

EDUCATION - RELIGIOUS, MORAL, CULTURAL EDUCATION

Paragraph 475

Further efforts should be made to strengthen the system of bilingual education in order to cover the whole of the indigenous population, 40 per cent of whom remain illiterate, and to prevent the destruction of the indigenous cultural heritage.

- Mexico, CERD, A/52/18 (1997) 42 at paras. 312 and 324.

Paragraph 312

The absence of local and federal legislation guaranteeing indigenous populations the possibility of a bilingual and bicultural education remains a source of concern.

Paragraph 324

The State party should make every effort to provide multicultural education for everyone.

- Iceland, CERD, A/56/18 (2001) 32 at para. 149.

The introduction of new curricula for nursery and primary schools, with increased attention to the role of schools in facilitating the integration of children from different cultural backgrounds without the loss of their ties to their own culture is welcomed. The emphasis on the promotion of tolerance is noted, as is the recognition of the need to provide students from different linguistic backgrounds with special education in Icelandic to address educational and employment disparities.

- Italy, CERD, A/56/18 (2001) 53 at para. 311.

The education of Roma children is one of the priorities for the integration of their community into Italian society. In this respect, although it is noted that the State party has chosen to integrate Roma children into the regular Italian schooling system, it is suggested that the State party continue to make every effort to respect and accommodate the specific cultural background of these children.

ICCPR

- Norway, ICCPR, A/49/40 vol. I (1994) 21 at para. 94.

It is noted that the authorities have included multicultural issues in education, but it is of concern that they have approached these issues only by reference to articles 2 and 26 of the Covenant. This gives a narrow interpretation of article 27 of the Covenant relating to the rights of persons belonging to minorities. In this regard, it is noted that the rights conferred under article 27 of the Covenant on

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individuals who are members of a minority avail to all such individuals in a State party's territory and must not, as enjoined by article 2, paragraph 1, of the Covenant, be restricted to nationals.

- Costa Rica, ICCPR, A/49/40 vol. I (1994) 31 at paras. 158 and 162.

Paragraph 158

With respect to article 18 of the Covenant, the pre-eminent position accorded to the Roman Catholic Church is of concern. The Committee also notes with concern that certain provisions of Costa Rican legislation (*inter alia*, the *Ley de Carrera Docente*) confer on the National Episcopal Conference the power to effectively impede the teaching of religions other than Catholicism in public schools and the power to bar non-Catholics from teaching religion in the public school curricula.

Paragraph 162

Steps should be taken to ensure that there is no discrimination in the exercise of the right to religious education, particularly with respect to access to religious teachings other than Catholicism. Current practices which make the selection of religious instructors subject to the authorization of the National Episcopal Conference are not in conformity with the Covenant.

- Slovenia, ICCPR, A/49/40 vol. I (1994) 56 at para. 351.

With reference to freedom of conscience and religion, including the issue of religious education, the State party should take into account the Committee's general comment No. 22 (48) on article 18 of the Covenant.

- Sudan, ICCPR, A/53/40 vol. I (1998) 22 at para. 134.

The documented cases of official action which interferes with the rights of non-Muslim religious denominations and groups to practise their religion and to carry out peaceful educational activities are regretted. A mechanism should be established to protect minority religious groups from discrimination and action seeking to impede their freedom to teach and practise their religious beliefs.

- Zimbabwe, ICCPR, A/53/40 vol. I (1998) 35 at para. 229.

The Committee is concerned about safeguarding the cultural heritage of minorities in Zimbabwe and recommends, *inter alia*, that education be provided in minority languages.

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- Argentina, ICCPR, A/56/40 vol. I (2001) 38 at para. 74(7).

The advances made in the protection of the rights of the indigenous peoples, the devolution of national and provincial land to indigenous communities through the National Registry of Indigenous Communities, and the promotion of multicultural and multilingual education, are noted with satisfaction.

ICESCR

- Poland, ICESCR, E/1999/22 (1998) 32 at para. 157.

Special care should be taken to ensure full respect for the rights of all religious groups, particularly concerning issues of national policy such as education, gender equality and health care. The rights of all minority groups with regard to their right to participate in national political and economic life and the right to practise and teach their culture should be fully respected.

CRC

- Norway, CRC, CRC/C/29 (1994) 27 at paras. 162 and 176.

Paragraph 162

Although an opting-out system exists for children wishing to abstain from compulsory religious education, this requires their parents to submit a formal request exposing the faith of the children involved and as such may be an infringement of their right to privacy.

Paragraph 176

The State party should reconsider its policy on religious education for children in light of the general principle of non-discrimination and the right to privacy.

- Holy See, CRC, CRC/C/46 (1995) 27 at para. 179.

Concern is expressed over the fact that discrimination between children may arise in Catholic schools and institutions, in particular with regard to gender.

- Norway, CRC, CRC/C/97 (2000) 43 at paras. 235 and 236.

Paragraph 235

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Concern is expressed about the approach taken by the State party's Act No. 61 of 17 July 1998 relating to primary, lower secondary and upper secondary education. This introduces a new common curriculum on "Religions, Knowledge and Ethical Education", which may be discriminatory. The Committee is concerned notably by the process of providing for exemptions to those children and parents who do not wish to participate in parts of the teaching.

Paragraph 236

The implementation of the new curriculum should be reviewed and an alternative exemption process should be considered.