Child Rights References in the Universal Periodic Review

Summary:
A compilation of extracts featuring child-rights issues from the reports submitted to the first Universal Periodic Review. There are extracts from the 'National Report', the 'Compilation of UN Information' and the 'Summary of Stakeholder's Information'. Also included is the 'Final Report' and 'Conclusions and Recommendations' from the Review.

Macedonia - 5th Session - 2009
12th May 2009, 2.30pm to 5.30pm

National Report


40. By a Decision of the Government, a National Commission for Fight against Trafficking in Human Beings and Illegal Migration was formed in 2001. It is coordinated by the Ministry of the Interior and has prepared a National Strategy and an Action Plan for fight against trafficking in human beings. In 2004, a Sub-Group for Fight against Trafficking in Children was formed. The office of the National Mechanism for Referral of Victims of Trafficking in Human Beings at the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy has been functioning since September 2005.


73. Article 40 of the Constitution of the Republic of Macedonia provides for special care and protection of the family. The Law on Family regulates the legal relations in marriage, family, and common law marriage. Parents have the right and obligation provide care for the supporting and upbringing of their children. The state provides for special care of children without parents and parental care. Children born in wedlock have equal rights as those born outside wedlock.

114. For the purpose of increasing the number of Roma pupils in secondary education, the Ministry of Education and Science has obliged secondary-school principals to accept the enrollment of at least one Roma pupil per class, in spite of the fact that they do not fulfill the enrollment criteria.

115. In the course of the 2008/2009 school year, the Ministry of Education and Science has introduced a special program for scholarships for Roma secondary-school pupils. 650 scholarships have been awarded to all Roma secondary-school pupils enrolled in first year in the 2008/09 school year, as a stimulating measure to increase the number of Roma pupils and for successful completion of their education. Free textbooks are provided for Roma pupils whose families receive welfare assistance. The optional subject “Language and Culture of the Roma” has been introduced and it may be taken by pupils from the third to the ninth grade. Two major projects have be initiated – construction of a secondary combined general education school and vocational school in the municipality of Shuto Orizari, where the Roma population is a majority, and establishment of a Department of Roma Studies and a group of Roma language at the pedagogical faculties.

117. Programs and activities are also realized for greater inclusion of the Roma population in the health care system and for improvement of the access to the health care services. Activities are undertaken for regular vaccination of Roma children, education about prevention of AIDS/HIV within the Roma community, control of and education about tuberculosis, free gynecological examinations for Roma women, etc.

120. The Republic of Macedonia is a party to the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its Protocol to
and health). One of the priority areas in both documents is education. Pre-school education is a key factor for inclusion of Roma children.

17. In reply to the advance questions by the Czech Republic and the United Kingdom relating to the Roma, in 2004 the national strategy and action plan for the 2005-2015 Decade of Roma Inclusion were adopted and are being implemented (education, employment, housing and health). One of the priority areas in both documents is education. Pre-school education is a key factor for inclusion of Roma children.
in schools. The Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, in cooperation with 16 municipalities, is implementing the project on inclusion of Roma children in pre-schools. As a result, 720 Roma children attended pre-school. Additional objectives of this project are to raise awareness of schools and teaching staff about Roma issues and to increase the number of Roma teachers. The Government allocated 400,000 euros for implementation of the project.

20. In reply to the United Kingdom, the day care centres for children with disabilities (21 operating) are designed to accommodate 20 to 25 persons. The size of groups is projected to provide the high quality care, individual treatment, group work and creation friendly and family like atmosphere. One of the priority objectives of the Government is to continue opening new centres at local level, where necessary. The number of professional of different specialization is compatible with the prescribed standards by the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy, that is to say one professional covering four beneficiaries. The employees of these centres have continuing in-service training in the area of their expertise.

24. Algeria noted that the Ombudsman had been found by the Human Rights Committee not to be fully in accordance with the Paris Principles and asked what measures were envisaged to remedy this. It also noted concerns expressed by several treaty-monitoring bodies and UNICEF over the high school dropout rates in rural areas and among Roma children, refugees and girls. It further noted efforts made and policies adopted to foster the integration of Roma, Albanian, and other minorities in different sectors of society.

42. Morocco commended the Government for its judicial reform strategy facilitating access to justice and asked about measures to address the lack of confidence in the judicial system. Morocco applauded the national plan of action on children’s rights. It further commended the adoption of the action plan to prevent sexual violence against children and encouraged the Government to continue to implement measures according to its national and international priorities.

47. Concerning trafficking in persons (Ukraine, Greece, Sweden), a National Commission against Trafficking in Human Beings and Illegal Migration was formed in 2001. In 2004, a Sub- Group for Fight against Trafficking in Children was formed. The Office of the National Mechanism for Referral of Victims of Trafficking in Human Beings at the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy has been functioning since September 2005. The National Commission prepared a National Action Plan for Fight against Trafficking in Human Beings and Illegal Migration in the country for the period 2006-2008. In January 2009, the preparation of a new national action plan commenced. At present, the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy is drafting amendments to the Law on Social Protection which envisages non-institutional protection of victims of trafficking in human beings and establishment of a Centre for Victims of Trafficking in Human Beings. In 2007, the standard operating procedures for treatment of victims of trafficking in human beings were endorsed by the Government. The procedures were introduced with the aim of providing assistance and protection to all victims of trafficking in human beings through a single comprehensive approach based on the human rights of the victims.

71. Belgium welcomed the positive measures adopted by the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia in the area of the rights of the child, particularly concerning access to education. It, however, noted concerns by treaty-monitoring bodies regarding high levels of absenteeism in primary and secondary schooling and low levels of school enrolment for certain population groups such as the Roma and asked how the Government assesses the current situation. Since the national plan on the rights of the child was foreseen for a nine year period, Belgium asked how the Government plans to conduct regular evaluations and adapt to changes on the ground.

Conclusion and Recommendations

4. Conduct a comprehensive review of the conformity of internal law with the provisions of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (Poland); continue harmonization of the national legislation with international standards in the field of human rights (Ukraine);

7. Consider the possibility to conduct a mid-term evaluation of the Action Plan on the rights of the child (Morocco);

8. Put in place a national comprehensive plan for civil status registration and the right to identity, which includes awareness raising-campaigns for parents, guardians and other responsible persons, which will help to speed up the registration of births (Argentina);

23. Adopt and implement legislation prohibiting corporal punishment under all circumstances and accompany this with a public awareness-raising campaign (Austria); adopt appropriate measures, consistent with international standards, to avoid corporal punishment of children in all areas and to carry out education and awareness-raising campaigns in schools and in society at large (Argentina);

24. Increase the level of protection of minors, particularly those who find themselves in a situation of lack of protection and outside of the compulsory schooling system (Spain);

40. Adopt provisions to address the phenomenon of school dropouts particularly among Roma children and children living in rural areas, especially girls (Algeria); continue its efforts to guarantee free education at the primary level for all children, giving special attention to minority groups (Holy See); continue to pay special attention to access to education for all children regardless of their ethnic origin and at all education levels, preschool, primary and secondary (Belgium);