme Court's judgement of September 1999 which invalidated the former governmental guidelines governing the use of "moderate physical pressure" during interrogations and held that the Israeli Security Agency (ISA) has no authority under Israeli law to use physical force during interrogations.

Principal subjects of concern and recommendations

(11) The Committee has noted the State party's position that the Covenant does not apply beyond its own territory, notably in the West Bank and in Gaza, especially as long as there is a situation of armed conflict in these areas. The Committee reiterates the view, previously spelled out in paragraph 10 of its concluding observations on Israel's initial report (CCPR/C/79/Add.93 of 18 August 1998), that the applicability of the regime of international humanitarian law during an armed conflict does not preclude the application of the Covenant, including article 4 which covers situations of public emergency which threaten the life of the nation. Nor does the applicability of the regime of international humanitarian law preclude accountability of States parties under article 2, paragraph 1, of the Covenant for the actions of their authorities outside their own territories, including in occupied territories. The Committee therefore reiterates that, in the current circumstances, the provisions of the Covenant apply to the benefit of the population of the Occupied Territories, for all conduct by the State party's authorities or agents in those territories that affect the enjoyment of rights enshrined in the Covenant and fall within the ambit of State responsibility of Israel under the principles of public international law.

The State party should reconsider its position and include in its third periodic report all relevant information regarding the application of the Covenant in the Occupied Territories resulting from its activities therein.

(12) While welcoming the State party's decision to review the need to maintain the declared state of emergency and to prolong it on a yearly rather than an indefinite basis, the Committee remains concerned about the sweeping nature of measures during the state of emergency that appear to derogate from Covenant provisions other than article 9, derogation from which was notified by the State party upon ratification. In the Committee's opinion, these derogations extend beyond what would be permissible under those provisions of the Covenant which allow for the limitation of rights (e.g. arts. 12, para. 3, 19, para. 3, and 21, para. 3). As to measures derogating from article 9 itself, the Committee is concerned about the frequent use of various forms of administrative detention, particularly for Palestinians from the Occupied Territories, entailing restrictions on access to counsel

and on the disclosure of full reasons for the detention. These features limit the effectiveness of judicial review, thus endangering the protection against torture and other inhuman treatment prohibited under article 7 and derogating from article 9 more extensively than what in the Committee's view is permissible pursuant to article 4. In this regard, the Committee refers to its earlier concluding observations on Israel and to its general comment No. 29.

The State party should complete as soon as possible the review initiated by the Ministry of Justice of legislation governing states of emergency. In this regard, and pending the adoption of appropriate legislation, the State party should review the modalities governing the renewal of the state of emergency and specify the provisions of the Covenant from which it seeks to derogate, to the extent strictly required by the exigencies of the situation (art. 4).

(13) The Committee is concerned that the use of prolonged detention without any access to a lawyer or other persons in the outside world violates the Covenant (arts. 7, 9, 10 and 14, para. 3 (b)).

The State party should ensure that no one is held for more than 48 hours without access to a lawyer.

(14) The Committee is concerned about the vagueness of definitions in Israeli counter-terrorism legislation and regulations which, although their application is subject to judicial review, appear to run counter to the principle of legality in several aspects owing to the ambiguous wording of the provisions and the use of several evidentiary presumptions to the detriment of the defendant. This has adverse consequences for the rights protected under article 15 of the Covenant, which is non-derogable under article 4, paragraph 2, of the Covenant.

The State party should ensure that measures designed to counter acts of terrorism, whether adopted in connection with Security Council resolution 1373 (2001) or in the context of the ongoing armed conflict, are in full conformity with the Covenant.

(15) The Committee is concerned by what the State party calls "targeted killings" of those identified by the State party as suspected terrorists in the Occupied Territories. This practice would appear to be used at least in part as a deterrent or punishment, thus raising issues under article 6. While noting the delegation's observations about respect for the principle of proportionality in any response to terrorist activities against civilians and its affirmation that only persons taking direct part in hostilities have been targeted, the Committee remains concerned about the nature and extent of the responses by the Israeli Defence Force (IDF) to Palestinian terrorist attacks.

The State party should not use "targeted killings" as a deterrent or punishment. The State party should ensure that the utmost consideration is given to the principle of proportionality in all its responses to terrorist threats and activities. State policy in this respect should be spelled out clearly in guidelines to regional military commanders, and complaints about disproportionate use of force should be investigated promptly by an independent body. Before resorting to the use of deadly force, all measures to arrest a person suspected of being in the process of committing acts of terror must be exhausted.

(16) While fully acknowledging the threat posed by terrorist activities in the Occupied Territories,

the Committee deplores what it considers to be the partly punitive nature of the demolition of property and homes in the Occupied Territories. In the Committee's opinion the demolition of property and houses of families some of whose members were or are suspected of involvement in terrorist activities or suicide bombings contravenes the obligation of the State party to ensure without discrimination the right not to be subjected to arbitrary interference with one's home (art. 17), freedom to choose one's residence (art. 12), equality of all persons before the law and equal protection of the law (art. 26), and not to be subject to torture or cruel and inhuman treatment (art 7).

The State party should cease forthwith the above practice.

(17) The Committee is concerned about the IDF practice in the Occupied Territories of using local residents as "volunteers" or shields during military operations, especially in order to search houses and to help secure the surrender of those identified by the State party as terrorist suspects.

The State party should discontinue this practice, which often results in the arbitrary deprivation of life (art. 6).

(18) The Committee is concerned that interrogation techniques incompatible with article 7 of the Covenant are still reported frequently to be resorted to and the "necessity defence" argument, which is not recognized under the Covenant, is often invoked and retained as a justification for ISA actions in the course of investigations.

The State party should review its recourse to the "necessity defence" argument and provide detailed information to the Committee in its next periodic report, including detailed statistics covering the period since the examination of the initial report. It should ensure that alleged instances of ill-treatment and torture are vigorously investigated by genuinely independent mechanisms and that those responsible for such actions are prosecuted. The State party should provide statistics from 2000 to the present day on how many complaints have been made to the Attorney-General, how many have been turned down as unsubstantiated, how many have been turned down because the defence of necessity has been applied and how many have been upheld, and with what consequences for the perpetrators.

(19) While again acknowledging the seriousness of the State party's security concerns, which have prompted recent restrictions on the right to freedom of movement, for example through imposition of curfews or establishment of an inordinate number of roadblocks, the Committee is concerned that the construction of the "Seam Zone", by means of a fence and, in part, of a wall, beyond the Green Line imposes additional and unjustifiably severe restrictions on the right to freedom of movement of, in particular, Palestinians within the Occupied Territories. The "Seam Zone" has adverse repercussions on nearly all walks of Palestinian life; in particular, the wide-ranging restrictions on freedom of movement disrupt access to health care, including emergency medical services, and access to water. The Committee considers that these restrictions are incompatible with article 12 of the Covenant.

The State party should respect the right to freedom of movement guaranteed under article 12. The construction of a "Seam Zone" within the Occupied Territories should be stopped.

(20) The Committee is concerned by public pronouncements made by several prominent Israeli personalities in relation to Arabs that may constitute advocacy of racial and religious hatred constituting incitement to discrimination, hostility and violence.

The State party should take the necessary action to investigate, prosecute and punish such acts in order to ensure respect for article 20, paragraph 2, of the Covenant.

(21) The Committee is concerned about Israel's temporary suspension order of May 2002, enacted into law as the Nationality and Entry into Israel Law (Temporary Order) on 31 July 2003, which suspends, for a renewable one-year period, the possibility of family reunification, subject to limited and subjective exceptions, especially in the cases of marriages between an Israeli citizen and a person residing in the West Bank or in Gaza. The Committee notes with concern that the suspension order of May 2002 has already adversely affected thousands of families and marriages.

The State party should revoke the Nationality and Entry into Israel Law (Temporary Order) of 31 July 2003, which raises serious issues under articles 17, 23 and 26 of the Covenant. The State party should reconsider its policy with a view to facilitating family reunification of all citizens and permanent residents. It should provide detailed statistics on this issue, covering the period since the examination of the initial report.

(22) The Committee is concerned about the criteria in the 1952 Law on Citizenship enabling the revocation of Israeli citizenship, especially its application to Arab Israelis. The Committee is concerned about the compatibility with the Covenant, in particular article 24 of the Covenant, of the revocation of the citizenship of Israeli citizens.

The State party should ensure that any changes to citizenship legislation are in conformity with article 24 of the Covenant.

(23) Notwithstanding the observations in paragraphs 4 and 7 above, the Committee notes with concern that the percentage of Arab Israelis in the civil service and public sector remains very low and that progress towards improving their participation, especially of Arab Israeli women, has been slow (arts. 3, 25 and 26).

The State party should adopt targeted measures with a view to improving the participation of Arab Israeli women in the public sector and accelerating progress towards equality.

(24) While noting the Supreme Court's judgement of 30 December 2002 in the case of eight IDF reservists (judgement HC 7622/02), the Committee remains concerned about the law and criteria applied and generally adverse determinations in practice by military judicial officers in individual cases of conscientious objection (art. 18).

The State party should review the law, criteria and practice governing the determination of conscientious objection, in order to ensure compliance with article 18 of the Covenant.

(25) The State party is invited to disseminate widely the text of its second periodic report, the replies provided to the Committee's list of issues and the present concluding observations.

(26) In accordance with article 70, paragraph 5, of the Committee's rules of procedure, the State party is invited to provide, within one year, relevant information on the implementation of the Committee's recommendations in paragraphs (13), (15), (16), (18) and (21) above. The State party's third periodic report should be submitted by 1 August 2007.