

United Nations

**International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial
Discrimination**

Declarations and Reservations [Excerpt]¹

Last update: March 2007.

(Unless otherwise indicated, the declarations and reservations were made upon ratification, accession or succession)

Austria

"Article 4 of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination provides that the measures specifically described in sub-paragraphs (a), (b) and (c) shall be undertaken with due regard to the principles embodied in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the rights expressly set forth in article 5 of the Convention. The Republic of Austria therefore considers that through such measures the right to freedom of opinion and expression and the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association may not be jeopardized. These rights are laid down in articles 19 and 20 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights; they were reaffirmed by the General Assembly of the United Nations when it adopted articles 19 and 21 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and are referred to in article 5 (d) (viii) and (ix) of the present Convention."

Belgium

In order to meet the requirements of article 4 of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, the Kingdom of Belgium will take care to adapt its legislation to the obligations it has assumed in becoming a party to the said Convention.

The Kingdom of Belgium nevertheless wishes to emphasize the importance which it attaches to the fact that article 4 of the Convention provides that the measures laid down in subparagraphs (a), (b), and (c) should be adopted with due regard to the principles embodied in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the rights expressly set forth in article 5 of the Convention. The Kingdom of Belgium therefore considers that the obligations imposed by article 4 must be reconciled with the right to freedom of opinion and expression and the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association. Those rights are proclaimed in articles 19 and 20 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and have been reaffirmed in articles 19 and 21 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. They have also been stated in article 5, subparagraph (d) (viii) and (ix) of the said Convention.

The Kingdom of Belgium also wishes to emphasize the importance which it attaches to respect for the rights set forth in the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, especially in articles 10 and 11 dealing respectively with freedom of opinion and expression and freedom of peaceful assembly and association.

¹ Compiled by ERICarts from the UN website <http://www.ohchr.org/english/countries/ratification/2.htm>

Bulgaria

The Government of the People's Republic of Bulgaria considers that the provisions of article 17, paragraph 1, and article 18, paragraph 1, of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, the effect of which is to prevent sovereign States from becoming Parties to the Convention, are of a discriminatory nature. The Convention, in accordance with the principle of the sovereign equality of States, should be open for accession by all States without any discrimination whatsoever.

France

With regard to article 4, France wishes to make it clear that it interprets the reference made therein to the principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and to the rights set forth in article 5 of the Convention as releasing the States Parties from the obligation to enact anti-discrimination legislation which is incompatible with the freedoms of opinion and expression and of peaceful assembly and association guaranteed by those texts.

With regard to article 6, France declares that the question of remedy through tribunals is, as far as France is concerned, governed by the rules of ordinary law.

With regard to article 15, France's accession to the Convention may not be interpreted as implying any change in its position regarding the resolution mentioned in that provision.

Hungary

"The Hungarian People's Republic considers that the provisions of article 17, paragraph 1, and of article 18, paragraph 1, of the Convention, barring accession to the Convention by all States, are of a discriminating nature and contrary to international law. The Hungarian People's Republic maintains its general position that multilateral treaties of a universal character should, in conformity with the principles of sovereign equality of States, be open for accession by all States without any discrimination whatever."

Ireland

Reservation/Interpretative declaration:

"Article 4 of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination provides that the measures specifically described in sub-paragraphs (a), (b) and (c) shall be undertaken with due regard to the principles embodied in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the rights expressly set forth in Article 5 of the Convention. Ireland therefore considers that through such measures, the right to freedom of opinion and expression and the right to peaceful assembly and association may not be jeopardised. These rights are laid down in Articles 19 and 20 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights; they were reaffirmed by the General Assembly of the United Nations when it adopted Articles 19 and 21 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and are referred to in Article 5 (d)(viii) and (ix) of the present Convention."

Italy

Declaration made upon signature and confirmed upon ratification:

(a) The positive measures, provided for in article 4 of the Convention and specifically described in sub-paragraphs (a) and (b) of that article, designed to eradicate all incitement to, or acts of, discrimination, are to be interpreted, as that article provides,

"with due regard to the principles embodied in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the rights expressly set forth in article 5" of the Convention. Consequently, the obligations deriving from the aforementioned article 4 are not to jeopardize the right to freedom of opinion and expression and the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association which are laid down in articles 19 and 20 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, were reaffirmed by the General Assembly of the United Nations when it adopted articles 19 and 21 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and are referred to in articles 5 (d) (viii) and (ix) of the Convention. In fact, the Italian Government, in conformity with the obligations resulting from Articles 55 (c) and 56 of the Charter of the United Nations, remains faithful to the principle laid down in article 29 (2) of the Universal Declaration, which provides that "in the exercise of his rights and freedoms, everyone shall be subject only to such limitations as are determined by law solely for the purpose of securing due recognition and respect for the rights and freedoms of others and of meeting the just requirements of morality, public order and the general welfare in a democratic society."

(b) Effective remedies against acts of racial discrimination which violate his individual rights and fundamental freedoms will be assured to everyone, in conformity with article 6 of the Convention, by the ordinary courts within the framework of their respective jurisdiction. Claims for reparation for any damage suffered as a result of acts of racial discrimination must be brought against the persons responsible for the malicious or criminal acts which caused such damage.

Malta

Declaration made upon signature and confirmed upon ratification :

"The Government of Malta wishes to state its understanding of certain articles in the Convention.

"It interprets article 4 as requiring a party to the Convention to adopt further measures in the fields covered by sub-paragraphs (a), (b) and (c) of that article should it consider, with due regard to the principles embodied in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the rights set forth in article 5 of the Convention, that the need arises to enact '*ad hoc*' legislation, in addition to or variation of existing law and practice to bring to an end any act of racial discrimination.

"Further, the Government of Malta interprets the requirements in article 6 concerning 'reparation or satisfaction' as being fulfilled if one or other of these forms of redress is made available and interprets 'satisfaction' as including any form of redress effective to bring the discriminatory conduct to an end."

Poland

The Polish People's Republic considers that the provisions of article 17, paragraph 1, and article 18, paragraph 1, of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, which make it impossible for many States to become parties to the said Convention, are of a discriminatory nature and are incompatible with the object and purpose of that Convention.

The Polish People's Republic considers that, in accordance with the principle of the sovereign equality of States, the said Convention should be open for participation by all States without any discrimination or restrictions whatsoever.

Romania

...

The Council of State of the Socialist Republic of Romania declares that the provisions of articles 17 and 18 of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination are not in accordance with the principle that multilateral treaties, the aims and objectives of which concern the world community as a whole, should be open to participation by all States.

Switzerland

Reservation concerning article 4:

Switzerland reserves the right to take the legislative measures necessary for the implementation of article 4, taking due account of freedom of opinion and freedom of association, provided for *inter alia* in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Reservation concerning article 2, paragraph 1 (a):

Switzerland reserves the right to apply its legal provisions concerning the admission of foreigners to the Swiss market.

Turkey

Declarations and reservation:

"The Republic of Turkey declares that it will implement the provisions of this Convention only to the States Parties with which it has diplomatic relations.

The Republic of Turkey declares that this Convention is ratified exclusively with regard to the national territory where the Constitution and the legal and administrative order of the Republic of Turkey are applied.

The Republic of Turkey does not consider itself bound by Article 22 of this Convention. The explicit consent of the Republic of Turkey is necessary in each individual case before any dispute to which the Republic of Turkey is party concerning the interpretation or application of this Convention may be referred to the International Court of Justice."

United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

Upon signature:

Subject to the following reservation and interpretative statements:

"First, in the present circumstances deriving from the usurpation of power in Rhodesia by the illegal régime, the United Kingdom must sign subject to a reservation of the right not to apply the Convention to Rhodesia unless and until the United Kingdom informs the Secretary-General of the United Nations that it is in a position to ensure that the obligations imposed by the Convention in respect of that territory can be fully implemented.

"Secondly, the United Kingdom wishes to state its understanding of certain articles in the Convention. It interprets article 4 as requiring a party to the Convention to adopt further legislative measures in the fields covered by sub-paragraphs (a), (b) and (c) of that article only in so far as it may consider with due regard to the principles embodied in

the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the rights expressly set forth in article 5 of the Convention (in particular the right to freedom of opinion and expression and the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association) that some legislative addition to or variation of existing law and practice in those fields is necessary for the attainment of the end specified in the earlier part of article 4. Further, the United Kingdom interprets the requirement in article 6 concerning 'reparation or satisfaction' as being fulfilled if one or other of these forms of redress is made available and interprets 'satisfaction' as including any form of redress effective to bring the discriminatory conduct to an end. In addition it interprets article 20 and the other related provisions of Part III of the Convention as meaning that if a reservation is not accepted the State making the reservation does not become a Party to the Convention.

"Lastly, the United Kingdom maintains its position in regard to article 15. In its view this article is discriminatory in that it establishes a procedure for the receipt of petitions relating to dependent territories while making no comparable provision for States without such territories. Moreover, the article purports to establish a procedure applicable to the dependent territories of States whether or not those States have become parties to the Convention. Her Majesty's Government have decided that the United Kingdom should sign the Convention, these objections notwithstanding, because of the importance they attach to the Convention as a whole."

Upon ratification:

"First, the reservation and interpretative statements made by the United Kingdom at the time of signature of the Convention are maintained.

"Secondly, the United Kingdom does not regard the Commonwealth Immigrants Acts, 1962 and 1968, or their application, as involving any racial discrimination within the meaning of paragraph 1 of article 1, or any other provision of the Convention, and fully reserves its right to continue to apply those Acts.

"Lastly, to the extent if any, that any law relating to election in Fiji may not fulfil the obligations referred to in article 5 (c), that any law relating to land in Fiji which prohibits or restricts the alienation of land by the indigenous inhabitants may not fulfil the obligations referred to in article 5 (d) (v), or that the school system of Fiji may not fulfil the obligations referred to in articles 2, 3 or 5 (e) (v), the United Kingdom reserves the right not to apply the Convention to Fiji."