

**COMMITTEE ON THE
RIGHTS OF THE CHILD**

**WRITTEN REPLIES BY THE GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED ARAB
EMIRATES CONCERNING THE LIST OF ISSUES (CRC/C/Q/UAE/1)
RECEIVED BY THE COMMITTEE ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD
RELATING TO THE CONSIDERATION OF THE INITIAL REPORT OF
THE UNITED ARAB EMIRATES (CRC/C/78/Add.2)**

[Received on 26 April 2002]

CRC/C/RESP/1
GE.02-41435 (E) 230502 240502

The Permanent Mission of the United Arab Emirates, Geneva

No.: 2/3/32-165

The Permanent Mission of the United Arab Emirates to the United Nations and other international organizations in Geneva presents its compliments to the Chairman of the Committee on the Rights of the Child and, with reference to his letter No. G/SO/228/1(3) dated 1 November 2001 concerning the list of issues to be taken up by the Committee at its thirtieth session to be held at Geneva from 21 May to 7 June 2002 in connection with its consideration of the initial report of the United Arab Emirates (CRC/C/78/Add.2), has the honour to transmit herewith the reply of the United Arab Emirates to the said list of issues.

The Permanent Mission of the United Arab Emirates takes this opportunity to convey to the Chairman of the Committee on the Rights of the Child the assurance of its highest consideration.

Geneva, 25 April 2002

The Chairman of the Committee on the Rights of the Child
Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights

PART I

2. National budgetary allocations at the federal level

It should be noted that the figures in the federal budget are not disaggregated for each Emirate, but only according to the allocations for each ministry or federal body.

(a) *Education (allocations for primary and secondary education, salaries and maintenance of school buildings)*

The relevant sources (the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Planning) do not have figures available under the requested headings. The data below is presented according to the method of disaggregation that is used.

Education expenditure (1997-2000)

Year	Salaries	%	General expenditure*	%	Capital	%	Total
1997	2 717 426 000	87	375 226 000	12	27 431 000	0.88	3 120 083 000
1998	2 808 818 000	86	432 562 000	13	39 369 000	1	3 280 749 000
1999	2 883 704 000	88	363 077 000	11	39 124 000	1	3 285 905 000
2000	3 213 704 000	89	363 077 000	10	39 124 000	1	3 615 905 000

(* General expenditure includes maintenance and other social services.)

Education expenditure compared with expenditure on other federal services (1994-2000)

Item	1994/95	1995/96	1996/97	1997/98	1998/99	1999/2000
Total number of students in public general and higher education*	323 063	333 513	338 921	348 813	363 457	375 380
Public expenditure on education (in billions of dirhams)	3 392.70	3 630.60	3 980.40	4 358.40	4 566.50	4 758.80
Total Federal Government expenditure (in billions of dirhams)	17 811	17 065	18 187	19 781	20 204	20 559
Students' share of Federal Government expenditure on education (in billions of dirhams)	10.5	10 886	11 744	12 495	12 564	12 677
Expenditure on education as a proportion of Federal Government expenditure (%)	19	21.3	21.9	22	22.6	23.1

(* Includes Ministry of Education students, students in exchange programmes, adult education, the United Arab Emirates University, higher colleges of technical education and Zayed University.)

(b) *Health (allocations for primary health care, vaccinations, adolescent health care and other health-care services for children)*

(* No data is available in the form requested.)

Years		1998	1999	2000
Hospitals	Public sector	40	37	38
	Private	19	28	21
Beds	Public sector	7 671	6 207	6 276
	Private	969	1 241	827
Clinics	Public sector	130	148	140
	Private	995	1 389	1 010
Dermatologists	Public sector	3 764	3 209	2 564
	Private	1 900	2 850	2 103
Dentists	Public sector	314	290	205
	Private	524	786	471
Nursing home	Public sector	11 039	9 002	8 085
	Private	1 249	1 797	1 567
Total Government expenditure (in billions of dirhams)		2 236	2 337	2 398

(c) *Child protection (institutional or foster care)*

With the exception of cases of children who are juvenile delinquents or foundlings, Emirates society has had no instances of children requiring protection or care or who, in their own best interests, have been placed with foster families or in special social welfare institutions. Similarly, there have been no cases of children being subjected to physical or mental abuse, neglect or violence or injury by one or both parents nor have there been any of the other cases to which the Convention refers.

(d) *Juvenile crime prevention and rehabilitation*

(e) *Other social services*

The allocations for the ministries, federal bodies and local authorities concerned with these issues are recorded only under a broad system of disaggregation that was approved and designed by the Department of Finance. The fact that the budget is broken down by item headings such as salaries, capital expenditure and general expenditure makes it impossible to determine the allocations provided for juvenile crime prevention, rehabilitation and other social services.

3. Information concerning the number of children deprived of a family environment and separated from their parents, disaggregated by sex and age

(a) *Children separated from their parents*

There are no recorded cases in Emirates society of children who have been separated from their parents for any reason whatsoever. Consequently, no statistical information is available on this topic.

(b) *The number of foundlings*

Foundlings are defined as children of unknown parentage. The procedure followed in all such cases is firstly to post notices in all police stations. The figures below are for the years 1998-2000.

Emirate	1998	1999	2000
Abu Dhabi	-	-	1
Al-Ain	-	-	-
Sharjah	-	2	9
Ajman	-	10	7
Umm al-Qaiwain	-	-	-
Ras al-Khaimah	1	2	1
Fujairah	-	1	2
Total	1	15	20

(c) *Children placed with relatives, in Kafalah, and in welfare institutions*

As explained above, there have been no cases in Emirates society of children who have had to be placed with relatives, foster families (in Kafalah) or in welfare institutions. This statement equally applies to cases of children who become orphaned as a result of losing both parents and those living in a family environment in which they are at risk because of poor education, depravity or emotional neglect.

4. Enrolment and completion rates, disaggregated by sex, age, and according to type of school, in percentages

4.1 Number of children enrolled in public, and private education, disaggregated by sex and age (3-18 years)

(a) *Children enrolled in public, and private kindergartens (2000-2001)*

Age	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Total
Male (public)	1 033	4 744	4 206	70				10 053
Female (public)	1 088	5 018	4 447	79				10 632
Male (private)	6 430	12 205	5 447	701	64	1	2	24 850
Female (private)	6 109	11 130	4 412	520	40	2	1	22 214
Male (total public and private)	7 463	16 994	9 653	771	64	1	2	34 903
Female (total public and private)	7 197	16 148	8 859	599	40	2	1	32 846
Total	14 660	33 142	17 512	1 370	104	3	3	67 749

(b) *Children enrolled in public, and private elementary education (2000-2001)*

Age	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	Total
Male (public)	8 488	11 588	11 586	11 178	10 160	9 737	4 890	1 588	592	255	95	70 157
Female (public)	7 927	10 237	10 119	9 270	8 825	8 588	3 598	1 153	317	103	32	60 205
Male (private)	2 443	10 366	11 053	11 858	12 001	12 179	10 118	2 895	1 604	806	328	75 930
Female (private)	2 723	10 737	11 259	11 540	11 783	12 209	10 001	2 338	935	412	126	74 063
Male (total public and private)	10 931	21 954	22 639	23 036	22 161	21 916	15 008	4 483	2 196	1 061	423	146 087
Female (total public and private)	10 650	20 974	21 378	20 810	20 608	20 797	13 599	1 252	1 252	515	158	134 268
Total	21 581	42 928	44 017	43 846	42 769	42 713	28 607	5 735	3 448	1 576	581	280 355

(c) *Children enrolled in public, and private intermediate education (2000-2001)*

Age	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	Total
Male (public)		12 188	10 577	9 699	3 693	2 093	851	259	39 340
Female (public)		12 674	11 694	9 733	2 862	1 507	774	518	39 762
Male (private)	4 371	6 892	7 390	3 838	1 375	670	238	92	24 866
Female (private)	4 035	6 153	6 310	3 097	907	293	110	45	20 950
Male (total public and private)	4 371	19 080	17 967	13 537	5 068	2 763	1 089	351	64 206
Female (total public and private)	4 035	18 827	18 004	12 830	3 469	1 800	884	563	60 712
Total	8 406	37 907	35 971	26 367	8 337	5 563	1 973	914	124 918

(d) *Children enrolled in public, and private secondary education (2000-2001)*

Age	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	Total
Male (public)		1 917	7 317	8 099	6 769	2 621	1 132	328	96	28 279
Female (public)		2 526	8 882	10 196	8 465	2 890	1 720	655	272	35 606
Male (private)		2 613	4 353	4 224	2 160	710	263	91	23	14 437
Female (private)		2 809	4 010	3 741	1 607	485	154	34	5	12 845
Male (total public and private)		4 530	11 670	12 323	8 929	3 331	1 395	419	119	42 716
Female (total public and private)		5 335	12 892	13 937	10 072	3 375	1 874	689	277	48 451
Total		9 865	24 562	26 260	19 001	6 706	3 269	1 308	396	91 167

(e) and (f) Children enrolled in religious, vocational and commercial education (2000-2001)

Type of school / Age	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	Total
Religious	21	49	356	240	230	179	158	139	54	34	22	1 482
Industrial					24	95	129	140	115	71	64	638
Commercial					25	95	171	185	156	103	101	836
Agricultural					3	19	41	39	46	25	12	185
Total	21	49	356	240	282	388	499	503	371	233	199	3 141

5. Number of children with disabilities, disaggregated by sex and age

(a) Children living with their families

A total number of 4,542 children with disabilities are living with their families. This reflects the policy pursued by all the relevant institutions including the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Health, and non-governmental institutions of offering services to persons with disabilities on a day-care basis.

(b) Children with disabilities living in specialized institutions

From the very beginning, the approach used for the treatment of disabled children has been based on guaranteeing them the right to receive care within the family. Thus, a policy of providing such children with care on a non-residential basis has been promoted among both government and non-governmental institutions. Therefore, there are no residential institutions for children with disabilities.

(c) Number of children with disabilities attending regular schools

Emirate	1997-1998	1998-1999	1999-2000
Abu Dhabi	538	611	703
Dubai	291	273	277
Sharjah	234	236	255
Ajman	71	84	88
Umm al-Qaiwain	83	70	68
Ras al-Khaimah	158	190	217
Fujairah	56	162	176
Total	1 421	1 626	1 784

(d) *Number of children with disabilities attending special schools in 2001 (disaggregated by sex)*

Item	Name of centre	Male	Female	Total
1	The Abu Dhabi Centre	108	80	188
2	The Al-Ain Centre	82	55	137
3	The Dubai Centre	145	76	216
4	The Ras al-Khaimah Centre	64	49	113
5	The Fujairah Centre	54	43	97
6	The Hattah Centre	12	12	24
7	The Al-Najah Centre for Rehabilitation	17	9	26
8	The Nour Centre for the Training and Rehabilitation of Disabled Persons	131	86	217
9	The Nour Centre for the Care of the Deaf, Dumb and Mentally Retarded	61	59	120
10	The Rashid Centre for the Treatment and Care of Children	45	40	85
11	The Association of Indian Women	37	21	58
12	The Dubai Special Care Centre	69	53	122
13	The Sharjah Humanitarian Services City	498	305	803
14	The Al-Ain Special Centre	50	18	68
15	The Future Centre	76	40	107
	Total	1 435	946	2 381

6. Number of children

(i) who allegedly committed a crime that was reported to the police (by sex, and for each Emirate) during the period 1998-2000

Year	1998		1999		2000	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Abu Dhabi	258	6	613	44	418	22
Dubai	367	35	361	36	339	29
Sharjah	535	152	594	180	429	127
Ajman	254	150	252	116	290	108
Umm al-Qaiwain	37	1	24	2	40	4
Ras al-Khaimah	42	6	61	4	45	4
Fujairah	116	9	157	32	193	47
Total	1 609	359	2 062	414	1 754	341

- (ii) Number of children who allegedly committed a crime which was reported to the police (by age and for each Emirate) during the period 1998-2000

Year	1998		1999		2000	
Age	Under 10	10-18	Under 10	10-18	Under 10	10-18
Emirate						
Abu Dhabi	5	259	15	642	0	440
Dubai	3	339	4	393	4	364
Sharjah	70	617	112	662	72	484
Ajman	141	263	148	220	164	234
Umm al-Qaiwain	0	38	0	26	3	41
Ras al-Khaimah	6	42	7	58	6	43
Fujairah	8	117	20	169	46	194
Total	233	1 735	306	2 070	295	1 800

- (iii) Number of children who allegedly committed a crime which was reported to the police (by type of charge (crime), and for each Emirate) during the period 1998-2000

Year	1998			1999			2000		
	Type of crime								
Emirate	Against a person	Against property	Other	Against a person	Against property	Other	Against a person	Against property	Other
Abu Dhabi	80	107	77	233	285	139	228	165	47
Dubai	121	177	104	116	175	106	101	156	111
Sharjah	223	174	290	176	165	433	130	132	294
Ajman	73	46	285	59	67	242	79	59	260
Ras al-Khaimah	33	28	35	60	53	76	63	60	117
Fujairah	24	14	0	8	18	0	15	27	2
Umm al-Qaiwain	22	17	9	24	23	18	21	14	14
Total	576	563	800	676	786	1 014	637	613	845

(b) *Number of children who were sentenced by the courts to sanctions, and the nature of the sanctions imposed.*

The courts sentenced a total of 383 minors to detention in a juvenile reform institution. In these institutions children go through a process of rehabilitation, behavioural correction and social adjustment.

(i) Number of children placed in a juvenile reform institution, by age group, in 2001

Age group	No.	Percentage
8 - 10	8	2.1
11 - 13	38	9.9
14 - 16	208	53.5
17 and over	129	33.7
Total	383	100

(ii) Number of children placed in a juvenile reform institution, according to the type of charge, in 2001

Charge	No.	Percentage
Theft	178	46.5
Sodomy	68	17.7
Unlawful intercourse	10	2.6
Glue-sniffing	2	0.5
An offence against public decency	6	1.5
Rape	8	2.1
Affray	13	3.4
Assault	10	2.6
Driving without a licence	2	0.5
Involuntary manslaughter and causing an accident	2	0.5
Evasion and infringement of immigration laws	31	8.1
Recidivism	19	5
Other	34	8.9
Total	383	100

(c) *Number of suspended sentences*

Emirate	1998	1999	2000
Abu Dhabi	34	120	136
Dubai	-	-	-
Sharjah	4	9	12
Ajman	1	5	-
Umm al-Qaiwain	12	1	5
Ras al-Khaimah	-	-	-
Fujairah	35	30	43
Total	85	165	196

(d) *Where the sanction is deprivation of liberty, please further specify the period of imprisonment*

According to article 1 of Federal Act No. 9 of 1976, concerning juvenile delinquents and vagrants: “For the purposes of the application of the provisions of this Act, a minor is deemed to be any person who is under the age of 18 on the date when he commits the offence which is the subject of an investigation or of his being found in a state of vagrancy.”

Likewise, article 9 of the same Act states: “A minor cannot be sentenced to a penalty of death, or imprisonment or to financial penalties.”

Under the terms of article 10:

“1. In cases where a criminal sentence can be imposed upon a minor, the applicable penalties of death or imprisonment shall be replaced by a custodial sentence.

“2. The term of the custodial sentence shall not exceed one half of the statutory maximum sentence.

“3. Any custodial sentence handed down against a minor in accordance with the terms of the present article must be served in a special institution that offers social welfare and educational facilities.”

Under the terms of article 69 of the Penal Code No. 3 of 1987: “Detention means the placement of a convicted person in a penal institution legally established for that purpose for the period stated in the sentence.

Unless otherwise specified herein, a term of detention must not be less than a minimum of one month or more than a maximum of three years.”

As these provisions clearly show, the penalties of death and life imprisonment are not applied to juvenile delinquents. The maximum penalty which a judge may impose in order to deprive a minor of his liberty is to place him in a therapeutic community, rehabilitation centre, educational residence or reform institution for a period of no more than one and a half years, the equivalent of half of the maximum sentence prescribed by the Penal Code. In such cases a judge may defer sentencing and place the minor under judicial probation.

One may conclude from all of the foregoing that sentences involving deprivation of liberty are not applied to minors, the only measures taken against them being those specified in article 15 of the Juveniles Act, which provides for the following:

1. The delivery of a reprimand (in these cases the presiding judge reprimands the minor during the hearing by admonishing and upbraiding him and exhorting him to good behaviour);
2. A supervision order (the minor is entrusted to the supervision of a parent, guardian or, if neither of these parties is fit to perform this task, a family member);
3. Judicial probation (in cases where it is permissible to sentence a minor to a custodial sentence, a judge can decide to defer a sentence of no less than one and no more than three years' detention, order that the minor be placed under supervision and impose the restrictions applicable in cases of judicial probation. If the minor completes the probationary period successfully, the case against him will be dropped);
4. An injunction (a court can prohibit a minor from frequenting certain places that are proved to incite him to delinquency or vagrancy);
5. An order prohibiting the minor from performing a specific type of work (a court can prohibit a minor from engaging in particular types of work which clearly contribute to his delinquency or vagrancy);
6. A compulsory vocational training order (by virtue of issuing a compulsory vocational training order a court can entrust a minor to the care of a government vocational training centre, industrial plant, commercial enterprise or farm which assumes responsibility for his rehabilitation for a maximum period of three years);
7. Placement, as appropriate, in a therapeutic community, rehabilitation centre, educational residence or reform institution (if a court recognizes that a minor's delinquency or vagrancy is attributable to a mental illness, it can order him to be placed in a treatment centre or designated health institution until he is cured. Thereafter, the court decides whether such a

person should be released on the basis of the reports submitted by the doctors responsible for his treatment. A court may place a minor in a suitable rehabilitation centre or State-owned or State-approved educational and reform centre specifically established for the welfare and rehabilitation of minors. The court issues release orders for these minors on the basis of the reports it receives from these same institutions).

It is possible to say, therefore, that if a minor is sentenced to deprivation of liberty, he will, by order of the court, be placed in a social welfare and rehabilitation institution.

(e) *Percentage of recidivism cases*

Emirate	1998		1999		2000	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Abu Dhabi	2	0.75	3	0.5	14	3.2
Dubai	-	-	-	-	-	-
Sharjah	11	1.6	10	1.3	7	1.25
Ajman	17	15	22	12.8	12	9.8
Umm al-Qaiwain	5	10	3	4	6	12
Ras al-Khaimah	-	-	-	-	-	-
Fujairah	4	7.5	7	15	16	25
Total	39	-	45	-	55	-

B. General Measures of Implementation

1. (i) Reservations

The request for comments under items (a), (b), (c) and (d) of this question has been passed on to the committee established to consider the question of the State's accession to the Convention. We shall notify you of its response as soon as it becomes available.

(ii) The possibility of reviewing these reservations

There is of course a team of legal advisers that was formed to analyse the Convention and decide upon the feasibility of the State's accession thereto. The team reviews the Convention on a continuous basis and has been made informed of the question regarding the possibility of reviewing the [State's] reservations. We shall notify the Committee of the outcome of its deliberations in due course.

2. (i) With respect to the implementation of the Convention, please indicate the relevant federal institutions and the role they play in:

(a) Intersectoral coordination and cooperation at and between federal and Emirate levels of government;

In view of the large number of institutions involved in implementing the Convention and offering services to safeguard the rights set forth therein, a committee (known as the Convention on the Rights of the Child Committee) has been formed with members from the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Information and Culture, the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Sharjah Supreme Council for the Family. The Committee's tasks are as follows:

1. To draft initial and periodic State reports on the measures taken to implement the Convention;
2. To promote the Convention and ensure that conditions in the local environment are conducive to the achievement of its aims;
3. To ensure to children the rights guaranteed under national laws and international conventions, treaties and protocols;
4. To make recommendations concerning ways and means of improving the quality of services programmes offered by the relevant institutions for children with a view to safeguarding children's rights.

(b) Monitoring at federal and Emirate levels of government;

This task is performed by the Convention on the Rights of the Child Committee, since the Convention was signed in the name of the United Arab Emirates and the task of follow-up and monitoring is therefore a matter for federal bodies.

(c) Receiving and addressing complaints of violations of child rights;

The Federal Public Prosecutor is primarily responsible for this task, together with the Ministry of the Interior. The police investigate any complaints received and refer them to the Public Prosecutor if there is evidence to support them. The Ministry of Education performs a similar role through the agency of the social services units that have been set up in schools to monitor cases that could be described as involving violations of child rights, including cases of domestic violence, beating and ill-treatment.

The Dubai General Police Command has created a human rights committee to consider complaints received from the public and monitor the efficiency of institutions in responding to and investigating complaints and guaranteeing observance of human rights. The Committee is presently considering a proposal for the establishment of an independent federal body to address violations of child rights and identify and remedy any breaches of the terms of the Convention.

(d) The collection and analysis of disaggregated data in order to design policies and programmes affecting all persons under 18 years;

Without prejudice to the powers of ministers and the functions of federal ministries, the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs collects and analyses data in accordance with the functions attributed to it under the terms of Council of Ministers Decree No. 5 of 1990 and in its capacity as the institution responsible for ensuring the stability and cohesion of the family, the protection of childhood, and guidance of the young. The Ministry's structures include the Family and Child Welfare Division, which comprises three main departments: the Family Welfare Department, the Child Welfare Department and the Child Custody Department. In addition, the Division for the Welfare of Special Categories caters for young and disabled persons as well as follow-up care for persons released into the community after the completion of judicial measures. The Ministry's Social Security Department also plays its part by providing families with financial support to provide for the needs of their members.

(ii) If any overlap or duplication exists in the functions of these institutions, what is done to remedy this?

There is no overlap or duplication in the functions of the institutions responsible for the implementation of the Convention. To the contrary, their roles are complementary and are determined in accordance with the respective areas of competence of each institution. At the federal level, section 7 of the Constitution provides for the allocation of legislative, executive and State responsibilities at the federal and Emirates levels in the manner described hereunder.

(a) The Federation performs legislative and executive functions in the following domains: foreign affairs; defence; the federal armed forces; the defence of federal security against external or internal threats; security and public order; the system of government in the federal capital; federal employee affairs; federal judicial affairs; federal finance, taxes, duties, revenue and loans; postal, telegram, telephone and wireless services; the building, maintenance and improvement of federal highways designated by the Federal Supreme Council as main roads; the organization of traffic on such roads; issuance of aircraft and pilot licences; education; public health and medical services; money and currency; standards, weights and measures; electricity

services; federal nationality, passports, residence permits and immigration; federal property and all matters pertaining thereto; census and statistical information for federal purposes; and federal information.

Local governments provide a variety of social services at the Emirate level for the protection and welfare of children, to which all children in the State are entitled. These include, inter alia, the Children's Parliament in the Emirate of Sharjah, the Abu Dhabi Cultural League and the Zayed House for Children.

(iii) Plan of action for the implementation of the Convention

Although the State acceded to the Convention relatively recently, every effort has been made to improve child services and safeguard the rights enshrined in national laws and in the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The establishment of the [Convention on the Rights of the Child] Committee is regarded as one indicator of this concern. The Committee is responsible for monitoring the implementation of the Convention, ensuring coordination between the relevant federal institutions, and formulating a national programme for the promotion and improvement of children's services. A proposal has recently been made to expand the Committee's membership to include government bodies, civil society institutions and the private sector.

3. In light of article 15 of the Convention, and other international standards on the freedom of association, please describe what efforts have been made to facilitate the involvement of civil society throughout all stages in the implementation of the Convention.

Freedom to establish associations

The Constitution of the United Arab Emirates recognizes the right to establish associations that serve the public interest. According to article 33 thereof freedom of association and the right to establish associations are guaranteed within the limits prescribed by law.

Act No. 6, concerning associations serving the public interest, was promulgated in 1974. The Act defines an association as: "Any group of individuals or bodies corporate constituted on a continuous basis, for a definite or indefinite period, for the purpose of pursuing a social, religious, cultural, educational or artistic activity, providing a humanitarian service, achieving a charitable aim or aims or rendering any other type of assistance in the form of material support or technical expertise, all the activities of which are directed towards the furtherance of such activities in the public interest and on a not-for-profit basis."

(a) In light of the provisions of this Act, the number of registered associations has risen to 107. This figure includes professional and women's associations; associations offering humanitarian services; popular arts, theatre and musical associations; and associations for disabled persons and persons who care for disabled families. They have a total of 32,050 members and their annual revenue amounts to 278,858,082 million dirhams.

(b) The associations play an important role in familiarizing citizens and residents with the rights and duties specified in the Constitution and in prevailing laws and legislation, and particularly the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

(c) In 2000 a total of 753 lectures and seminars were organized by associations. While all associations play an important role in this domain, particular mention should be made of the Dubai Association for the Welfare of Young Persons, which designs special training, rehabilitation and welfare programmes for young persons and provides a family hotline to deal with the problems facing families and their children.

(d) In 1998, the Association for the Welfare of Gifted Persons was given official recognition. This was followed in 2001 by the official establishment of the Association for the Welfare of Orphaned Children. The latter set itself the goals of providing for the social, psychological, educational and vocational welfare of orphaned children and of offering financial assistance to families that care for orphans. The fact that these associations have been given official recognition is regarded as an important development, which supports the work of existing associations.

(e) All State schools, except for those at the earliest levels of education, allow students to have their own representative councils, known as students' councils, which currently number 600. Under the rules of these councils students are entitled to discuss issues, including educational and administrative issues, that affect them in schools, and they can present their demands to the Ministry, which gives them due consideration.

(f) Students are represented in parents' councils, of which there are a total of 700. The students' representative is entitled to participate in these councils and to discuss and represent students' views.

(g) Students are also represented in educational area councils, of which there are a total of 20. If we consider that the student population accounts for approximately

600,000 students, or more than 50 per cent of all children, this gives us some indication of the high percentage of children who are involved in the councils, where they are able to discuss their issues of concern in a spirit of openness and responsibility.

(h) In the same context, a Children's Parliament has been formed in the Emirate of Sharjah. The Parliament holds regular meetings to discuss child issues. Its sessions are held in the presence of representatives of the media, including the print and audio-visual media and are broadcast live on television. The Parliament's members are elected by Sharjah school students in a free ballot.

(i) The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs has included in its plans for 2002 the organization of lectures jointly with these associations in order to raise awareness of the Convention and of what has been done towards implementing it and to expand non-governmental participation in the implementation process.

4. Please explain the measures taken and their effectiveness with respect to the States parties public awareness campaigns of the Convention, particularly for professionals working for and with children (e.g. of governmental officials, community-based organizations, religious leaders, the mass media), and the public-at-large, including children themselves.

In 1998 the Family and Child Welfare Division of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs held a seminar on various aspects of children's rights at which several important working papers were presented. These are now being considered by the Convention of the Rights on the Child Committee in the context of the formulation of its programmes of action.

The social development centres of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs organized a total of 236, 238 and 250 lectures in the years 1998, 1999 and 2000 respectively, as part of their programmed activities. The lectures were designed for women attending the centres and focused mainly on the subjects of child welfare and children's rights. The centres also showed a total of 38 films on social and health topics designed to promoting the interests and rights of the child.

Among the programmes broadcast by the Emirates Channel of Abu Dhabi television was a series devoted to children's rights, which hosted several academics and officials of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs. Its aim was to promote awareness of children's rights and of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

The Convention on the Rights of the Child Committee is working on the formulation of a programme geared towards promoting awareness of children's rights and disseminating information about the Convention and its principal provisions.

5. Please describe any ongoing human rights training and education activities for professionals, especially those working for and with children, throughout the seven Emirates.

(a) Training sessions for social workers in schools

The Department of Social Services holds regular training sessions for more than 1,000 social workers employed in government schools, to enhance their understanding of the nature of their responsibilities, explore ways and means of resolving children's problems and of receiving and analysing students' complaints and building empathetic relationships with their families.

(b) The Ministry of Education and Youth organizes a series of annual students' events to make students and persons employed in the educational field aware of the importance of a number of issues, including the following:

Respect for one's parents;

Respect for one's teacher;

Assuming responsibility;

Accepting criticism and the opinions of others;

Environmental development and preservation;

Cooperation and working with a group;

Voluntary work.

These events provide the categories which work with children (e.g. teachers, counsellors, school managers, social workers, parents) with education and training on the importance of inculcating these particular values in children given the important role which they play in the formation and development of the personality.

PART II

Copies of the Convention in all the official languages of the State

The official language of the United Arab Emirates is Arabic. A copy of the Convention, translated into Arabic by the United Nations, has already been approved and distributed to the relevant institutions.

PART III

Bills or newly-enacted legislation

1. New bills

(a) *The Child Protection Act*

The Sharjah Supreme Council for the Family has formed a committee to draft a Bill for the protection of the children's rights that are guaranteed under national laws and international conventions, treaties and protocols. The committee members include representatives from government and non-governmental institutions and academics. The committee has completed its draft of the Bill, which it has submitted to the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs as the competent authority for the adoption of federal laws and their referral to the relevant authorities. The Ministry has transmitted the text to the Ministry of Justice for analysis and review.

(b) *The Disabled Persons' Act*

The technical committee of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs is drafting a Bill on the rights of persons with special needs (disabled persons), which is designed to address all their rights and establish regulations pertaining to educational, health, social and support services; welfare programmes; the specifications for buildings, public utilities and public transport; the facilities that must be available at the local level; and the exemptions and privileges to which individuals in this category are entitled.

2. Draft Council of Ministers' executive decrees

(a) *Day-care facilities for the children of mothers employed in government institutions*

With due regard for the provisions of paragraph 3, article 18, of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which recognizes a child's right to care while its parents are at work, the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs has prepared a draft decree for adoption by the Council of Ministers, which will require government institutions to provide childcare facilities for their women employees. There can be little doubt of the impact that this decree will have on the psychological well-being of working women and of its effects on their productivity, as well as their peace of mind regarding the welfare of their children and the quality of care that they receive during the mother's absence.

(b) *Council of Ministers' draft decree for the establishment of private welfare institutions for disabled persons*

The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs has drawn up a draft decree for submission to the Council of Ministers, that pertains to the organization of institutions run by individuals or undertakings offering services to disabled persons. The text stipulates the conditions and

standards required in respect of the quality of buildings and equipment, methods of treatment, education and rehabilitation, the numbers and duties of staff, and management performance. This decree aims at safeguarding the rights recognized in the Convention in general and those set forth in its articles 3 and 23 in particular.

3. Laws amending existing legislation

(a) The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs Organizational Bill

From a series of studies on improving the efficiency and services of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs a blueprint was drawn up for the Ministry's organizational structure to keep pace with social progress and respond to the social development and social welfare imperatives of the future. Among the most important additions included in the Bill are the provisions for the modernization of the following structures: the Department for Social Defence; the Centre for Research Training and Information; the technical office and department for non-governmental organizations working in the field of disabled persons and disability; and the department for non-governmental organizations operating in the field of voluntary social work. It is hoped that the Bill will be referred to the competent authorities in the near future and, if it is approved, work will proceed in accordance with its provisions.

(b) The Social Security Act

The Social Security Act No. 2 of 2001 was promulgated as an amendment to the Social Security Act No. 21 of 1991. Among the most important amendments introduced to the Act was the addition of disabled persons as a separate category which is entitled to social assistance when all other conditions for such entitlement are met. Under the Act women nationals who are the widows of foreign spouses are also entitled to assistance for themselves and their children. The fact that the task of determining the amount of such assistance is left to the discretion of the Council of Ministers endows the Act with sufficient flexibility to respond to changes, improvements in living standards and inflation. One positive effect of the Act as regards children is that it guarantees that the State will provide for them financially in the event of their becoming orphaned, suffering a disability, or where their parentage is unknown. This provision is also extended to children in other categories and to those whose families are struggling to get by on low incomes. There is no doubt that this type of State provision is consistent with the Convention's guiding principles regarding the child's right to life, survival and development and with the rights recognized in articles 6, 7, 9, 18, 20, 23, 26 and 27 thereof.

(c) *The Federal Government Civil Service Act*

Federal Act No. 21 of 2001, concerning the employment of civil servants in Federal Government, was enacted to replace Federal Act No. 8 of 1973 of the same title. One of the most important amendments introduced in the new Act is that it guarantees children the rights enshrined in the Convention on the Rights of the Child. According to article 55 of the Act a working woman is entitled to take two months' maternity leave on full pay instead of the 45 days for which the previous Act provided. She is also entitled to take two months' leave on half pay and a further two months' leave without pay for the purpose of breastfeeding. A working woman is entitled to take maternity leave on five occasions during her working life. The provision of leave for the purpose of breastfeeding is considered one of the innovations introduced by the new Act. These innovations are consistent with the terms of articles 18 and 19 of the Convention, in that they make it possible for a child to enjoy its mother's care for up to six months during the first year of their lives. They also strengthen the mother's right to appropriate pre-natal and post-natal health care in accordance with the terms of article 24 (d) of the Convention.

(d) *The Juvenile Delinquency Act*

Thirty years after the promulgation of Federal Act No. 9 of 1976, concerning the treatment of juvenile delinquents and vagrants, it proved necessary to revise it. The technical committee of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs is currently reviewing the text in the light of local changes and with due regard for the need to ensure that its approach to the treatment of juvenile delinquency and of those at risk of delinquency is consistent with modern approaches to that phenomenon and with the changing patterns in and forms of delinquency. Account is also taken of regional and international experiences of dealing with this phenomenon and of the importance of incorporating into the Act the outcomes of United Nations efforts in this domain, of which the most important are the rights recognized in articles 3, 8, 9, 12, 16, 18, 19, 20, 25, 37, 39 and 40 of the Convention of the Rights of the Child as well as the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Administration of Juvenile Justice (The Beijing Rules), the United Nations Rules for the Protection of Juveniles Deprived of their Liberty, and the United Nations Guidelines for the Prevention of Juvenile Delinquency (The Riyadh Guidelines). In addition, the drafters of the Act are also guided by the Model Act on Juvenile Delinquents and Persons at Risk of Delinquency, which has been elaborated by the League of Arab States.

New institutions

1. The City of the Child

The City of the Child in Dubai is regarded as the first educational and recreational city of its kind in the Middle East. Designed for children aged between 2 and 15 years, it provides a space in which children can pursue exploration and discovery activities, presented in an entertaining and educational way, that make use of their five senses.

The City of the Child comprises the following areas:

The Discovery Centre (The Human Body; Applied Sciences; Water);

The Culture Section (“The Life We Live”; World Cultures; The Nature Centre);

The Computer and Communications Section (Human Interaction; Modern Communications, Computers, Electronic Mail, the Telephone and the Fax);

The Space Discovery Centre (The Solar System; Aircraft; Day and Night);

The Planetarium;

The Information Centre (a library containing computers, books, educational toys, diskettes, and educational audio and video cassettes);

Study groups, workshops, theatre, and a play area.

2. The Sharjah Supreme Council for the Family

The Supreme Council for the Family was established under the terms of Amiral Decree No. 24 of 2001. The Council has responsibility for promoting the role of the family in society and consolidating family ties; analysing the problems that families encounter; improving the health awareness of mothers and promoting interest in the education and protection of children; guaranteeing the welfare and rehabilitation of disabled persons; and recommending family-related legislation.

3. The Emirates Association for the Welfare of Gifted Persons

Ministerial Decree No. 1053 of 1998 was promulgated on 23 November 1998, to proclaim the establishment of the Emirates Association for the Welfare of Gifted Persons. The Association is a civil society institution of which this State is particularly proud and its aims are as follows: to conduct research on gifted persons; to promote awareness of the importance of providing for the welfare of such persons; to encourage and help gifted persons to give expression to their creativity and inventiveness; to publish scientific journals that draw attention to their achievements; and to coordinate with official authorities and institutions in order to ensure that gifted persons receive a comprehensive package of services. The Association’s aims

highlight the degree to which its efforts are consistent with the purposes of the Convention and the rights of the child enshrined therein, particularly those recognized in its articles 28, 29 (a) and 31.

4. The Association of Orphaned Children

This association was established on 8 May 2001 by Proclamation Decree No. 246 of 2001. It is devoted to catering for the social, psychological, educational and vocational welfare of orphaned children, providing financial assistance to the families that assume their care and encouraging charitable work on behalf of orphans. The Association serves the recognized rights of children in general and those laid down in article 28 of the Convention in particular.

5. The Female Juvenile Delinquents Reform Centre Project

This project seeks to provide for the social welfare of female juvenile delinquents who are aged between 7 and 18 years. The project offers female juvenile delinquents and girls at risk of delinquency a place for re-education and rehabilitation that deters girls at risk of delinquency from engaging in delinquent behaviour and provides treatment for those involved in deviant behaviour.

6. The Supreme Council for Motherhood and Childhood

The Council of Ministers has given its approval, in principle, for a Bill establishing the Supreme Council for Motherhood and Childhood. The Bill has been referred to the legislative committee for review. It provides, inter alia, for the formulation of family- and childhood-oriented policies and programmes, the monitoring and evaluation of their implementation, and analysis of the changing and newly emerging needs of the family and children in Emirates society.

7. Newly implemented policies and programmes

In the context of the State's efforts to eliminate the factors that contribute to disability and hereditary diseases, a genetic testing programme has been introduced for prospective marriage partners with a view to protecting future generations against certain hereditary diseases.
