

# Human Rights 2000

Annual Report on Norwegian efforts to promote Human Rights



UTENRIKSDEPARTEMENTET

*Ministry of Foreign Affairs*

Efforts to promote human rights are one of the cornerstones of Norwegian government policy. Our commitment to human rights is based on a fundamental view of human beings - that all individuals are of equal value. This means that every person has the same right to life, security, freedom from torture, freedom of religion and belief, freedom of expression, education and employment, to mention some of the universal human rights. Human rights make demands on states in terms of what must be done and how it should be done. Human rights mean respect for each individual. In practical policy, this means ensuring that people are heard and are able to have a say in measures that concern them.

This is a principle that applies both nationally and internationally. The Government's obligations apply first and foremost to our own country's inhabitants. However, if we are to respect the value of human beings, we must also show solidarity with those who live outside our borders. Today, the greatest challenges are to be found in the international arena. Human rights are therefore a pivotal issue in Norwegian foreign policy and development cooperation.

This year's annual report is a follow-up to Report No. 21 to the Storting (1999-2000) Focus on Human Dignity. A Plan of Action for Human Rights, which was debated by the Storting in November 2000. In combination, the national and international sections of the report provide a picture of the progress we have made in realizing the objectives of the plan.

The Plan of Action is a binding document. The Government wishes to pursue an active human rights policy. The annual report provides a good opportunity to take stock of our efforts in this field.



A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a stylized first name and a more formal last name.

Thorbjørn Jagland  
Minister of Foreign Affairs

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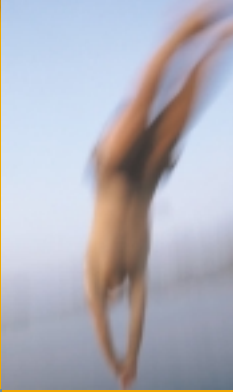
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# HUMAN RIGHTS IN **NORWAY**



## Summary

The Plan of Action for Human Rights was presented in December 1999 and covers a period of five years. The Annual Report on Norwegian Efforts to Promote Human Rights is intended as a follow-up to the Plan of Action, and the report is therefore structured in the same way as the Plan of Action. This enables the reader to see how much progress has been made in the practical implementation of the plan.

The content of this report has been provided by government ministries. Contributions were also made by the Centre for Combating Ethnic Discrimination and the ombudsmen who are most concerned with human rights issues.

Like the Plan of Action, the Annual Report consists of a national section and an international section. The national section is a review of the Government's efforts to strengthen the protection of human rights in Norway in 2000.

The international section of the Annual Report deals with Norway's efforts to promote human rights abroad. Norway contributes towards setting standards through multilateral forums, cooperates directly with other countries on a broad range of human rights issues, and provides financial assistance for projects to promote human rights. A separate chapter of the report is devoted to human rights and development.

The Annual Report is intended to serve as a reference tool for everyone who is concerned with the human rights situation in Norway and internationally. The report also includes an appendix containing statistics and a list of organizations involved in efforts to promote human rights.

## THE HUMAN RIGHTS ACT AND THE PLAN OF ACTION FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

Report No. 21 to the Storting (1999-2000), Plan of Action for Human Rights, was debated by the Storting (Norwegian parliament) in November 2000. There was broad political agreement on the recommendations that were presented and the course of action to be followed.

Based on the principle that each cabinet minister is responsible for promoting human rights in his or her field, the Government has established a separate committee of state secretaries to follow up the Plan of Action and to ensure that human rights issues receive the necessary political emphasis and attention. The committee is chaired by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The Plan of Action is a follow-up to the recommendation of the 1993 World Conference on Human Rights, and Norway is one of the first countries to have presented a plan of this nature. The Norwegian Plan of Action adopts a coherent approach, comprising both national and international measures to strengthen human rights and addressing both political and civil rights and economic, social and cultural rights. The plan comprises 325 projects and initiatives to improve the human rights situation in Norway and abroad. It has been received with great interest and positive responses internationally, and has been translated into English.

Through the Human Rights Act of May 1999, the three main human rights conventions were incorporated into Norwegian law: the European Convention on Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Social, Cultural and Economic Rights. In the Storting



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The Plan of Action for Human Rights comprises a total of 325 national and international measures and initiatives.



Recommendation from the Standing Committee on Justice in this connection, the Storting requests the Government to continue its efforts to incorporate human rights conventions into Norwegian law, beginning with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women and the UN Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment. Furthermore, a separate Act to Combat Ethnic Discrimination has been proposed which is currently being prepared by the Government. A special committee has been appointed for this purpose, and the recommendation of the committee will form the basis for the incorporation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination.

In 2000, Norway was one of the first countries to sign two Optional Protocols to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child on trafficking in children, one on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography and one on the participation in armed conflict of children under 18 years of age.

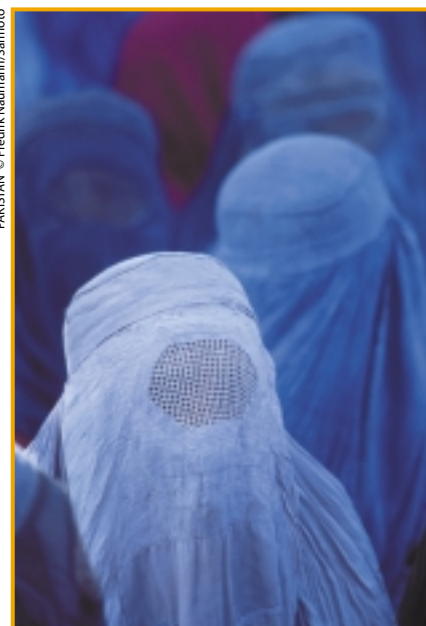
The Plan of Action includes a special emphasis on information on and education and training in human rights. It proposes the establishment of a national institution for human rights. The Norwegian Institute for Human Rights was accorded such status during the Storting's budget debate in autumn 2000. The Institute has now been guaranteed basic financing from the budget of the Ministry of Education, Research and Church Affairs. A resolution was adopted to establish a Resource Centre for the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, as announced in the Plan of Action, and the centre will be fully operational as from the beginning of 2002.

Important measures in the international arena include assistance for the scheme to provide refuge for writers who are the victims of persecution, the continuation of human rights dialogues with China, Turkey and Cuba and the establishment of this type of dialogue with Indonesia, the promotion of increased awareness of human rights in the private sector and efforts to strengthen the focus on human rights in development cooperation.

Measures in the national section of the Plan of Action are concentrated on the priority areas of discrimination and racism, Sami policy issues, national minorities, asylum and immigration law, remand in custody and the time required to deal with criminal cases, social and health care, persons with disabilities, children, women, family life, homosexuals and lesbians, freedom of religion or belief, freedom of expression, adult education, the status of victims of crime and biotechnology issues.

Efforts to promote human rights at the international level are focused on certain vulnerable groups such as children, internally displaced persons, persons with disabilities, women, human rights defenders, minorities and indigenous peoples, lesbians and homosexuals, and on certain specific topics such as capital punishment, torture, fundamental standards of humanity, discrimination, racism, freedom of religion or belief, the right to development, the right to education, the rule of law, freedom of expression and labour standards.

PAKISTAN © Fredrik Naumann/Samfoto



International human rights efforts focus on certain vulnerable groups such as children, women and indigenous peoples. The right to education and freedom of expression are among the main issues.

## REPORTS FROM OMBUDSMEN AND THE CENTRE FOR COMBATING ETHNIC DISCRIMINATION

### The Parliamentary Ombudsman

The Parliamentary Ombudsman, the Storting's Ombudsman for Public Administration, considers it important to contribute towards promoting the implementation of human rights, both in Norwegian administrative practice and internationally. The Storting's Standing Committee on Scrutiny and



Constitutional Affairs has commended the Parliamentary Ombudsman's information activities at home and abroad, which help to increase awareness of the important role played by the Ombudsman, both in Norway and in other countries.

Through his work on individual cases in which human rights issues are raised, the Parliamentary Ombudsman helps to spread knowledge and understanding of the importance of Norway's international human rights commitments. He also emphasizes the promotion of human rights during visits and meetings. In 2000 the Parliamentary Ombudsman visited Valen Psychiatric Hospital, Oslo Regional Prison and the section for unaccompanied minors seeking asylum at Tanum Reception Centre for Asylum-Seekers.

The Legislative Committee for the Prevention of Ethnic Discrimination visited the Office of the Parliamentary Ombudsman in December to hear about the institution's experiences in connection with complaints about ethnic discrimination or differential treatment on grounds of ethnic origin. The Ombudsman himself has previously visited the Centre for Combating Ethnic Discrimination.

The Parliamentary Ombudsman also considers it important to provide information to countries wishing to develop their protection of human rights. There is great interest in the institution of the Parliamentary Ombudsman abroad, and in the course of the year the Ombudsman receives many delegations and representatives from various countries and informs them about democracy and human rights. He also gives lectures and participates in meetings and conferences abroad, thereby helping to disseminate knowledge of a democratic institution that can make an important contribution towards promoting human rights in many countries.

The Indonesian Minister of Human Rights visited Norway in February, and in May the Parliamentary Ombudsman received a Thai delegation in connection with the establishment of an ombudsman system in that country. He also received visits from a representative of the Chinese prosecuting authority and the Russian Ombudsman for Human Rights, and attended a conference on human rights in China. In connection with this visit, the Parliamentary Ombudsman was also given a briefing by the Chinese Ministry of Supervision who hoped to benefit from the experience gained by the Ombudsman in the course of his activities. At the same time, it provided an opportunity to exchange views on how supervisory functions can be organized and carried out to meet the needs of the population.

### **The Ombudsman for Children**

The mandate of the Ombudsman for Children, "to safeguard the interests of children in society", is set out in the Act relating to the Ombudsman for Children. This Act requires the Ombudsman to ensure that Norwegian legal and administrative practice corresponds with Norway's obligations pursuant to both national legislation and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. The Ombudsman for Children seeks to ensure that children's interests are safeguarded in all decision-making processes that concern individual children and, more generally, to improve conditions for children and young people between 0 and 18 years of age.

Children's inquiries to the Ombudsman for Children increasingly concern injustice, clarification of their rights and proposals for changes that will improve their life situation. As a spokesman for children and young people, the Ombudsman for Children seeks to include their knowledge and experience in political and practical action.

In December 2000, the Commissioner's status report Barndom pågår

(Childhood in Progress) was presented to the Storting and distributed to municipalities. In this report the Commissioner focused on the challenges we are facing in a new millennium, where children and young people often appear to be the losers in society. Human rights and the rights of the child are pivotal issues in the report.

The Ombudsman for Children wishes to focus on children as active individuals. Society must accept children as subjects - not merely as objects placed at the disposal of adults. Children possess expertise that spans their entire realm of experience, from school and their local community, traffic, health, family life and family split-ups to environmental issues and politics. The transfer of children's experience to society is beneficial, and it is a challenge to use this knowledge correctly. The experience of municipalities that have given children and young people an opportunity to participate and exercise influence is good, but successful results are contingent on children and young people being allowed to participate in designing methods and structures for participation.

This has been one of the main messages in the Ombudsman for Children's contact with decision-makers in Norway and abroad. As a tool in the process of making children and young people fully-fledged citizens, the Commissioner has promoted the incorporation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child into Norwegian legislation.

### The Gender Equality Ombud

The Gender Equality Ombud enforces the Gender Equality Act, which prohibits differential treatment on the basis of gender. For instance, it is not permitted to differentiate between men and women when hiring, laying off, dismissing or promoting employees. However, the Act permits the differential treatment of women and men if this promotes gender equality. The Gender Equality Act requires equal pay for women and men who perform work of equal value, equal rights to education for women and men, and the membership of public committees, boards and councils must consist of at least 40% men and 40% women.

Enforcement of the Act entails dealing with individual cases and providing guidance and information on the provisions of the Act. The Gender Equality Ombud received 266 complaints in 2000, more than the previous year. Most of the complaints concern matters relating to employment, but the Act applies to all areas of society.

The Gender Equality Ombud still sees major challenges in Norwegian efforts to promote gender equality:

- There are still differences in pay even when women and men do the same job and have the same qualifications.
- Almost half of the labour force today are women, but the percentage of women in management positions is still low. There is a particularly large deficit of women in the management and on the boards of directors of the largest private companies.
- More than 50% of university and college students are women, but girls and boys still make very traditional choices with regard to occupations.
- Careers and family life are closely interrelated. It is important to encourage a more equal distribution of care functions between men and women than is the case at present.

The annual meeting of Nordic ombudsmen was held in Stockholm in October 2000. The meeting was scheduled to coincide with the celebration of the 20th anniversary of JamO, the Swedish Equal Opportunity Ombudsman, and an anniversary seminar on equal pay. These meetings are important venues for exchanges of experience and views between countries with relatively similar problems. Furthermore, they offer an opportunity to meet agencies in neigh-

bouring countries that can provide useful information on the development of rights in the EU.

In May 2000, the Acting Gender Equality Ombud visited Japan and spoke in several cities on the gender equality situation in Norway and Norwegian legislation in this field.

In September a Chinese delegation visited Norway, and the Gender Equality Ombud was responsible for organizing the programme for their visit.

In November, the Ombud paid a second visit to Japan and met with the Japanese Government's Office for Gender Equality.

The Gender Equality Ombud is represented on the EU's Advisory Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men, and participated in meetings in March, June and October 2000.

### **The Ombudsman for the Armed Forces and the Ombudsman for the Civilian National Service**

The Storting's establishment of the Committee of the Ombudsman for the Armed Forces and the Committee of the Ombudsman for the Civilian National Service in 1967 was an important step towards safeguarding the rights of individuals in relation to the defence authorities and the Ministry of Justice, which is the administrative authority for conscientious objectors (persons performing civilian national service). According to their instructions, these ombudsmen systems are to protect the rights of military personnel and civilian national service personnel, respectively.

Since soldiers and civilian service personnel are supposed to have equal rights while performing their compulsory military service, the policy of the Storting has always been to have the same persons sit on both committees.

The Storting, ministers and Chief of Defence may submit cases concerning personnel performing compulsory military service and employees of the Defence Forces to the committees for advisory comment. The committees may also take up matters on their own initiative.

The role of the committees as protector of the rights of service personnel is laid down in the instructions mandating them to deal with cases of general interest. The Ombudsman must also deal with complaints from individuals who consider that they have been unlawfully or unreasonably treated by their respective administrative authorities.

Over the years, a number of cases concerning the protection and broadening of the rights of individuals in relation to the public authorities have been raised and resolved. Particular mention may be made of a case in 2000 in which the Committee of the Ombudsman for the Armed Forces dealt with a complaint concerning the Defence Forces' use of detention as a means of reprimand. With a view to ensuring that the Defence Forces' practice of placing personnel in detention does not conflict with the European Convention on Human Rights, the matter is now being further investigated by the Ministry of Defence, at the request of the Ombudsman.

The Committee of the Ombudsman has also carried out surveys of the Defence Forces' treatment of soldiers and other personnel belonging to minority religions. The field chaplains are the Defence Forces' advisors in cases concerning the right to free exercise of religion. The Committee has ascertained that no cases have been found of a breach of a person's freedom of religion by military authorities.



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Norwegian compulsory military service may conflict with the civilian interests and rights of individuals.

Based on their insight into the rights of Defence Forces personnel, the Committee and the Ombudsman also play an active monitoring role to ensure a corresponding positive trend as regards the rights of civilian national service personnel

Each year, the Ombudsman reports on approximately 110-150 complaints from individuals in the Defence Forces or the civilian national service. Between 30 and 40 per cent of these complaints culminate in a decision in the complainant's favour.

Norway practices a system of compulsory military service entailing that all able-bodied men aged 19 to 44 are obliged to perform military service or alternative civilian national service. This constitutional duty may conflict with the civilian interests and rights of individuals. It is incumbent on the two ombudsmen systems to contribute as best possible towards reducing the potential for a conflict between individual rights and service-related obligations.

In the experience of the Ombudsman, the rights of the individual in relation to the authorities in question generally seem to be well protected.

However, experience also shows that developments in society result in a continuous need for agencies to monitor human rights. It is a question of promoting social development that meets the needs of the community without violating the rights of individuals.

### **The Centre for Combating Ethnic Discrimination**

The Centre for Combating Ethnic Discrimination is a public office established by Royal Decree on 11 September 1998. The main purpose of the Centre is to ensure that individuals are protected against ethnic discrimination. The Centre has three different functions:

- providing legal aid for people who believe themselves to be the victims of ethnic discrimination,
- documenting the nature and scope of ethnic discrimination in Norway, and
- presenting proposals for measures to prevent discrimination in society.

In the Centre's mandate, ethnic discrimination is defined as negative discriminatory treatment on grounds of religion, race, skin colour or national or ethnic origin. The work of the Centre is based on the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination.

In 2000, the Centre for Combating Ethnic Discrimination dealt with 247 individual complaints, bringing the total number to 426 complaints since its inception. Through its legal aid services, the Centre obtains first-hand information about how discrimination manifests itself in various areas. Discrimination on the labour market is the area about which the Centre received most complaints. These cases included harassment at the workplace and discrimination relating to recruitment, promotion or dismissal. Another major category of complaints received by the Centre concerned relations between the police and ethnic minorities. Some of these cases concerned unnecessary use of force, racist language and immigrants being regarded as less trustworthy than ethnic Norwegians. The Centre also received complaints about discrimination by the social services and national insurance authorities, on the housing market, in schools and in relation to the administration of the Immigration Act.

The results of legal aid provided in 2000 varied from case to case and from client to client. In half of the above-mentioned 247 cases, the Centre provided clients with the information they required about their rights and obligations. In about forty cases, the Centre's efforts led to financial compensation (13 cases), the reversal of administrative decisions (18 cases), changes in the practice of the opposing party (2 cases) or an apology (7 cases).

The Centre for Combating Ethnic Discrimination's efforts to document discrimination have demonstrated that knowledge of the extent of discrimination in Norway is fragmentary and inadequate. The public authorities should considerably strengthen their efforts to develop barometers for various spheres of society such as the employment sector, the education sector, the housing market and political participation.

In 2000, the Centre for Combating Ethnic Discrimination discovered how current regulations function in practice. Insufficient knowledge as regards ethnic discrimination in society, coupled with a lack of legal remedies, offer victims few possibilities to react if they are subjected to ethnic discrimination in restaurants, bars, discothèques, night-clubs, etc., on the labour market or on the housing market. Ethnic discrimination is not offered as an academic discipline in law faculties; there is little legal precedence (court decisions) regarding discrimination; some lawyers choose not to include any argument based on discrimination in presenting their case, even if it is legally relevant; the Parliamentary Ombudsman has only made one decision concerning ethnic discrimination in public administration; there is still no general law against ethnic discrimination in Norway, merely a few scattered provisions in the General Civil Penal Code and one provision in the Working Environment Act. On the basis of its experience and knowledge, the Centre will therefore be providing advice and proposals in connection with the work currently in progress on an Act prohibiting ethnic discrimination.

## MEASURES UNDER THE PLAN OF ACTION

### Norway's ratification of human rights conventions and withdrawal of reservations

In May 2000, the UN General Assembly adopted two Optional Protocols to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child regarding the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, and children in armed conflict, respectively. Norway signed both protocols in June.

In December 2000 Norway signed an Optional Protocol to the UN Convention on Transnational Organized Crime on trafficking in persons.

In December 2000 Norway ratified ILO Convention 182 concerning the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour.

### Revision of important legislation in the justice sector

In autumn 2000 the Ministry of Justice presented a Bill relating to Execution of Sentence (Proposition No. 5 to the Odelsting (2000-2001)). The Act was adopted in spring 2001. The statute's relationship to human rights has been an important issue in preparing the Act. Among other things, there has been focus on the possibility of limiting the use and adverse consequences of solitary confinement. Mention may also be made of the fact that rules have been laid down that will strengthen children's right of access to parents who are in prison, cf. the obligations set out in the Convention on the Rights of the Child and Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights.

In connection with the measure in the Plan of Action concerning proposed new rules in the field of civil procedure, a recommendation is expected to be submitted by the Civil Procedure Act Committee in July 2002. The Plan of Action also includes a measure entailing a review of the Criminal Procedure Act to assess the need for amendments in the light of Norway's human rights obligations. So far, no plan has been drawn up to implement this measure.



### Evaluation of current regulations relating to the defence forces

A Working Group on Human Rights in the Defence Forces consisting of representatives of the Ministry of Defence, Headquarters Defence Command Norway and the Director General of Military Prosecutions was established in 1999, in part to evaluate relevant regulations and the way they are put into practice. One of the statutes now being assessed by the working group is the Act on Authority relating to Military Discipline, with particular focus on the use of military detention.

The working group has also decided to examine the basis for and practice of searching military personnel.

#### *Strengthening the defence forces' knowledge of human rights*

The Working Group on Human Rights in the Defence Forces is also considering the possibilities of integrating information on human rights into defence training programmes. Consideration is being given to what topics the training should cover, which groups of personnel should participate in the training programme, and how interest in human rights can be generated among soldiers. In this connection, the working group regards both the protection of human rights internally in the defence forces and in connection with Norwegian participation in international peace operations as relevant.

#### *Age limit for soldiers*

In 2000, the Ministry of Defence presented Proposition No. 61 to the Odelsting (1999-2000) on amendments to the Home Guard Act and the Compulsory Military Service Act, which were adopted by the Storting in autumn 2000. When the amended Act enters into force, it will raise the age limit for military service, thereby ensuring that persons under 18 years of age cannot participate in an armed conflict. The legislative amendment may be seen in conjunction with Norway's anticipated ratification of the Optional Protocol to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child on the prohibition of the participation in armed conflict of children under 18 years of age, which was adopted in May 2000.

### Right to re-open a case after it has been tried by a treaty body

In Proposition No. 70 (2000-2001) to the Ministry of Justice proposed that breaches of Norway's international legal obligations should to a greater extent confer a right to have the case re-opened. The proposal, which was approved by the Storting, entails that the statements of the UN Commission of Human Rights may also constitute grounds for re-opening a case. Existing legislation already provided that judgments pronounced by the European Court of Human Rights could give grounds for re-opening a case. It was further established that a demand may also be made to re-open a case if the proceedings have breached a treaty.

### Procedures for dealing with requests to re-open a criminal case

In Proposition No. 70 (2000-2001) to the Odelsting, the Ministry of Justice proposed that a special commission be established to deal with petitions for the re-opening of criminal cases. The Storting approved the proposal, whereby the commission itself is to be responsible for examining the factual and legal aspects of a case before it decides whether to allow the case to be re-opened. If the commission decides that the case is to be re-opened, the case must be tried by a court other than the one that pronounced the contested judgment.

### The need for legal aid

In by far the majority of cases in which breaches of human rights are claimed, the public authorities are the opposing party. The Ministry of Justice is in the process of following up Report No. 25 (1999-2000) to the Storting on free legal





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In 2000 several offices were established to provide information on services and rights for persons with disabilities.

aid. In this report, it was proposed that the substantive scope of the Legal Aid Act should be expanded to encompass more cases against the public authorities, that consideration should be given to introducing a statutory right to free litigation in civil proceedings concerning alleged violations of human rights, and that the right to legal aid to bring complaints before international appeals bodies should be laid down and made clear in statutory rules. In spring 2001 the Ministry launched a campaign to provide the general public with information on the legal aid scheme. The aim is to increase the use of the legal aid system and to ensure that the way the system is used corresponds more accurately with social needs and the significance of the problems raised for the welfare of those concerned. The income ceilings laid down in the Legal Aid Act will be raised as from 1 July 2001.

In cooperation with the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs, the Ministry of Justice has established two trial projects with a view to strengthening counselling and information on the rights of persons with disabilities. The projects are part of Norway's follow-up of the UN's Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities, which were implemented after the Plan of Action for Persons with Disabilities (Report No. 34 to the Storting (1996-97)) showed that there was a large gap between the UN's standard rules and Norwegian policy in this area. One of the projects is based in the Norwegian Federation of Organizations of Disabled People, the other in the Norwegian Association of the Disabled. The purpose of both trial projects is to advise persons with disabilities on their rights and to collect information on their legal aid needs.

#### *User guidelines and legal aid for persons with disabilities*

In the course of 2000, offices have been established in several places in Norway which persons with disabilities and their relatives may call to obtain counselling and advice on services and rights as regards national insurance, health and social services, housing, transport, etc. More information on this scheme may be found under "Special Priority Areas: Persons with Disabilities" in the national section of this report.

### **Representation in the courts**

The Ministry of Justice has initiated a review of the lay judge system, including an assessment of the use of persons with different ethnic backgrounds as lay judges.

### **Provisional establishment of an Ombudsman for the Elderly and an Ombudsman for the Care of the Elderly and Persons with Disabilities**

On the basis of a Storting resolution, a development programme has been initiated to try out ombudsman schemes for the elderly and for the care of the elderly and persons with disabilities. The primary responsibility of the ombudsmen is to assist people who need the help of the health and social services with complaints relating to this sector, investigate the circumstances, and help to formulate complaints which are then sent to the appropriate administrative appeals body. They may take up individual cases on their own initiative and take unsolicited action. The ombudsmen must provide information about circumstances that may weaken the case of individuals in the municipality. Cooperation has been established with the Norwegian Association of Local Authorities with a view to trying out the system of municipal ombudsmen for the elderly and for the care of the elderly and persons with disabilities during the period 1999-2002. On the basis of the lessons learned in this period, the trial project will show whether there is a need for a permanent ombudsman system and, if so, which models work best. The trial project is well under way, and an evaluation will be presented at the end of April 2001.

## INFORMATION, TRAINING AND EDUCATION

### Primary, lower and upper secondary education

#### *Survey of education in the field of human rights*

Work on the survey has not yet begun. However, a study has been initiated to inventory measures aimed at preventing racism and ethnic discrimination in schools. The study is based on information received from the National Education Offices in the various counties.

#### *Optional course on democracy and human rights*

One of the aims of the Plan of Action was to offer this optional course as from the 2000-2001 school year. A draft curriculum for the course has been circulated for consultation, and the comments received from those consulted are now under consideration at the Norwegian Board of Education. The matter will be sent to the Ministry of Education, Research and Church Affairs, and the aim is to be able to offer this optional course in schools as from autumn 2001.

#### *Establishment of a website on human rights on the School Network*

The Norwegian Board of Education, which has taken over the functions of the former National Centre for Educational Resources, has stated that work is in progress on establishing and developing the human rights website.

### Higher education/professional training

#### *Teacher training research fellowship in the field of human rights*

The Ministry of Education, Research and Church Affairs has not yet awarded the research fellowship in the field of human rights, but will reconsider the award in 2001.

#### *Prioritization of in-service teacher training in human rights*

In 2000 the Ministry of Education, Research and Church Affairs allocated approximately NOK 600,000 to the Section for Continued Training of Teachers for courses on human rights for school teachers and teacher training staff. Priority will also be given to this type of course in 2001.

### The human rights knowledge base

#### *Increase in the basic allocation for the Institute for Human Rights*

In the government budget for 2000, the basic allocation for the Institute for Human Rights was increased by NOK 500,000. This funding was maintained as a permanent allocation in the government budget for 2001.

#### *Establishment of a national institution for human rights at the Institute for Human Rights*

A provision of NOK 3.5 million has been made in the government budget for 2001 for the establishment of a national institution for human rights at the Institute for Human Rights. In 2000 the ministries concerned began work on establishing the institution, which will be inaugurated in 2001.

#### *Awards for journalists*

In the Plan of Action, the Government proposed the establishment of two human rights awards, one for journalists and one for the film sector. The prizes are to be awarded to journalists and short films that focus particular attention on current human rights issues in Norway. The Ministry of Cultural Affairs is currently drafting statutes and appointing special juries to select the award winners. The Ministry plans for the awards to be presented for the first time in the course of 2001, provided there are qualified candidates.



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Human rights is one of the main focuses of the National Plan of Action for Health Promotion.

#### *Plan of Action for Public Health*

Efforts have been initiated to prepare a National Plan of Action for Health Promotion, in which human rights is one of several general perspectives. The Plan of Action will deal with training in health promotion and propose goals and strategies for educating health professionals. The Plan of Action is to be presented by the end of 2001.

#### *The Holocaust Centre*

In connection with its debate on Proposition No. 82 (1997-98) to the Storting relating to the Jewish property settlement, the Storting adopted a resolution to allocate NOK 40 million for a centre for studies of the Holocaust and belief minorities. In autumn 2000 the Storting resolved to establish this centre in Villa Grande (Qvisling's headquarters during the German occupation of Norway in World War II) in Oslo. A steering group consisting of representatives from the ministries concerned are currently working on this matter with a view to establishing the centre in 2003.

#### *The Falstad Centre*

NOK 2,000,000 was allocated in the government budget for 2001 for the Falstad Centre, a centre for education and documentation on the history of prisoners of war, humanitarian international law and human rights.

#### *The Higher Education for Peace conference*

In 2000 the Ministry of Education, Research and Church Affairs again provided funding for the Higher Education for Peace conference, held in Tromsø on 4-6 May 2000 and jointly organized by the University of Tromsø, the College of Tromsø and the Norwegian UNESCO Commission. The conference focused on human rights in peace education, and was arranged as a follow-up to UNESCO's World Conference on Higher Education in Paris in 1998. The amount provided on this occasion was NOK 150,000, bringing the Ministry's total funding for the conference to NOK 400,000. The conference inspired extensive activity in this field at many Norwegian institutions of higher education, and its results include interdisciplinary cooperation, seminars and new courses.

## **SPECIAL PRIORITY AREAS**

### **Discrimination and racism**

#### *Plan of Action to Combat Racism and Discrimination*

The Plan of Action to Combat Racism and Discrimination was presented on 15 June 1998 and covers the period 1998-2001. This plan focuses on central government administration and comprises 32 measures in the following target areas:

- the police and judicial apparatus
- the labour market
- the housing market
- primary, lower secondary and upper secondary school
- key sectors of public administration
- local communities.

The measures in the plan are to be carried out by the end of 2001. A review of the status of these measures undertaken in spring 2000 showed that most of them have been implemented. In order to ascertain whether they have had the intended effect, the plan will be evaluated in 2002. The Government aims to present a new action plan to combat racism and discrimination in the course of 2002, based on the lessons learned from the first plan.

#### *Work in local communities and the promotion of sound attitudes*

The Interdisciplinary Advisory Service was established in 1996 by the Directorate of Immigration (UDI) to provide advice and counselling to munici-

palities on ways of dealing with acute conflict situations which appear to be caused by xenophobia and racially motivated violence. Its functions also include providing advice on preventive efforts. The Directorate continued to collaborate with non-governmental organizations and labour unions on the promotion of sound attitudes.

In June the Directorate published its first report on discrimination. In this connection, the directorate arranged a seminar in October on the efforts of the public authorities to combat racism and discrimination.

The Directorate and the Ministry of Children and Family Affairs have collaborated on the EXIT project, which aimed at preventing recruitment to racist groups and helping young people to withdraw from such groups. The project was phased out in 1999. A report and evaluations of the results achieved by the EXIT project were presented in 2000, together with a booklet of helpful information and ideas.

#### *Participation and dialogue*

Increasing the participation in society of persons with an immigrant background and strengthening dialogue between these members of the population and the authorities is a government goal.

The Directorate provides funding for local immigrant organizations and activities run by non-governmental organizations that foster diversity, dialogue and interaction in local communities. A total of NOK 12 million was allocated to counties for this purpose in 2000. Of this amount, NOK 8.72 million was channelled to local immigrant organizations and NOK 2.18 million to the activities of non-governmental organizations targeting persons with an immigrant background. The remaining NOK 1.1 million was allocated in the form of a grant to support the counties' administration of the scheme. NOK 1 million was also provided for the establishment of the International House project in Stavanger.

Grants are also provided for nation-wide organizations involved in activities for persons with immigrant backgrounds. The purpose of the funding is to support national organizations that promote genuine equality between immigrants and Norwegians, encourage immigrants' active participation in society and enable them to become self-sufficient. These national organizations play a pivotal role in communicating the views and needs of the immigrant population to the authorities and the general public. A total of NOK 8.9 million was provided for this purpose in 2000, divided between nine organizations.

The grant scheme for national organizations has been evaluated and a report presented in February 2000 concluded that the objective of the scheme and its criteria should be reviewed. The report was circulated for consultation and both the report and the consultative comments form the basis for a further review of the scheme, in which the objectives and criteria will be formulated in more specific terms.

Voter participation among foreign nationals is low compared with that of the rest of the population. In the 1999 elections, an analysis of voter participation was carried out among foreign nationals and Norwegian nationals with an immigrant background. Report 2:2001 on immigrants and the 1999 local elections by Tor Bjørklund and Karl-Erik Kval at the Institute for Social Research was presented in February 2001. The report concludes that voter participation was low, particularly among non-Western immigrants, of whom only 39 per cent went to the polls. This is 20 per cent lower than for the electorate as a whole. Voter participation among foreign nationals varies significantly, depending on the nationality of the voter. For instance, 47 per cent of Pakistanis and 41 per cent of Bosnians voted, while less than 20 per cent of Moroccans, Ghanaians and Ethiopians took

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The EXIT project was initiated to prevent recruitment to racism groups. Several organizations have received assistance aimed at strengthening diversity, dialogue and interaction in local communities.



part in the elections. Among immigrants with a Western background, 10 per cent more women than men voted, whereas the difference between men and women voters was insignificant among immigrants with a non-Western background.

#### *Liaison Committee between Immigrants and the Authorities*

The Liaison Committee between Immigrants and the Authorities was established in 1984. The primary role of the committee is to provide an arena for dialogue between persons with an immigrant background, the public administration, municipalities and political parties. The need for changes in the committee's structure and composition will be evaluated in connection with its next reappointment, i.e. after the general elections in autumn 2001.

#### *Acquisition of knowledge*

The final report on the feasibility project entitled "Communication and Due Process of Law - the interface between foreign nationals and language minorities and the police and courts" was presented in June 2000. The report reveals clear weaknesses in the current use of interpreters. Another project, which experimented with interpreting using telematics, concluded that on-screen interpreting can be a good supplement to on-site interpreting. The challenge lies in getting the primary users to invest in and use the technological equipment, and in establishing a functional system of cooperation between public interpretation services.

#### *Reporting*

Norway is to submit its 16th report to the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination in autumn 2001.

#### *Act against ethnic discrimination*

On 1 March 2000 the Government appointed a committee to prepare a draft of a new Act to combat ethnic discrimination. One of the tasks of the committee is to examine various alternatives for imposing sanctions and ways of organizing effective methods of enforcing the legislation. It is also to evaluate the role of the Centre for Combating Ethnic Discrimination. Furthermore, the committee is to present proposals for the incorporation of the UN Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination into Norwegian law, and evaluate Norway's obligations under other relevant human rights conventions. The committee is also to examine the legislation of other countries in this field. The committee's report is to be submitted by summer 2002.

#### *Act on benefits for newly arrived immigrants*

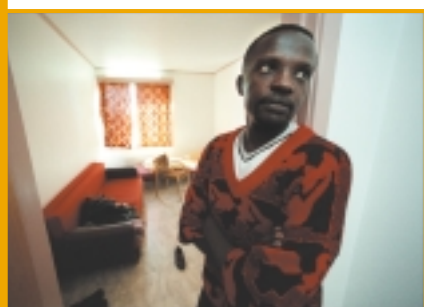
In 1999 the Government appointed a committee to draft legislation on benefits for newly arrived immigrants who need assistance in obtaining basic qualifications for employment. The time-limit for submission of the report is June 2001. According to its terms of reference, the committee is to assess to whom such an Act should apply and the legal safeguards involved in such an arrangement. It is also to examine the issue of the level of benefits and the use of a mutually binding agreement between the municipality and the individual as a basis for disbursement of funds.

#### *Evaluation of the Centre for Combating Ethnic Discrimination*

The Centre for Combating Ethnic Discrimination, which was established for a trial period until the end of 2002, is subject to continuous evaluation by the Norwegian Institute of Urban and Regional Research (NIBR) and the Institute for Sociology of Law at the University of Oslo. The two institutes presented a preliminary report in October. The Government has decided that the centre is to be operated on a permanent basis. At this point it is too early to tell whether the Centre will continue to be run in its present form or will be given other tasks.

#### *Proposal to include a prohibition against discrimination in new legislation on housing/house building cooperatives*

Official Norwegian Report 2000:17 on legislation relating to housing/house



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Legislation on housing/house-building cooperatives is intended to prevent discrimination on grounds of race and skin colour.

building cooperatives proposes provisions prohibiting discrimination on grounds of race, nationality, skin colour, ethnic origin, etc. The report, which was presented in June 2000, has been circulated for consultation. The Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development is currently drafting new legislation on housing/house building cooperatives.

#### *Evaluation of the system for recognition of foreign academic credentials*

Recognition of foreign higher academic credentials in Norway is the task of the Information Centre for International Education - National Academic Information Centre (NAIC). The centre is part of a network for student exchange and academic recognition between EU countries (National Academic Recognition Information Centres (NARIC)) and between the countries affiliated with the Council of Europe/UNESCO (European Network of Information Centres (ENIC)). Since the reorganization and integration of the NAIC into the newly established Network Norway Council (national advisory body on higher education) in 1999, a review of the way the recognition system functions has been carried out. As a result of the review, a national database for the recognition of foreign academic credentials will be established. The database will be located at the NAIC and will become operational in the course of autumn 2001. Parts of the database will be accessible to the general public.

### **Sami policy**

The basis for official Norwegian policy in respect of the Sami people is set out in Section 110 a of the Constitution of Norway and in the Sami Act. Norway has also endorsed several international conventions of significance for the Sami people. At present, ILO Convention No. 169 concerning Indigenous and Tribal Peoples in Independent Countries is the only international, legally binding instrument that directly addresses the protection of indigenous peoples, but the Council of Europe's Charter on National and Regional Languages, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child are all important in relation to the Sami people. The Human Rights Act, adopted in 1999, gives the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights status as Norwegian law.

#### *National policy and measures in respect of the Sami people*

An important principle in Norwegian legislation which regulates the authorities' obligations towards the Sami population is ensuring that the Sami people play an active role in matters affecting Sami interests. This is also in accordance with the provisions of ILO Convention No. 169.

This entails the following main obligations for the authorities:

- Make provision, through legislation and measures, for the Sami people themselves to play the active role in safeguarding and developing the Sami language, culture and social life.
- Allocate sufficient funds to the Sami Parliament to enable it to determine priorities in matters concerning the Sami people.
- Establish routines for cooperation between the Government and the Sami Parliament on the formulation of Norwegian Sami policy, the budget of the Sami Parliament and the development of general policies that will affect the Sami community.

Every four years, a report on the main principles of Norwegian Sami policy is presented to the Storting. The next report is due to be presented in August 2001. A report on the activity of the Sami Parliament is submitted to the Storting each year, one chapter of which consists of the entire Annual Report of the Sami Parliament. The annual report is an important document in the relationship between the Sami Parliament and the Government, because the Government's report to the Storting contains responses to matters raised in the Sami Parliament's annual report.



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Legislation aims to enable the Sami people to be the active party in developing the Sami language, culture and social life.



The Sami Parliament is the Government's most important source of information and influence when defining the basic premises for Norwegian Sami policy, and emphasis is placed on ensuring that the Sami Parliament participates in the policy formulation process at the earliest possible stage. This is done, for instance, at meetings between the senior political staff of the respective ministries and the Sami Parliament. There is also contact at the administrative level between the ministries and the Sami Parliament on the follow-up of Sami issues in the various policy areas.

#### *Transfer of functions and authority to the Sami Parliament*

There is continuous dialogue with the Sami Parliament concerning the transfer of authority from government ministries to the Sami Parliament. The secretariat of the Sami Education Council was transferred from the Ministry of Education, Research and Church Affairs to the Sami Parliament on 1 January 2000. The administration of the Sami Special Library was transferred from the Ministry of Cultural Affairs to the Sami Parliament on the same day. The grant scheme for Sami day-care facilities was transferred from the Ministry of Children and Family Affairs to the Sami Parliament on 1 January 2001. The Ministry of Cultural Affairs is also engaged in dialogue with the Sami Parliament concerning the transfer of other functions in the cultural sphere. This will be described in greater detail in the Report to the Storting on Norwegian Sami policy that is to be presented in August 2001.

#### *Sami language and information*

In 1998, the Norwegian Institute of Urban and Regional Research (NIBR) in Alta was commissioned to conduct a survey of experience with bilingual public administrative services in the municipalities that constitute the administrative area for the Sami language. The survey covers municipal and regional administration in the municipalities of Karasjok, Kautokeino, Nesseby, Porsanger and Tana in Finnmark, and Kåfjord municipality in Troms. The survey emphasizes the inhabitants' evaluation of public services and their possibilities of choosing between Sami and Norwegian in their dealings with public offices. Bilingual services vary significantly from one municipality to another, and from one agency to agency in the various municipalities. Strengthening the Sami language is a government priority, and the results of the survey will be important in these efforts. The Government is aware that there may be little knowledge of the language rules laid down in the Sami Act, and will therefore initiate measures of an informative nature.

The Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development has carried out a survey of the information provided by the central government authorities to and about the Sami people in the central government administration. The survey shows that there is a need for more information about Sami matters and for government information in Sami. The Ministry will follow up this survey by appointing a language and information advisor and by publishing a special newsletter.

The Nordic Sami Institute is currently carrying out a comprehensive study of information to and about Sami people which is to be completed in March 2001. The institute has been commissioned by the Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development to conduct a comprehensive study of information provided to and about Sami people. The findings were sent to the Ministry in spring 2000. This study also includes the municipalities in the Sami administrative area.

The University of Tromsø has carried out a survey of attitudes towards the Sami people and Sami matters by reviewing the editorial content of a number of Northern Norwegian newspapers and the national newspaper *Aftenposten* in the period January 1996 to December 1999.



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Surveys show that there is a need for better information on Sami matters and for government information in the Sami language.

#### *Regular general practitioners for the Sami people*

When the regular general practitioner scheme is put in place, Sami-speaking patients in the Sami administrative area will have priority as regards places on the list of patients of Sami-speaking physicians. Sami persons engaged in reindeer husbandry are to have priority as though they were listed patients when they consult another regular GP. Negotiations between the parties did not result in the introduction of financial incentives for physicians who wish to learn Sami. However, the Ministry has requested the Norwegian Medical Association to include funding for Sami language tuition in connection with the grant scheme for further and continuing education in general/family medicine and community medicine.

#### *Centre for Sami Health Research*

In 2000 preparations were made for the establishment of the University of Tromsø's Centre for Sami Health Research, located in Karasjok. The centre will carry out research on health and social issues with a view to achieving the goal of services for the Sami people that are of the same quality as those for the rest of the Norwegian population.

#### *Measures targeting women in reindeer husbandry*

The Ministry of Agriculture has established a permanent position as Executive Officer in Women's Affairs at the Directorate of Reindeer Husbandry in Alta. The Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development emphasized measures targeting women in reindeer husbandry in 1999 and 2000, and allocated NOK 1 million each year to strengthen women's position in this sector. The Ministry of Agriculture is following up these efforts through the Reindeer Husbandry Agreement. The Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development and the Ministry of Agriculture are participating in a group of experts in connection with these measures.

#### *Resource Centre for the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*

Work has begun on planning the resource centre, which will be located in Kautokeino. The aim is for the centre to be fully operational as from January 2002.

#### *Sami land and water rights*

In 1999 the ministries commenced work on following up Official Norwegian Report 1997:4 relating to the natural resource base for Sami culture. The aim is to propose new legislation on the management of land and natural resources in Finnmark County in the course of the next Storting period (2001-2005).

The Sami Rights Committee was reappointed on 1 June 2001. The committee will now study the use and management of land and natural resources in areas used by the Sami people outside Finnmark County. This primarily means the counties of Troms, Nordland, the trøndelag counties and Hedmark. The Ministry of Justice has had a fruitful, meaningful dialogue with the Sami Parliament on both the formulation of the mandate and the composition of the committee.

#### *Nordic efforts relating to the Sami people*

The Nordic ministers responsible for Sami matters in Norway, Sweden and Finland have established a forum for cooperation on Sami issues within the framework of the Nordic Council of Ministers. The forum has established contact with the presidents of the Sami parliaments in the three countries, and will meet with them regularly to deal with current Sami matters of interest to all the Nordic countries.

A working group consisting of representatives from ministries in Norway, Sweden and Finland and the Sami parliaments in the three countries has examined the needs and basis for a Nordic convention on the Sami people. The working group presented its report in June 1998, in which it unanimously concluded that the

efforts to elaborate a Nordic convention are important and should be continued. The report has been circulated for consultation, and the comments from those consulted will be submitted to the ministers and the presidents of the Sami parliaments in spring 2001.

### National minorities

The most fundamental provision relating to the international protection of minorities is Article 27 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which lays down that persons belonging to ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities have the right, in community with the other members of their group, to enjoy their own culture, to profess and practise their own religion and to use their own language.

Minorities with a long-standing connection to the state in which they live are regarded as national minorities and as such are specially protected by the Council of Europe's Framework Convention on the Protection of National Minorities. This convention was ratified by Norway on 17 March 1999. In connection with ratification, it was determined that the Sami people, the Kvens (people of Finnish descent living in northern Norway), the Romani people (travellers), the Roma (gypsies), the Skogfinn (people of Finnish descent living in southern Norway) and Jews satisfy the criteria to qualify as national minorities in Norway. However, the Sami Parliament has stated that the Sami people do not stand to gain from being covered by the convention, since Sami rights under ILO Convention No. 169 concerning Indigenous and Tribal Peoples in Independent Countries are broader in scope than under the Framework Convention.

#### *Report No. 15 (2000-2001) to the Storting on National Minorities in Norway*

This Report was presented to the Storting by the Government in December 2000 and is the first overall review of the principles that form the basis for government policy relating to Jews, Kvens, the Roma (gypsies), the Romani people (travellers) and the Skogfinn.

The report makes it clear that there have been minorities in Norway for a long time. In the report, the Government critically reviews with the policy of Norwegianization previously pursued by the authorities in relation to all national minorities. The Government strongly condemns the abuses committed against the Romani people (travellers). The Norwegianization policy pursued in relation to the Romani people was instrumental in undermining their traditional life style and culture. To make amends for this injustice, the Government proposes to establish a centre for the documentation and presentation of the culture and history of the Romani people in the Glomdal Museum in Elverum. Construction is scheduled to begin in 2002.

Government policy is based on the aim of ensuring that Norway is a pluralistic, tolerant society that is good to live in. Everyone, regardless of background, should have the same opportunities, rights and obligations to participate in society and utilise their resources. The Government considers it a goal to meet the needs of national minorities as far as possible within the framework of general administrative schemes.

At the same time, the Government emphasizes its intention to promote a society that enables persons belonging to national minorities to express, maintain and further develop their own identity, language and culture. The Government therefore proposes a range of measures to maintain minority cultures and languages, measures for children and young people, educational measures and measures to encourage the active participation of national minorities in society. The Government has also approved the use of trilingual municipal names - in Sami, Kven/Finnish and Norwegian - as a means of underscoring the cultural pluralism of local communities.



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Kvens, Romani people (travellers), Roma (gypsies), Skogfinn and Jews are national minorities in Norway.

The Government has attached importance to involving national minorities in the work on the report. It is an important principle of minority policy that national minorities participate in and that their views are heard in matters of importance to them. This principle also applies at the municipal and county level.

It is important to focus more public attention on minorities. Doing so can help to communicate positive images of minorities, and gives municipalities and other institutions knowledge that enables them to tailor services and facilities to meet the needs of these groups. As part of these efforts, the Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development has begun to publish a newsletter on national minorities.

#### *Grants for national minorities*

The Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development maintained its grant scheme for national minorities, providing basic funding for four organizations: the Association of Norwegian Kvens, the National Society of the Romani People, the Roma Foundation and Skogfinn Interests in Norway. This purpose of this basic assistance is to encourage minority groups to form their own organizations with a view to improving contact and dialogue between these groups and the public authorities. Funding was also provided for a number of individual projects. The purpose of this support is to promote information on the situation of minority groups, document discrimination, foster sound attitudes, encourage self-help activities and promote contacts and cooperation between national minorities across national boundaries.

### **Asylum and immigration law**

#### *The rights of asylum-seekers*

The right to apply for and be granted asylum is set out in Article 14 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and internationally regulated by legislation such as the UN Convention of 28 July 1951 relating to the status of refugees, with protocol. The Immigration Act must be implemented humanely and fairly in a way that ensures that Norway assumes its share of responsibility for people fleeing their own countries.

To obtain asylum in Norway, a person must be a refugee as defined by the UN Convention relating to the status of refugees. This means, among other things, that the person must be persecuted on grounds of race, religion, nationality, political opinion or membership of a special social group. In 1998, the Ministry of Justice determined that persecution on grounds of gender or sexual orientation is covered by the above-mentioned convention's concept of "membership of a special social group". Asylum may be granted regardless of who the persecutor is, whether the authorities of the asylum-seeker's home country, groups beyond the control of the authorities or individuals.

#### *Quota for resettlement refugees*

Most of the refugees in the world are given protection in a country in the vicinity of their own. If the country in which they first sought refuge cannot provide them with satisfactory protection, and they cannot return to their home country, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) requests a third country to resettle the refugees. Norway's quota for the selection of resettlement refugees for 2000 was 1,500 places. Fifty places were earmarked for prominent persons such as politicians, trade union leaders or writers. The Norwegian immigration authorities also allocated funds for 50 places that can be used for alternative resettlement in consultation with the UNHCR. In evaluating which individual refugees should be transferred to Norway, emphasis is primarily placed on their need for protection. Furthermore, the refugees' possibilities of adjusting to Norwegian society are also assessed. In consultation with the UNHCR, Norway has adopted a flexible quota system covering a period of three years. Within this

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Unaccompanied minors who seek asylum must be transferred from a reception centre to a municipality for resettlement as soon as they have been granted a residence permit.



period of time, places that are not used one year may be carried forward to the following years. Moreover, places from the following years' quotas may be used in advance, if there should be a need to do so.

#### *Residence on humanitarian grounds*

If an asylum-seeker's application for asylum is likely to be rejected, the Immigration Act requires the authorities to assess whether a residence permit should be granted pursuant to section 8, second paragraph, of the Act. The term "strong humanitarian considerations" in section 8, second paragraph, of the Immigration Act embraces a wide range of factors, both grounds relating to protection of the asylum-seeker and compassionate grounds, such as the safety of the asylum-seeker in his home country, health factors, the situation of minors or the asylum-seeker's actual connection with Norway. Practice was relaxed somewhat in 1999 in cases where an overall assessment is carried out of several different types of compassionate grounds.

#### *The situation of children in asylum cases*

As from 1 July 2000 a provision in the Immigration Regulations was implemented to the effect that children are to be heard in a better, more direct manner. The main rule is that the executive officer dealing with the case at the Directorate of Immigration (UDI) must interview children who seek asylum with their parents. This may be omitted if such an interview is obviously unnecessary or if the parents object to it. The importance that should be attached to the child's statements will depend on the child's age and ability to understand the situation.

Unaccompanied minors seeking asylum, i.e. children and young people under 18 years of age who come to Norway without their parents or other persons with parental responsibility, are registered as asylum-seekers in the ordinary way, and the executive officer at the Directorate interviews the child about why he or she came to Norway. The interview must be carried out as soon as possible, and preferably within a week after the child's arrival. The child's legal counsel is encouraged to be present during the interview. Furthermore, an adult must be present to assist the minor, such as a guardian or provisional guardian. Special guidelines have been drawn up for interviewing children.

The objective is to resettle unaccompanied minors as soon as possible, and no later than three months after they have been granted a residence permit.

#### *Transfer of responsibility for interviews with asylum-seekers from the police to the Directorate of Immigration*

The Directorate of Immigration took over responsibility for interviewing asylum-seekers as from 1 July 2000 in order to ensure due process of law for asylum-seekers. The police are still responsible for registering newly arrived asylum-seekers and for undertaking any further investigations to determine their identity and route travelled to Norway.

#### *Relaxation of rules regarding family reunification*

The maximum duration of short-term visit permits for parents was extended from six to nine months. Children under 18 years of age with no parents or other care providers were allowed to be reunified with full siblings living in Norway, and persons between 18 and 21 years of age who have previously lived in Norway for a long period of time were allowed to be reunified with their mother or father living in Norway.

Furthermore, measures to prevent forced marriages were also introduced in the Immigration Regulations. Persons subjected to a forced marriage may be granted the right to remain in Norway when legal proceedings are instituted to have the marriage annulled. If the marriage is annulled by judgment, a new residence permit will be granted on specific conditions.

### *Labour immigration*

On 10 December 1999 the Bondevik government presented Report No. 16 (1999-2000) to the Storting on the regulation of labour immigration. The present Government amended the "specialist provision" to include skilled labour. If special considerations warrant doing so, it may be stipulated that the level of training must be higher.

The provision regarding seasonal labour has been extended to cover the entire year.

### *Appeals board for immigration cases (Immigration Board)*

In March 1999 the Storting adopted a resolution establishing an independent Immigration Board to deal with appeals against the Directorate of Immigration's decisions to reject applications in asylum and other immigration cases. The Immigration Board was scheduled to be established on 1 November 2000. After a slight delay, the board became operational on 1 January 2001. The Ministry of Justice was therefore responsible for dealing with appeals against the Directorate of Immigration's decisions in immigration cases throughout 2000.

One of the reasons for the establishment of the Immigration Board is a desire to strengthen the legal safeguards of asylum-seekers and other foreign nationals, and to increase confidence in the decisions made by the board. Under the Immigration Act, the asylum-seeker may appear in person. Some decisions must be made in a board meeting that is held in camera. The board meeting comprises a board chairman with judicial authority and two board members who are lay persons. The lay members are appointed by the King in Council on the recommendation of humanitarian organizations working in the immigration sector, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development and the Norwegian Association of Lawyers. Each board meeting is attended by one lay member appointed on the recommendation of a humanitarian organization and one member appointed by one of the other three bodies. Cases are decided by a majority vote. If this is no doubt about a case, the case may be decided without a board meeting, by either the board chairman or by the secretariat.

### *Detention of foreign nationals pursuant to the Immigration Act*

Foreign nationals may be detained pursuant to the Immigration Act on grounds of suspicion of false identity, and on grounds of fear that they may evade the implementation of decisions. Foreign nationals detained on one of these grounds are usually placed in ordinary prisons. This practice has been criticized on the grounds that such persons should not be imprisoned with convicted persons serving a sentence. Pursuant to the amendments to Act of 30 April 1999 No. 22, foreign nationals who are incarcerated on such grounds must, as a general rule, be placed in a detention centre for foreign nationals. This must be an institution that is not part of the prison service institutions, staffed by personnel who have knowledge of languages and other cultures.

In 2000 seven persons were detained pursuant to section 37, sixth paragraph (suspicion of false identity) of the Immigration Act, and 77 persons pursuant to section 41, fifth paragraph (fear of evasion of implementation of measures), of the same Act. Forty-one of these persons were not detained with convicted persons who were serving a sentence. No person has been detained for more than 12 weeks.

### **Remand and the time required to deal with criminal cases**

In December 2000 the Ministry of Justice circulated a Proposal for Amendments to the Criminal Procedure Act, etc. for consultation. Most of the proposals are based on proposals drawn up for the ministry by two working groups in a project to reduce the time required to deal with criminal cases. The consultation paper includes proposals for time-limits for deciding whether or not to prosecute and



for beginning the main hearing in cases against offenders under 18 years of age. In the Ministry's view, other amendments should also be made in the rules regarding remand. A special provision is proposed regarding remand in solitary confinement and maximum limits for the period of time a remand inmate may be subjected to restrictions. The Ministry of Justice aims to present a proposition in autumn 2001.

The Council of Europe's Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CPT) submitted its second periodic report on Norway in March 2000. The Norwegian authorities provided a supplementary response in October 2000. One of the concerns of the CPT has been the conditions of remand inmates who are subject to restrictions. In 2000 the Norwegian authorities followed up the recommendations of the CPT by proposing special requirements regarding grounds for court orders imposing restrictions (Proposition No. 81 (1999-2000) to the Odelsting, which was adopted by the Act of 2 March 2001 No. 7). Some of the proposals in the consultation paper relating to the project to reduce the time required to deal with criminal cases are also a follow-up of the CPT's last report. The Director General of Public Prosecutions has drawn up a circular on information to relatives and legal counsel regarding arrest, and the Ministry of Justice has prepared two circulars on the right to necessary health care for police detainees and on the distribution of mattresses and clean blankets to police detainees. An information folder has also been prepared concerning the rights of persons arrested by the police.

The Government has appointed a committee to review the rules relating to police registers and propose legislative amendments. The committee will present its report in spring 2002. This work includes efforts to develop a register of criminal cases (STRASAK) for use as a management and reporting tool.

### Social services and health care

The public health, social welfare and national insurance services administer substantial financial and ethical values. The overriding objective of these public services is to ensure that professionally adequate services of equal quality are offered to everyone in Norway irrespective of gender, age, state of health, residence and income. This is in accordance with fundamental human rights principles and therefore forms the basis for the new laws on health care that came into force on 1 January 2001.

#### *Use of coercion in mental health care*

In connection with the entry into force of the new Mental Health Care Act of 1 January 2001, nine new sets of regulations were issued. The purpose of these regulations is to ensure that the use of coercion in mental health care is regulated more clearly, thereby strengthening patients' legal safeguards. The nine regulations are:

- Regulations regarding the approval of institutions that are to be responsible for compulsory mental health care
- Regulations regarding the establishment of compulsory mental health care, etc.
- Regulations regarding compulsory mental health care on an out-patient basis
- Regulations regarding examination and treatment without the consent of the patient
- Regulations regarding the use of coercive means to prevent injury in mental health care institutions for in-patients
- Regulations regarding the mental health professional responsible for decisions
- Regulations regarding the functions of the supervisory commission
- Regulations regarding emergency mental health care
- Regulations regarding patients in private mental health care institutions.

Meetings and lectures have been held for service providers, mental health professionals, users and supervisory authorities to create a common understanding of the contents of these regulations. The goal is to reduce the use of coercion. The Ministry of Health and Social Affairs has also prepared a circular containing comments on the new Mental Health Care Act and Regulations which may be found (in Norwegian) on the Internet website [odin.dep.no/shd/norsk/regelverk/rundskriv](http://odin.dep.no/shd/norsk/regelverk/rundskriv).

The Ministry of Health and Social Affairs is developing tools to provide comparable statistics on the use of coercion in Norwegian mental health care.

#### *Legal safeguards for dementia patients*

Dementia is a disease characterized by the gradual decline of intellectual, emotional and motor functions, with the result that the patient gradually becomes unable to take care of himself. The patient's ability to recognise his own need for assistance is also impaired. To a great degree, dementia patients are helped by measures to which they consent, but to prevent injury it is sometimes necessary to take measures without the consent of the patient and even against his or her will. This requires legal authority. Current legislation is both unclear and inadequate.

Issues related to legal safeguards for dementia patients were discussed in Report No. 28 (1999-2000) to the Storting regarding the content and quality of care services. A majority of the members of the Standing Committee on Social Affairs saw a need for rules that impose limits on the use of coercion in the care of dementia patients, cf. Recommendation No. 99 (2000-2001) to the Storting. The Ministry of Health and Social Affairs will circulate a consultation paper proposing regulations in the course of 2001.

The Ministry of Health and Social Affairs has commissioned the National Centre of Expertise for Age-related Dementia to conduct a survey of the actual use of coercion in care of dementia patients. The final report on this survey was completed in November. The reasons for the use of coercion are many and complex. Measures designed to improve skills and attitudes are important, in addition to ensuring that surroundings and routines are adapted to the needs of dementia patients. The Ministry of Health and Social Affairs will continue to work closely with the National Centre of Expertise for Age-related Dementia and other groups of experts to limit the use of coercion and reinforce legal safeguards for dementia patients.

#### *Assessment of financial social welfare benefits*

The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights stipulates that everyone has a right to a satisfactory standard of living (Article 11) and social security (Article 9). In Report No. 50 (1998-99) to the Storting on equalization, the Government announced that it wished to introduce recommended government norms for living expenses. The guidelines for these norms have now been drawn up and provide a common basis for municipal processing of social welfare cases, thereby helping to reduce disparities in the level of benefits from one municipality to another. Government norms also help to free up time for the active follow-up of social welfare recipients. The guidelines are a tool for assessing the need for benefits, and are not binding. Benefits are still to be determined on the basis of an assessment of needs in each individual case. The guidelines (in Norwegian) may be found on the Internet website at [odin.dep.no/shd/norsk/regelverk/rundskriv/030031-250009](http://odin.dep.no/shd/norsk/regelverk/rundskriv/030031-250009).

The Government also wishes to improve guidance and training in the attachment of conditions to social benefits. The goal is to strengthen the legal safeguards of benefit recipients and promote the increased use of conditions, thereby encouraging more social welfare recipients to seek employment and become self-sufficient in the long term. Work on a new circular relating to Chapter 5 of the Social Services Act, which deals with the question of conditions, will be completed



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Rules are required that set limits on the use of coercion in respect of dementia patients.

before summer 2001. The circular will contain guidelines for the attachment of conditions.

#### *Processing time in social security cases*

In 2000, all of the social security offices, county offices of the National Insurance Scheme and the National Insurance Administration in Norway were included in the system of national insurance service declarations. As a result of a project to shorten response times throughout the agency, the number of cases pending action has been substantially reduced in every county in Norway in the past few years. The use of electronic data interchange between the national insurance authorities and other agencies has simplified administrative procedures and freed up administrative resources for the provision of services. In 2000 all counties achieved most of their goals as regards reduced processing time in the National Insurance Appeals Council.

#### *Action Plan for Social and Economic Security (follow-up of the Report on Equalization)*

The Report on Equalization was debated by the Storting in spring 2000. A unanimous Storting endorsed the analyses and strategies for equalizing standards of living that were presented in the report. The Storting adopted a resolution "requesting the Government to present a plan of action to follow up the Report on Equalization and the Storting debate on the report in spring 2001". The Government has presented an action plan for social and economic security that describes measures that benefit the weakest members of society. The plan was presented in the Government's long-term programme (2002-2005) in spring 2001, and will be implemented over a period of four years.

The action plan will focus on an inclusive labour market and propose measures to ensure that as many people as possible are able to support themselves. Housing measures for disadvantaged persons are also a key element of the plan. The plan also proposes certain targeted improvements in the provision of health services and in the social safety net for those whose needs are not satisfactorily met by the current welfare system.

#### **Norway's report under the European Social Charter**

The European Social Charter is an international convention that was elaborated by the Council of Europe during the period 1953-1961. It was opened for signature and ratification in 1961, and was ratified by Norway in 1963. The Social Charter contains 19 articles that lay down rules and legal standards in spheres such as labour market and working environment policy, health and social policy, family policy and social security. An Optional Protocol adopted in 1988 with four new articles has also been ratified by Norway.

At regular intervals the states that have ratified the Social Charter submit reports to an independent committee of experts. The reports are reviewed by the committee, which determines to what extent the various countries are fulfilling the articles of the Social Charter. The Committee's conclusions are then discussed by an Expert Committee, which submits its recommendations as to relevant reactions in respect of the individual countries to the Ministerial Committee. The Ministerial Committee then decides whether a reaction should be issued in the form of a recommendation to the country concerned.

The Social Charter was revised in the early 1990s. The Revised Social Charter was opened for ratification in 1996 and entered into force in June 1999. The Revised Social Charter has been drawn up as an independent instrument. It contains amendments to the substantive contents of the articles of the Social Charter, as well as a number of new articles. The Social Charter of 1961 forms the basis of the Revised Social Charter, and all the amendments and supplements to the original

articles of this charter have been incorporated into the revised text. The number of articles has increased from 19 in the Social Charter of 1961 to 31 in the Revised Social Charter.

Norway ratified the Revised Social Charter on 7 May 2001.

### **Persons with disabilities**

#### *The rights of persons with disabilities*

The Strategic Committee for the Promotion of the Rights, Full Participation and Equality of Persons with Disabilities will present its report by 1 July 2001.

#### *Access to higher education for persons with disabilities*

Report No. 8 (1998-99) to the Storting required all universities and colleges to draw up plans of action for persons with disabilities. These plans have now been elaborated by a large number of educational institutions. In Report No. 21 (1999-2000) to the Storting, the Government announced its intention to examine more closely the access to higher education of persons with disabilities. The working group that has considered these issues presented its report in 2000. The report recently presented to the Storting on higher education, Report No. 27 (2000-2001), establishes that educational institutions have a clear responsibility for catering to the needs of persons with disabilities, both in connection with the admission of students and while they are pursuing their studies. Institutions are to draw up plans of action for persons with disabilities and are required to allocate at least five per cent of their maintenance budget for measures to facilitate access for this group of persons. ICT-aided, flexible study programmes and distance learning will also play an important role in these efforts.

#### *User counselling and legal aid for persons with disabilities*

To improve user counselling for persons with disabilities, the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs has provided funding for the Norwegian Federation of Organizations of Disabled People and the Norwegian Association for the Disabled for a three-year project. In 2000, offices were established in several areas of Norway which persons with disabilities and their relatives can call for counselling and advice on services and rights relating to national insurance, health and social services, housing, transport, etc. These offices have revealed a great need for this type of assistance. Enquiries are recorded and systematized and will provide better knowledge of the inadequacies of current schemes, such as the public legal aid scheme.

#### *User-managed personal assistance*

The Social Services Act was amended as of 1 May 2000. Pursuant to the amendment, municipalities are required to offer user-managed personal assistance as an alternative way of organizing practical, personal help for persons with serious disabilities. Several types of information material on the scheme have been prepared and distributed. Courses have also been arranged for users and their relatives, assistants, municipal employees and local politicians.

#### *Use of coercion in respect of certain mentally retarded persons*

Chapter 6A of the Social Services Act concerns rights and the use of coercion in respect of mentally retarded persons. The Act entered into force on 1 January 1999. These provisions aim at strengthening the legal safeguards of mentally retarded persons who expose themselves or others to serious injury. The Act sets stringent criteria as regards preventive measures, the use of coercion and procedural rules to ensure thorough evaluation and possibilities of appeal. Chapter 6A is to apply for three years from the entry into force of the Act. The purpose of this time-limit is to ensure that the Act and its practical implementation are continuously evaluated. It has proved to take longer for municipalities to comply with the new rules than expected when the Act was adopted. The



Council for the Evaluation of Practice and Legal Safeguards pursuant to chapter 6A of the Social Services Act has therefore proposed that the period of applicability of chapter 6A should be extended by two years, and that the Council's term of office should be extended by six months. The Ministry of Health and Social Affairs circulated a proposal to this effect for limited consultation in autumn 2000.

#### *Plan of Action for Persons with Disabilities*

Report No. 8 (1998-99) to the Storting on the Plan of Action for Persons with Disabilities initiated a number of measures to improve conditions for this group. An updated report on the status of these measures is provided in Circular I-15/2001 - Status Report for 2000 on the Plan of Action for Persons with Disabilities, which may be found (in Norwegian) on the Internet website [odin.dep.no/shd/norsk/regelverk/rundskriv/030081-250009](http://odin.dep.no/shd/norsk/regelverk/rundskriv/030081-250009).

### Children

#### *Implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child in Norway*

The Norwegian authorities were examined by the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child in May 2000, and the committee presented its concluding comments in June. Norway was praised for the positive, independent role played by the Ombudsman for Children. Official measures to combat intolerance and discrimination, implement family and parental guidance programmes and provide funding to strengthen the rights of children in developing countries were also commended. The Committee made a number of recommendations, including a wish to have the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) implemented in Norwegian law. They also pointed to the need for more information on the right of children to express their views, measures to rehabilitate young offenders, and better access to mental health care for children. The Committee's concluding remarks have been distributed to Norwegian central government authorities, municipalities, non-governmental organizations, colleges and universities. Feedback from central government authorities concerning their follow-up of the recommendations is currently being compiled. In 2000 an inter-ministerial working group prepared a circulation paper on the best way of implementing the CRC in Norwegian law. The paper has been circulated for consultation with a time-limit for comment of 15 May 2001. The Government will then present a Bill relating to implementation of the convention.

A Proposition to the Odelsting on raising the age limit for military service was adopted by the Odelsting and the Lagting in November 2000 and approved by the King on 19 January 2000. The legislative amendment will enter into force from the date decided by the King.

#### *Children and the media*

The "Oslo Challenge" was launched on the occasion of the international celebration in Oslo to mark the 10th anniversary of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. The "Oslo Challenge" is an appeal to the countries of the world and the media to take the rights of children in the media sector seriously, to use the media to promote the rights of children, and to raise awareness of the CRC. Norway and UNICEF are jointly developing a handbook for use by countries when reporting on the rights of children in the media sector. The handbook will also focus on examples of measures that strengthen children's rights in this field. These examples are selected from countries with different economic and cultural conditions.

#### *Children and participation*

About half of Norway's municipalities have established a body through which children and young people can exert influence (child and youth councils, youth municipal councils or the like). In the course of the coming year, more than 75 per



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The environment in which children and young people grow up must be improved.

cent of Norwegian municipalities are expected to have established some form or other of systematic participation and influence by children and young people.

In April 2000 the Youth Forum for Democracy, in cooperation with the Ministry of Children and Family Affairs and the Hedmark Project, arranged a conference for young people from the above-mentioned municipal bodies. In summing up, the conference concluded that there are significant differences between municipalities as regards the amount of influence that young people and children have, and the type of matters on which they are given an opportunity to voice an opinion.

The mandate period of the Youth Forum for Democracy expires in spring 2001. The forum has put forward a number of proposals, which have been presented to the Minister of Children and Family Affairs and sent to local, regional or central government authorities depending on the nature of the matter concerned. A report from the Youth Forum for Democracy, which is to be completed by the end of 2001, will also contain proposals for the follow-up of the conference and the Summer Camp in the Storting project, which was jointly arranged by the Forum and the Norwegian Government Commission on Human Values for 100 young people from all over Norway.

The Children in Focus project (1999-2000) was initiated to increase awareness of and disseminate information on the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The object of the project was to strengthen children's influence on and involvement in their own daily lives. The Norwegian Youth Council has been responsible for managing the project, which has comprised the development and distribution of information material, the production of films and video films, the arrangement of a course on influence and participation for local leaders, the development of Internet sites and an essay competition for children.

*Development programme to improve the environment in which children grow up*

The programme to improve the conditions in which children grow up was started in 1998 and will span a period of several years. Its aim is to promote cooperation between government and non-governmental agencies on improving childhood environments with particular emphasis on enhancing the opportunities of children and young people to participate in and influence society and to cope successfully with the challenges they face. Efforts to combat violence, bullying, alcohol and narcotics, crime and racism will be intensified. Ten municipalities were selected to participate in the programme for a three-year period beginning in autumn 1998. Funds have been allocated to both the municipalities and to non-governmental youth organizations.

In this way, useful lessons will be learned that can provide a basis for more permanent efforts in other municipalities. The experience gained in this development programme will be passed on at conferences and in reports. The work in the pilot municipalities is being followed up by the Norwegian Institute for Urban and Regional Research. In 2001, other municipalities will be selected to take part in the programme.

This programme will help to enhance coordination of central government efforts to improve conditions for children and young people.

*Plan of Action to Combat Youth Crime*

In December 1999 the Ministry of Children and Family Affairs presented Report No. 17 (1999-2000) to the Storting on the Plan of Action to Combat Youth Crime. Improved coordination of preventive efforts is a main objective of the plan. Five ministries are cooperating on this plan, which is to be implemented over a period of five years (2000-2004).



The plan provides an overall view of what the Government intends to do to prevent and combat criminal offences and improve the conditions in which children and young people grow up. It comprises measures in six main areas:

- General preventive efforts
- Measures targeting schools
- Measures targeting leisure time activities and local communities
- Follow-up of children and young people with serious behavioural problems
- Follow-up of young offenders and criminal youth gangs
- Acquisition of knowledge and research.

In 2001, to follow up the plan, an inter-ministerial working group comprising representatives from the Ministry of Children and Family Affairs, the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Education, Research and Church Affairs has prepared a report proposing measures to combat child and youth crime.

#### *Efforts to combat violence and crime in schools*

Schools are offered a broad range of programmes and teaching materials aimed at improving the environment in which children learn and develop. Based on research in this field, a group appointed by the Ministry of Education, Research and Church Affairs and the Ministry of Children and Family Affairs have reviewed and evaluated a number of these programmes. According to the researchers, school-based, multi-centred measures produce very promising results. Broad-based measures generally appear to be far more effective than measures with a narrow target group.

Together with the Plan of Action to Combat Youth Crime, a report titled *"Evaluation of Programmes and Measures to Reduce Problem Behaviour and Develop Social Skills"* will form the basis for the Ministry's further strategy and measures targeting schools.

#### *Child welfare*

Children and young people who are subject to child welfare measures account for between two and three per cent of the total Norwegian population under 18 years of age. In May 2000, the Befring Committee submitted a comprehensive evaluation of child welfare services in Norway (NOU 2000:12 Child Welfare Services in Norway). The committee presented a number of proposals for amendments to the Child Welfare Act and innovations in the child welfare system. The committee attached particular importance to preventive activities, the right of children to protection and assistance and children's overall need for favourable conditions in which to grow up. The committee's recommendations will be followed up in a separate Report to the Storting on child welfare services in 2001.

#### *Research on child welfare and the Child Welfare Act*

In 1999, the Research Council of Norway launched the "Welfare Programme - Society, Family, Childhood". The new programme comprises a subsidiary programme of research on child welfare (1997-2001) as a follow-up to an earlier programme on the same topic. The programme focuses on the following main areas:

- Values and normative frameworks of perception for the child welfare service
- The child welfare service's dilemma: what are the child's best interests?
- Problematic contexts in the lives of children and young people.

The main purpose of this research is to examine the intentional and unintentional consequences of the changes resulting from the new Child Welfare Act (1993). Most of the projects related to this programme were completed in 2000. The research results currently available are discussed in Norwegian Official Report 2000:12, Child Welfare Services in Norway.

### *Sexual abuse of children*

Work is continuing on implementation of the Norwegian plan to follow up the 1996 World Congress against the commercial sexual exploitation of children.

A revised chapter of the General Civil Penal Code relating to sexual offences was adopted by the Storting and implemented in 2000. Among other things, the age limits for sexual offences against young people were raised. Both the purchase of sexual services from and the commercial display in pictures with a sexual content of persons under 18 years of age are now criminal offences. The former age limit was 16 years.

In the period 2000-2002, the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs will attach particular importance to improving services for evaluating, diagnosing, treating and assisting sexually abused children and their relatives. The project period of the National Resource Centre for Sexually Abused Children has been extended by three years, until 2002. During this period, the centre, in partnership with the Norwegian Board of Health, will emphasize efforts to upgrade expertise and measures at regional and county level. NOK 3 million was allocated for the project in 2000.

### *Children's right to know their biological origin*

The Plan of Action for Human Rights stated that the Government will re-evaluate whether children conceived by means of artificial insemination should be entitled to know their biological origin. This is one of the issues discussed in connection with the ongoing evaluation and amendment of Act of 5 August 1994 No. 56 on the medical use of biotechnology.

### *Unaccompanied minors who are asylum-seekers and refugees*

The Government has presented a report to the Storting on policy relating to asylum-seekers and refugees in Norway (Report No. 1 (2000-2001) to the Storting). With regard to unaccompanied minors, the Government will:

- give priority to processing applications for asylum from unaccompanied minors
- strengthen efforts to find parents or other care providers, if appropriate, with a view to reunification in the home country
- ensure that the public guardian's office in municipalities intensifies its efforts to recruit guardians
- evaluate the functions of guardians and the public guardian's office and whether a system of remuneration should be introduced for guardians
- increase the number and upgrade the qualifications of staff members of sections for unaccompanied minors at reception centres
- improve the supervision of unaccompanied minors at reception centres
- draw up instructions for supervision at reception centres
- seek to identify any needs for assistance at an early stage by offering follow-up interviews and carrying out more thorough health examinations at ordinary reception centres
- strengthen the social network by urging municipalities and non-governmental organizations to collaborate with reception centres
- evaluate different models with a view to strengthening advisory services for municipalities with regard to unaccompanied minors.

The Government has reviewed the financial and administrative aspects of the special grant provided to municipalities for the resettlement of unaccompanied minors. The Government has concluded that, on average, the resettlement expenses of municipalities which resettle unaccompanied minors are currently covered by a combination of government grants and government reimbursement of expenditure on child welfare measures through the county authorities.

### *Health examinations of unaccompanied minors who are refugees*

Like other asylum-seekers and refugees, unaccompanied minors also undergo

an initial health examination during the period they spend in the transit reception centre. This examination focuses primarily on infections and the person's psycho-social health. It is important to identify and follow up refugees with psychological problems due to war experiences, torture and the like. If this examination reveals that the asylum-seeker requires assistance, the person in question must be referred to the ordinary health services. New guidelines for health services for refugees and asylum-seekers are currently being drafted. (More information may be found in Chapter 8 of Report No. 17 (2000-2001) to the Storting.)

In each health region, there are psycho-social teams funded by the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs. These teams are affiliated with the county specialist health services in the region, and have the following functions:

- Upgrade the skills of primary and specialist health services by means of consultations, teaching programmes and counselling
- Examine and treat traumatized refugees on an out-patient basis and provide other psycho-social services
- Systematize lessons learned, develop methods and upgrade their own skills through research and other projects.

In addition to this, a project has been initiated at the Norwegian Board of Health that is funded by the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs and focuses particularly on health services for persons suffering from post-traumatic stress. Initially, the purpose of this project is to carry out a study and present proposals for developing expertise and services to meet the needs of this group at national, regional and municipal level.

#### *Children affected by armed conflict*

The psycho-social team for refugees in Central Norway has prepared self-help brochures that have been translated into 15 languages and target persons who have been affected by war and the parents of war-affected children.

## **Women**

### *Gender equality*

Preventing gender-based discrimination and promoting equality between women and men are key objectives of human rights efforts. The UN Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) is an important international tool in efforts to strengthen the human rights of women. Under this treaty, States parties are obligated to implement the convention at national level and report on their implementation to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women every fourth year. Norway prepared its fifth report in 1999 and sent it to women's and other organizations for comment. Their contributions were included in the report which was forwarded to the UN in early 2000.

In 1999, a special Optional Protocol to CEDAW was adopted, establishing the right of individuals to submit complaints concerning possible violations of treaty provisions. Norway was one of the first countries to sign the protocol and aims to ratify it in the near future.

Efforts to combat discrimination and promote gender equality are authorized by the Gender Equality Act of 9 June 1978, which also provides the legal authority for the enforcement agency, the Gender Equality Ombud. The Gender Equality Act is currently being revised, and the Government will submit proposals for amendments to the Act in April 2001. If the amendments are adopted, the statute will be a stronger tool for promoting equal pay for women and men for work of equal value. The scope of the Act will be expanded to include sexual harassment. Principles regarding objective fault in connection with infringements of the pro-

visions of the Act will be introduced, and earlier case law as regards shared burden of proof in cases concerning appointments and working conditions will be codified. The amended Act will strengthen the obligation to promote gender equality, which will be expanded to include not only the public authorities, but also private employers and employers and employee organizations. Both the public authorities and private companies will be required to report on their efforts to promote gender equality.

To achieve genuine equality between men and women, the Government has decided to focus more strongly on gender equality in all policy areas. A committee of state secretaries for gender equality has been appointed with participants from the most important ministries. An important task for the committee is to ensure that gender equality considerations are included in the Government's basis for making decisions. The Ministry of Children and Family Affairs has launched a pilot project aimed at systematically integrating the principle of gender equality into the Government's planning and budget activities.

#### *Violence and sexual abuse*

Violence against and sexual abuse of women and children are serious violations of human dignity and a telling indication of the lack of equality between women and men. The Ministry of Children and Family Affairs provides annual grants to cover the operating costs of crisis centres and centres for incest victims. Government grants cover half of the operating costs of the various centres.

Increasing general expertise as regards victims of violence is another important objective. The Ministry of Children and Family Affairs, the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs and the Ministry of Justice jointly finance the operation of the Norwegian Resource Centre for Information and Studies on Violence.

Trafficking in women and children for the purpose of sexual exploitation is a gross violation of human dignity. The Ministry of Children and Family Affairs coordinates a inter-ministerial working group that is to draw up a plan of activities to combat trafficking in women.

#### *Measures to combat female genital mutilation*

Female genital mutilation is a breach of fundamental human rights, such as the right to non-discrimination, the right to privacy and the right to health. The practice has long been a criminal offence in Norway pursuant to provisions in the General Civil Penal Code, the Act relating to Medical Practitioners and the Children Act. A separate Act prohibiting female genital mutilation was adopted in 1995. The purpose of this Act was partly to clarify certain doubtful issues and partly to demonstrate clearly the Norwegian authorities' condemnation of female genital mutilation. The Act is little known. Norwegian personnel are trained neither to deal with the problem before it arises nor to provide professional assistance to women who have been subjected to genital mutilation. In October, therefore, the Norwegian Board of Health published a set of guidelines on female circumcision for health professionals in Norway. The object of the guidelines is to provide information for health professionals to give them the skills and confidence they require when they encounter a practice that calls for professional insight, sensitivity and understanding. It is also hoped that the guidelines will be instrumental in generating greater openness regarding the question of female genital mutilation.

In December, the Government presented a Plan of Action to Combat Female Genital Mutilation. The plan has the following goals:

- Prevent girls living in Norway from being subjected to genital mutilation, for instance by establishing cooperation with organizations and individuals
- Assist girls who have already been subjected to genital mutilation
- Promote efforts to put an end to female genital mutilation internationally.



### *Women's health*

In connection with the follow-up of Official Norwegian Report 1999:13 on women's health in Norway, a number of measures have been initiated that address human rights issues. These include:

- Measures to ensure the quality of treatment methods from a gender perspective. A pilot project was carried out in 2000. A report containing recommendations will be presented in the first half of 2001.
- The establishment of clauses and criteria to ensure the inclusion of women in research projects. Guidelines are being drawn up and will be completed in spring 2001.
- The establishment of routines for reporting the status of efforts to ensure that account is taken of gender issues and gender equality in the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs' spheres of responsibility. The Ministry designated special priority areas in 2000.
- The establishment of a three-year project to integrate the gender perspective into administrative procedures, and planning and budget activities in the fields of health and social welfare. A preliminary project has been completed, and the main project was initiated in 2000/2001.

### *Survey and follow-up of the educational needs of immigrant women*

The first part of this survey has been followed up through the provision of extra funding in 2000 and 2001 for courses particularly adapted for immigrant women in Oslo with special needs. The survey is part of a project run by the Institute for Applied Social Science.

## **Family life**

### *Equality between parents in relation to transfers of public funds*

The independent entitlement of fathers to benefits in connection with the birth or adoption of a child was introduced as from 1 July 2000. While fathers' right to childbirth or adoption benefits was formerly contingent on the mother's participation in the labour force prior to the birth, the father's right now depends on what the mother does after giving birth. The father is entitled to childbirth or adoption benefits on the basis of his own accrued rights when the mother takes employment or enrolls in an educational programme after giving birth, or is dependent on assistance to care for the child due to illness or injury. In other words, the father's right only applies if there is a need for care. The father is entitled to childbirth or adoption benefits based on his own accrued rights for a maximum of 29 weeks at 100 per cent wage compensation or 39 weeks at 80 per cent compensation.

### *Measures to combat forced marriages*

In December 1998, the Government presented its Plan of Action to Combat Forced Marriages, which covers a period of three years. The aim of the plan is to prevent young people from being subjected to forced marriages and provide better assistance to those who have been forced to enter into marriage. The plan comprises 40 measures among which preventive efforts, information, mediation, conflict resolution and training programmes play a key role. In 2000 funds were provided for eleven projects run by non-governmental organizations, crisis centres and the Norwegian Broadcasting Corporation and aimed at preventing forced marriages. A hotline providing information on forced marriages has been established, initially as a three-year project, but the need for a service of this nature will be evaluated at regular intervals. Research has been initiated to examine the possibilities of amending legislation with a view to preventing forced marriages. A report on the legal regulation of forced marriages and bigamy was presented in September.



## Lesbians and homosexuals

A research report presented by NOVA - Norwegian Social Research - in 1999 concluded that the mental health of lesbians and homosexuals is poorer than that of the rest of the population. It was also found that many young homosexuals have difficulty accepting themselves and acknowledging their own homosexuality, and that approximately 25 per cent of lesbians and homosexuals between the ages of 16 and 24 have attempted to commit suicide. In the light of this report, the Storting requested the Government to present a report on the standards of living and quality of life of lesbians and homosexuals. The object of the report, which will be presented to the Storting in spring 2001, is to shed light on the situation and standards of living of this group from a broad perspective through research-based knowledge. The aim is also to evaluate and propose measures to improve the quality of life of lesbians and homosexuals. As an immediate measure, funds were provided in 2000 for a summer camp for young lesbians and homosexuals and for the Gay Youth Telephone of Norway. Assistance was also provided for youth activities run by the National Association for Lesbian and Gay Liberation - Norway (LLH).

### *Measures to strengthen mental health services*

Within the framework of the Plan to Strengthen Mental Health Services (1999-2006), funds will be allocated for measures to upgrade expertise in the field of mental health in order to learn more about gender identity and sexuality, including homosexuality. Once the quality and quantity of services are improved, the Government expects that services for homosexuals and lesbians in the ordinary public health system will also be strengthened.

The plan calls for a staffing increase of 800 man-years for public health clinics and the school health service. This will have an impact on preventive health efforts targeting lesbians and homosexuals. Furthermore, a grant equivalent to 260 man-years will be provided under the plan for psycho-social services, personal support contacts and cultural and recreational programmes for children and young people under 18 years of age. The target group comprises children and young people who have, or are particularly subject to, problems of a psycho-social nature.

Furthermore, as a supplement to the school health service, the Plan of Action for the Prevention of Unwanted Pregnancies and Abortions will encourage the establishment of public health clinics for young people. These work of these clinics will focus primarily on sexual relationships, sexuality and contraception, but also on various psycho-social problems. In connection with this plan of action, an information and guidance programme will be designed for parents with young children, public health clinic personnel and day-care centre staff that will examine topics such as sexual relationships, the biology of sex and sexuality, including homosexuality. Material will be prepared on the subject of gender identity and sexuality for health, social service and teaching professionals, which will include the topic of homosexuality.

With a view to preventing eating disorders, educational material on culture, the body and communication has been produced for use in lower and upper secondary schools. Work is in progress on a resource manual for teachers for use in courses on self, society, sexuality and contraception, and a letter to young people and their parents containing information on sexual relationships and sexuality. This material also focuses on sexuality in children and young people and on their mental and sexual health.

The Ministry of Health and Social Affairs is currently preparing a circular to municipalities on psycho-social measures for children and young people. The circular will also address the topics of gender identity and sexuality.

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The mental health of lesbians and homosexuals is poorer than that of the rest of the population. The government has implemented measures to improve their quality of life.



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Gender, identity and marginalization are the topics of a special course for health professionals.

The Oslo University College has developed a three-day course on gender, identity and marginalization. The target groups for this course are teachers, child welfare officers, physicians, clergymen, psychologists, social workers and other professionals. Funding has been provided by the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs and the Ministry of Education, Research and Church Affairs.

The Plan of Action to Prevent Suicide, which was concluded in 1999, was succeeded on 1 January by a three-year follow-up project. The national resource centre, the Section for Suicide Research and Prevention at the University of Oslo, and three regional resource centres affiliated with each of the other health regions will remain in operation. The follow-up project aims at preventing suicide among groups that are particularly at risk, including lesbians and homosexuals. Efforts will be focused on this group by

- designing specific research projects in cooperation with the groups concerned
- increasing the expertise of health professionals and other public employees
- providing technical assistance to organizations such as the National Association for Lesbians and Homosexuals.

The Ministry of Health and Social Affairs will ensure that the measures are implemented and followed up in the course of the period covered by the plan.

### Freedom of religion and belief

#### *Evaluation of the school subject Christian Knowledge and Religious and Moral Education*

The evaluation of the subject Christian Knowledge and Religious and Moral Education was concluded in autumn 2000. The evaluation showed that parents, pupils and teachers are generally satisfied with the subject, but that there are significant local variations in the way the subject is taught in terms of both the content of the subject and the way the right to limited exemption from the course is practiced. In consultation comments on the evaluation reports, the National Parents' Committee for Primary and Lower Secondary Education, teachers' unions and almost all of the religious and belief organizations expressed their desire in principle to have a common subject that provides general knowledge of all religions and beliefs. A subject of this nature will bring pupils from different religious and belief backgrounds together in a common arena for the development of knowledge, dialogue, respect and tolerance. In Report No. 32 (2000-2001) to the Storting Evaluation of the subject Christian Knowledge and Religious and Moral Education, the Ministry presented proposals aimed at adjusting the subject, including the provision of information on the content of the subject and on the right to exemption from parts of the course, as well as increased emphasis on in-serving teaching training. The Government also proposed changing the name of the subject to "Religion and Belief", but this proposal did not receive the support for the majority in the Storting.

#### *Review of the administration of the Act relating to Religious Communities and the Act relating to Philosophical Communities with a view to safeguarding the rights of minorities*

The working group that has reviewed the administration of the Act relating to Religious Communities and the Act relating to Philosophical Communities with a view to safeguarding the rights of minorities has presented its report. The report was circulated for consultation with a time-limit for comment of 1 March 2001. The comments received from those consulted are currently being studied by the Ministry.

### Freedom of expression

The Commission on Freedom of Expression, appointed in 1996, presented its report, Official Norwegian Report 1999: 27 *There Shall be Freedom of Expression*

- *Proposal for a new Article 100 of the Constitution of Norway* in September 1999. Besides proposing a new constitutional provision relating to protection of freedom of expression, the commission recommended a number of legislative amendments. The commission also focused on responsibility for facilitating the exercise of freedom of expression. On 12 November 1999, the Ministry of Justice circulated the report for consultation, requesting that comments be submitted by 12 April 2000.

The time-limit laid down in Article 112 of the Constitution for submitting a proposal to amend the Constitution for debate in the next Storting period expired when the Storting was dissolved on 28 September 2000. On 1 September 2000, therefore, the Government presented Report No. 42 (1999-2000) to the Storting on amending Article 100 of the Constitution. The report presents the Commission on Freedom of Expression's own proposal for amendments and a number of alternatives. The purpose of the report was to give Storting representatives an opportunity to consider the proposals and, if appropriate, to present alternatives. The report did not express any opinion as to which draft should be chosen.

All the drafts in the report were presented to the Storting as a proposal to amend the Constitution on 28 September 2000 by Storting representatives from a broad range of Norwegian political parties.

The Government aims to present a new report to the Storting on freedom of expression in the next Storting period. In this report, the Government will give an account of its evaluation of the issues raised by the report of the Commission on Freedom of Expression.

### Adult education

#### *Proposed Act on the right of adults to primary, lower secondary and upper secondary education*

The Storting has adopted a resolution to the effect that adults in need of primary and lower secondary education are to have an individual right to such education. This right will enter into force as from the 2002/03 school year. Education is to be adapted to individual needs. Providing adults with primary and lower secondary education is the responsibility of municipalities, but they may also offer such education through adult education associations, distance learning institutions and other channels. Thirty-seven municipalities from all over Norway have participated in a project to survey the need for primary education and develop teaching models tailored for adults. On the basis of this survey, which was completed in autumn 2000, the municipalities have developed teaching models that are now being tested and further elaborated. NOK 10 million was allocated for the project in 2000, and this allocation will be maintained in 2001. Since August 2000, adults also have a constitutional right to upper secondary education. The right applies to persons born before 1978 who are not covered by the 1994 reform of upper secondary education. Amendments to the Regulations relating to the Education Act apply as from 1 February 2001. In 2000 NOK 20 million was allocated from the government budget for the development of teaching models in upper secondary education that are flexible and adapted for adults. An allocation of NOK 18 million has been provided to continue this work in 2001. Priority will be given to projects targeting adults with reading and writing problems, and to projects that motivate adults to participate actively in the labour market and society.

### The status of victims of crime

The pilot project, the Resource Centre for Assistance to Victims of Violent Crime, will continue until the end of 2002. The project mandate will be revised in the light

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An evaluation of the school subject Christian Knowledge and Religious and Moral Education was completed in 2000.

of the lessons learned during the pilot project period. The aim is still to have a staff equivalent to four man-years at the centre. The system of personal violence alarms has now been made permanent. The plan of action comprising measures to prevent domestic violence against women entered into force in 2000.

In September 2000 the Government presented a proposal to amend the rules regarding a ban on visits, cf. Proposition No. 81 (2000-2001) to the Odelsting. The Act was adopted by the Storting in spring 2001, cf. Act of 2 March 2001 No. 7. Breaches of the ban on visits may be punishable by remand in detention and fines. To strengthen the effect of the ban on visits, the rules are now being made more stringent.

### Biotechnological issues

#### *Act relating to the medical use of biotechnology*

The Ministry of Health and Social Affairs is in the process of evaluating the Act of 5 August 1994 No. 56 on the medical use of biotechnology. The evaluation will be presented in the form of a proposition to the Odelsting.

#### *Information to relatives concerning a serious hereditary disease*

The Bill on the right of physicians, subject to certain conditions, to make unsolicited contact with a patient's relatives if there is a suspicion of a serious hereditary disease (Proposition No. 93 (1998-99) to the Odelsting) has now been debated by the Storting. The Storting approved the Bill, with minor amendments, and the Act entered into force as from 21 December 2000. The Ministry of Health and Social Affairs is now drafting regulations defining which diseases qualify for unsolicited genetic counselling.

#### *Genetic testing in connection with hereditary cancer*

Official Norwegian Report 1999:20 on genetic testing in connection with hereditary cancer is being followed up in the process of evaluating the Biotechnology Act and through the work on the National Cancer Plan. Expansion of the offer of mammographic screening to include all women between the ages of 50 and 69, and the screening project that has been initiated for intestinal cancer will lead to the identification of more cases of hereditary cancer and a subsequent need for genetic counselling and, if appropriate, genetic testing.

In Official Norwegian Report 1999:20, the committee recommended that genetic counsellors should have more formal education, preferably at the level of a Master's degree. In December, the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs gave the University of Bergen the go-ahead to initiate a pilot project for such education. The project is to take the form of a Master's degree in health studies, and will continue until 2004. The project will be funded through the National Cancer Plan.

In 2000 NOK 20 million was allocated from the National Cancer Plan for the establishment of centres of expertise on hereditary cancer at all regional hospitals in Norway. This allocation has been increased to NOK 25 million for 2001. A total of NOK 100 million will be provided to centres of expertise in the field of genetic therapy in the period 1999-2003.

#### *Use of genetic health data*

The committee charged with reporting on the collection, storage and use of health data by insurance companies submitted its recommendation on 4 July 2000 in Official Norwegian Report 2000:23. The recommendation has been circulated for consultation. The collection, storage and use of genetic data are regulated by the Biotechnology Act. The committee's proposals relating to this type of data will be assessed as part of the evaluation of the Biotechnology Act.

*Use of biological material from human beings and animals*

A proposal to prohibit the commercial exploitation of human biological material, including cells and tissue from aborted fetuses, was presented to the Storting on 7 July 2000 in Proposition No. 77 (1999-2000) to the Odelsting on amendments to the Act of 9 February 1973 No. 6 on transplantation, hospital autopsies and surrender of corpses, etc. The proposition also contains proposals for a temporary ban (until 1 January 2003) on the transfer of live biological material from animals to humans (xeno-transplantation).



NORWEGIAN EFFORTS TO  
PROMOTE HUMAN RIGHTS AT THE  
**INTERNATIONAL LEVEL**



## INTRODUCTION

The international section of this Annual Report deals with Norway's efforts to promote human rights at the international level. Although human rights are primarily the obligations of governments towards their own citizens, they also entail a universal responsibility.

Human rights play an increasingly important role in Norway's international activities. The promotion of human rights has traditionally been regarded as being separate from development cooperation. Today, it is clear that development cooperation is largely a question of providing assistance to realize human rights. This applies to all groups of rights, both civil and political rights and social, economic and cultural rights.

International efforts to promote greater respect for human rights take place at many levels. Norway participates in various multilateral forums, in which the UN plays a particularly important role as a standard-setter and provider of assistance in the field of human rights. Human rights are promoted in the UN General Assembly's Third Committee, the UN Commission on Human Rights, the UN Commission on the Status of Women and in the different negotiating processes which take place under the auspices of the UN and which are aimed at strengthening the protection of human rights. Norway has also made contributions to the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights.

This review of Norway's international commitment to human rights is structured in the same way as the Plan of Action for Human Rights, but also includes a special section on Norwegian efforts in individual countries.

## COOPERATION WITH LIKE-MINDED COUNTRIES

In international human rights efforts, cooperation with like-minded countries is often necessary to obtain the requisite support for desired measures. Such cooperation is often informal, having sprung from a common understanding of human dignity and human rights. Partners in dialogues and alliances vary depending on the type of human rights concerned. In this connection, there has been particularly extensive cooperation between the Nordic countries. Other European countries, particularly the Netherlands, Germany and the UK have also been close partners in many connections. Mention should also be made here of the Lysøen Human Security Network. This network, in which thirteen countries participate, originated as a bilateral partnership between Norway and Canada in 1998. The network is an informal, flexible mechanism designed to identify specific areas for potential collective action within the concept of "human security" (freedom from fear). The network wishes to act as a catalyst by focusing international attention on current and future humanitarian issues. The members of the network are Norway, Canada, Switzerland, the Netherlands, Ireland, Greece, Austria, Slovenia, Chile, Mali, Jordan, Thailand and South Africa (observer). Since its inception, the Network has held three ministerial meetings.

## NEGOTIATION PROCESSES

### Optional Protocol to the European Convention on Human Rights regarding Non-Discrimination

Article 14 of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) obliges the States Parties to ensure the enjoyment, without discrimination, of the rights enshrined in the convention. The ECHR does not provide protection against other forms of discrimination. In June 2000 the Council of Europe adopted a

Twelfth Protocol to the ECHR, which expands the scope of the prohibition against discrimination in a general manner.

### **Optional Protocol to the UN Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment**

Work on elaborating an Optional Protocol to the UN Convention against Torture began in 1994. The aim is to establish a sub-committee to the UN Committee against Torture, with more extensive investigative powers than those of the Committee itself. The intention is that the sub-committee shall have authority to visit member states and inspect prisons and other institutions in which persons are deprived of their liberty in order to ascertain whether torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment is taking place. This system is intended as a supplement to the work done today by the Committee against Torture.

The negotiations on the Optional Protocol have been difficult. The fact that certain restrictive states have wished to require the sub-committee to obtain the consent of the recipient state before carrying out visits and to enable the recipient state to exercise extensive control of the implementation of the visit has been particularly problematic. The working group was to have held its Ninth Session in autumn 2000. In view of the slow progress of the negotiations, it was decided to postpone the round of negotiations until February 2001. This postponement will enable the chairman of the working group to hold informal consultations that may help to advance the negotiations.

Norway participated in the negotiations on the Protocol to the UN Convention on Transnational Organized Crime relating to trafficking in persons, which were finalized in autumn 2000. For further information on the protocol, please refer to the chapter on Special Priority Areas: Women in the international section of this report.

### **ILO Convention No. 182 concerning the Worst Forms of Child Labour**

Norway ratified ILO Convention No. 182 concerning the Worst Forms of Child Labour in December 2000. For further information on this convention, please refer to the chapter on Special Priority Areas: Children in the international section of the report.

### **Optional Protocol to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child relating to the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography**

Norway is expected to ratify this protocol in the course of the first three months of 2001.

### **Optional Protocol to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child relating to the prohibition against participation in armed conflict of children under 18 years of age**

Norway participated actively in drafting this protocol, and signed it in June 2000. Work has begun on the process of making the necessary legislative amendments.

## **MULTILATERAL MECHANISMS AND MONITORING ARRANGEMENTS**

### **The UN Commission on Human Rights**

The main impression was that the mood of the 56th session of the UN Commission on Human Rights was relatively good, with fewer polarizing issues

than in earlier years. This reflects the positive trend in global efforts to promote human rights, both as regards thematic issues and in important countries such as Indonesia, Nigeria, Morocco and Iran, despite setbacks in other countries.

#### *Human rights defenders*

For Norway, efforts to gain acceptance for a new mechanism for human rights defenders were a main priority prior to the session in 2000. The results were better than Norway had dared to hope. The strategy was based on close cooperation with a core group of countries from every region (South Africa, Guatemala, Chile, Sri Lanka and Latvia) with whom Norway reached early agreement that the mandate for the proposed special representative should be formulated in brief and general terms. Morocco was an important ally in lobbying countries in Africa and the Third World. Emphasis was placed on obtaining co-sponsorships from non-western countries at an early stage to avoid this being regarded as a traditional western initiative.

#### *Chechnya*

Before the session began, there was consensus among the western countries that it would be important to deal with the human rights situation in Chechnya in one way or another, given the gravity of the situation and in order to maintain the Commission's credibility. During the Commission session, High Commissioner Mary Robinson visited Moscow and Chechnya, but was not allowed access to the areas she wished to see. She submitted a critical report to the Commission, which was sharply refuted by Russia. A separate debate on the report, and the general submissions by countries, showed that there was broad criticism of the situation in Chechnya by western and Central European countries, and also by certain members of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC). Many of the submissions called for Russia to appoint an independent commission of inquiry with international assistance.

The EU tabled a draft resolution to put pressure on Russia in order to initiate consultations on a chairman's statement, which requires consensus approval. However, Russia was unwilling to accept the minimum measures considered necessary by the EU, and in the end there was no other solution but to put the matter to the vote. The Chechnya resolution was adopted by a 24-7-19 vote. Norway co-sponsored the resolution with all the western and many Central European countries.

#### *Country debates and country resolutions*

Apart from the discussion on Chechnya, the debate on country situations and the way country resolutions were dealt with followed the traditional pattern. Sixteen resolutions on country situations were adopted, including two resolutions on the Middle East. The resolution on Colombia was also adopted, while the resolutions on Haiti, Somalia and Cambodia (advisory services and technical cooperation in the field of human rights) were dealt with separately.

This year China again submitted a no-action motion with regard to the US resolution on China and won the vote on this issue. China acted with great self-confidence. The USA has subsequently suggested that the western countries should perhaps plan to hold strategy discussions prior to next year's human rights commission session to discuss the human rights situation in the country and the balance between multilateral and bilateral measures targeting China. The EU Presidency has made it clear that it will be very difficult - and not entirely beneficial - to attempt to create a common western front against China, even if it is agreed that there are several negative trends in the human rights situation in China.

As usual, Cuba made considerable efforts to prevent the Czech resolution on the human rights situation in Cuba from being adopted. The resolution was adopted by a vote of 21-18-14. Norway voted in favour of the resolution, but was not a co-sponsor.



At the 56th Session of the UN Commission on Human Rights, broad criticism of the situation in Chechnya was voiced by a number of countries.



The omnibus resolution on the human rights situation in the Balkans again included Croatia in 2000, even though Croatia was discussed far more briefly than at the previous session. The situation in Kosovo was not made the subject of a separate resolution, but is included in the omnibus resolution. This inclusion was criticized by several countries, referring to the fact that Kosovo is not a country in its own right, but a part of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. The resolution was adopted by a vote of 44-1-8.

The resolution on East Timor was negotiated by the EU Presidency and Indonesia. The consensual text contrasts strongly with the polarization that prevailed as regards the situation in East Timor during the Special Session of the Human Rights Commission in September.

The resolution on Iran was adopted by a small margin despite a relatively mild discussion of the situation in the country. If conditions in Iran improve, this resolution may cease to exist. The most important objective this year was to maintain the Special Rapporteur until more is known about the development of the human rights situation in the country.

As usual, the resolution on Iraq was adopted by a large majority.

The resolution on South Lebanon and West Bekaa was adopted by a vote of 51-1-1. Israel expressed its sincere hope that this was the last year that a resolution of this nature would be tabled.

This year, the resolution on Sudan was put to a vote (28-0-24). The EU's draft resolution was the object of several rounds of negotiations with Sudan with a view to achieving consensus. In the end, however, the USA requested a vote, resulting in a large number of abstentions, from Sudan itself, African countries and Third World countries. The outcome was a weakening of support for the mandate of the Special Rapporteur on Sudan, which the USA supports.

#### *Permanent forum for indigenous peoples*

As anticipated, the resolution recommending that the ECOSOC establish a permanent forum for indigenous peoples was a thorny matter. The resolution was the very last to be adopted before the end of the Commission meeting.

The main problems are linked to the question of how representatives of indigenous peoples are to be appointed and what is to be the future of the Sub-Commission's Working Group for Indigenous Peoples. The latter proved to be the most difficult issue. Several countries, spearheaded by the USA, wanted it to be stated clearly that the Working Group is to be dismantled as soon as the forum has been established. Cuba and Nigeria advocated not dismantling the Working Group. A satisfactory result, from Norway's point of view, was reached in the end, whereby a review of all mechanisms for indigenous peoples is to be undertaken once a forum has been established in order to avoid overlapping and duplication if possible.

After a number of rounds of voting on the proposed amendments, the resolution was finally adopted.

#### *New Protocols to the Convention on the Rights of the Child*

Two new protocols to the Convention on the Rights of the Child were adopted, one dealing with child soldiers and one dealing with the sale of children, child prostitution, etc. These protocols are the result of several years of discussion in special working groups. Right up to the last day of negotiations, there was a discussion between the USA (which besides Somalia is the only country that has not signed the Convention on the Rights of the Child) and France as to whether countries that are not parties to the main convention should be permitted to accede to the optional protocols.

### *Human rights mechanisms*

The report from the Working Group on the Review of Mechanisms was a fragile compromise that it was feared might have adverse effects on the work of the Commission. However, agreement was reached on an understanding whereby most of the recommendations in the report could be implemented during the same session.

The conflict regarding the review of mechanisms has been a polarizing issue in the Commission on Human Rights for several years. These mechanisms have developed rather incrementally, and western countries have long sought to have them reviewed and reformed. The Group of Like-Minded Countries (LMG) in the South, which is a forum for those developing countries that have the clearest ideological approach to human rights issues, has chosen to regard this as an attempt to enhance the effectiveness of efforts to promote civil and political rights, and a means of achieving a reform that eliminates some of the mechanisms that have been established at the proposal of this group and that western countries regard as being more appropriate in other contexts.

It is too early to judge whether this conflict has now been laid to rest, but the Commission has been granted a respite.

### *Debates on thematic issues and resolutions*

The debates on the thematic resolutions were largely in line with those of previous years, as regards both civil and political rights and economic, social and cultural rights. A number of resolutions ended up with texts that were largely in accordance with those of previous years.

The fact that the reports from the Special Rapporteurs, many of which are of high quality, often drown in the general multitude of issues to be discussed is still a problem. The Special Rapporteurs often present their briefings while their addressees are busy negotiating resolutions, and the dialogue and discussion warranted by the importance of the individual mandates do not take place.

Attempts to introduce new elements or to allow resolutions to better reflect current topics immediately gave rise to lengthy, difficult discussions. One example is the reference to so-called "honour killings" in both attempt to introduce a resolution on summary and arbitrary executions and the resolution on violence against women. These references activated groups of states that have not traditionally participated in the consultations on these thematic resolutions, as a result of which there was a risk that consensus could be breached on these points.

Efforts to promote the right to development are hopefully now on a more constructive track after agreement was reached on the chairmanship (Algeria) of the working group under the Commission that is to deal with this issue. The working group is to meet twice before the next session. Originally, the aim was to adopt a resolution on procedure, but the result was a resolution similar to that of last year which could be adopted by consensus. There clearly seems to be more support among western countries for this concept than before.

The concept of democracy played a more prominent role at this year's session than in previous years. As many as three resolutions on democracy were adopted: Romania's resolution on the promotion and consolidation of democracy, Brazil's resolution on democracy and racism and Cuba's resolution on promotion of the right to a democratic and equitable world order. In the debate, many states, particularly so-called "new democracies" and developing countries, focused particular attention on the development of democracy as being crucial to the enjoyment of civil and political rights.

The adoption of the Cuban resolution on a democratic and equitable world order

must be described as a new and negative initiative. The resolution contains a number of new, undefined concepts and attempts to establish new, diffuse rights. The voting showed a clear North-South pattern that reflects political more than human rights considerations.

The adoption of the resolution on human rights and human responsibilities must also be regarded as a step in the wrong direction. The resolution, which was tabled by Malaysia, concerns the responsibility of individuals in relation to human rights conventions, a basic premise that was rejected by all western countries, who fear that this will be used as grounds for imposing limitations on the rights and freedoms of individuals. The resolution was adopted by a majority of one vote.

A step forward at this year's session was Australia's resolution on human rights and good governance, which may be useful to the further development of the High Commissioner's cooperation with agencies such as the UNDP. The main challenge during the negotiations was to find a formulation which did not make a particular recipe for good governance a prerequisite for development cooperation, and which both donor and recipient countries can accept.

As regards new mechanisms, in addition to the Special Representative for Human Rights Defenders, the Commission also established a Special Rapporteur on the Right to Housing, after strong pressure from Germany, and a Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food. This was a Cuban initiative, which Norway chose to co-sponsor. Although both mandates are relevant supplements to the mechanisms of the Commission on Human Rights, they also contribute towards increasing the gap between the Commission's level of ambition and the resources available to the High Commissioner for servicing and supporting the various monitoring mechanisms.

Certain other examples of cooperation that cut across the various groups should be mentioned. This applies, for example, to Canada and Cuba's cooperation on the resolution on impunity, as a result of which only one resolution on this thematic issue was presented this year: a resolution that dealt with impunity for violators of civil and political rights as well as economic, social and cultural rights. Furthermore, Germany and India tabled a resolution on advisory services and technical cooperation. This resolution also entailed the combination of two of last year's rival resolutions. This procedure must be regarded as expedient not only in terms of substance and from a consensual standpoint, but also with a view to the large number of resolutions that the Commission now deals with.

The Commission devoted half a day in a plenary session to the theme of "Poverty and Human Rights". A panel consisting of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Secretary-General of UNCTAD, representatives of Habitat, the UNDP and UNICEF and a number of experts opened the session. There was a good rate of attendance among member countries, and a more nuanced attitude towards the concept of "rights-based development" could be noted among developing countries than before.

#### *Polarization or cooperation*

Almost nothing was heard from last year's influential gathering of the most restrictive countries in the Group of Like-Minded Countries (LMG). Inter-regional cooperation on the review of mechanisms continued to show positive results. The broad support for the resolution on human rights defenders and Romania's resolution on democracy are the clearest examples of this. Pakistan, which is still a "hardliner" on several issues, must be credited with a very positive attitude towards Norway's initiative regarding human rights defenders. Moreover, cooperation on individual resolutions with more moderate countries such as Chile, and this year India as well, increased. This trend has confirmed

the importance of consulting a broader range of countries at an early stage when negotiating resolutions. A model for cooperation based on the establishment of inter-regional core groups, which has been used to good effect in other contexts (cf. the convention on land mines) might be more important than first securing broad support within the group of western countries.

Individual resolutions are still being adopted in which North-South conflicts are clearly apparent, such as the resolutions on toxic waste, foreign debt and structural adjustment, and on a democratic, reasonable and just world order. It would be unrealistic to think that North-South conflicts can be entirely eliminated from the Commission on Human Rights.

#### *Guidelines for NGOs*

After last year's debate on the participation of NGOs, agreement was reached on amended guidelines for NGOs. Among other things, NGOs speaking as a group were accorded more time and the opportunity to make their statement at an earlier stage of the proceedings than individual NGOs. Last year's criticism also seems to have led to a review within the NGO community itself. There are still a great many NGOs who wish to take the floor, with the result that meetings are still frequently being held in the evenings and sometimes at night. Norway has supported a certain degree of reform while attaching great importance to NGO participation in the Commission.

#### *Norway's goals and results*

Norwegian priorities as regards human rights defenders and a permanent forum for indigenous issues generated positive results. During the session, furthermore, it was an overriding priority for the Norwegian delegation to seek to adopt a coherent approach to all human rights, to make respect for human rights a broader concern both within and outside the UN, and in particular to promote respect for human rights in countries in which grave, repeated violations take place.

In this respect, too, Norway is reasonably satisfied with the outcome of the session. The traditional dividing lines between North and South in human rights issues, where North is perceived as being solely concerned with civil and political rights while South focuses on economic and social rights, have been replaced by more coherent approaches. Within the circle of developing countries, there are many new democracies which emphasize respect for democracy and civil and political rights, while Norway is far from being the only industrialized country to attach importance to economic and social rights and the right to development.

Norway sought to ensure the more precise, correct use of international legal terms in a number of negotiations on resolutions, both for country-specific resolutions and for more thematic issues. Norway's efforts to secure the use of more precise international legal terminology in the texts of resolutions (for instance that human rights violations can only be carried out by states) met with general resistance. The goal was to avoid wordings whereby it may appear that parties other than states may violate human rights.

Asbjørn Eide was re-elected to the Sub-Commission by a large majority, confirming the respect he enjoys in the human rights community.

Thorbjørn Jagland was the first Norwegian foreign minister to visit the Commission on Human Rights, where he presented Norway's main submission. A growing number of foreign ministers and/or other ministers are making their country's main submission in the Commission. The trend is towards strengthening the Commission as the main forum for advancing global efforts to promote and protect human rights.

### The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights

The work of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) is partly financed from the regular UN budget, and partly by voluntary contributions. The mandate of the High Commissioner has steadily been expanded. When the Secretary General reformed the UN system in 1997, the intention was to give the Office of the High Commissioner an increasingly important role in order to integrate focus on human rights into the UN system. The expanded mandate has not been followed up by grants from the regular budget, and more than half the funds must now be provided through voluntary contributions. In 2000 Norway provided around USD 2.3 million, making it the seventh largest contributor. This support was used to finance field operations in Colombia, the Great Lakes area, Cambodia, Sierra Leone and Somalia. Funding was also provided for the UN's voluntary funds for assistance for torture victims and for thematic issues such as indigenous peoples, trafficking in persons, the rights of women, HIV/AIDS and minorities, and not least, for the preparations for the World Conference against Racism to be held in Durban, South Africa in August/September 2001.

### Monitoring agencies

While the UN Human Rights Committee ruled against Norway in two cases involving complaints by individuals in 1999, no new cases were submitted for decision in 2000. In 2000 the UN Committee for the Convention on the Rights of the Child reviewed Norway's observance of its obligations as a party to the Convention. A number of proposals concerning measures for following up the recommendations of the committee have been circulated for consultation. This applies, for instance, to the issue of the exercise of freedom of religion in relation to the subject Christian Knowledge and Religious and Moral Education in primary and lower secondary school, children's right to be heard in child custody cases, and a stronger implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child in Norwegian law.

### The Council of Europe

Every year the European Court of Human Rights pronounces a number of judgments against member countries which have not observed human rights as they are laid down in the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR). With its 41 permanent judges, the court has now increased its capacity in order to deal with the rapid growth in the number of complaints. However, there is a large backlog of cases pending judgment, a problem that will pose a considerable challenge in the years ahead. The Norwegian authorities and the other Nordic countries have pointed to the need to strengthen the budget of the European Court of Human Rights to enable it to reduce its case backlog and deal with the rapidly increasing number of new complaints received. The adopted supplementary budget for 2001 is to be covered by voluntary contributions.

The year 2000 marked the 50th anniversary of the signing of the ECHR, and the occasion was marked by a Ministerial Conference in Rome, which was attended by the Norwegian Minister of Justice. At the conference, Norway advocated considering measures to deal with the court situation, including the possibility that the solutions that had been arrived at may necessitate a reform of the convention, such as the introduction of a "screening mechanism".

In the past few years, the ECHR and the European Court of Human Rights have been supplemented by several new control mechanisms. The Council of Europe's Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CPT) has unlimited access to prisons, psychiatric clinics and other institutions in which persons are deprived of their liberty in all member countries. Other important instruments are the European Commission



MOZAMBIQUE © GY Press

Norway has contributed to the work of the UN on HIV/AIDS prevention.



against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) and the Council of Europe's Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities.

The Council of Europe's Commissioner for Human Rights, who took up his duties in 1999, supplements the work of the Court on a non-judicial basis, for instance by providing advice and information on human rights. Through his efforts in connection with the Chechnya conflict, the commissioner has proved to be a valuable addition.

The Council of Europe possesses unique expertise as regards long-term efforts to create stable democratic institutions, fundamental standards and judicial instruments. The Council's activities to promote democracy complement the work of other international organizations, particularly the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the EU and the FN. Cooperation with these organizations was further strengthened in 2000.

The Council of Europe's Committee of Ministers has established a special political mechanism to monitor member countries' compliance with their obligations as regards democracy, human rights and the rule of law. Nordic cooperation in connection with the work of the monitoring mechanism continued in 2000 within the framework of consultations prior to the meetings of the Committee of Permanent Representatives. The Nordic countries have also made joint submissions. The topics addressed at the meetings of the monitoring mechanism in 2000 were capital punishment, the police and security forces. In 2000, Norway also made a number of voluntary contributions to human rights activities under the auspices of the Council of Europe. The Council of Europe's projects in South-East Europe aimed at combating corruption and crime, strengthening local democracy, building up the media sector and developing institutions for the protection of human rights are some of the measures for which funding has been provided. Educational, cultural and social projects also received support, in addition to which support was provided for a human rights office in Chechnya.

In 2000, the European Court of Human Rights pronounced one judgment in a case in which a complaint had been lodged against Norway. The complaint concerned a series of articles in the Norwegian newspaper *Bergens Tidende* which criticized the practice of a plastic surgeon. The Norwegian Supreme Court awarded compensation to the surgeon. The European Court of Human Rights found that Norway had breached Article 10 of the ECHR relating to freedom of expression. The judgment may be found on the website of the European Court of Human Rights ([www.echr.coe.int](http://www.echr.coe.int)).

### The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE)

Austria, which took over the annual chairmanship of the OSCE from Norway in 2000, has attached priority to continuing the organization's emphasis on the human dimension. As a member of the OSCE's Chairmanship Troika in 2000, Norway has been a key consultation partner for the Chairmanship. At the Troika countries' meetings of foreign ministers and in other forums, Norway has made active efforts to continue the OSCE's work to strengthen the commitments of participating states to respect human rights and fundamental freedoms, create democratic institutions and develop the rule of law. All of these goals constitute the human dimension of the OSCE and the commitments apply equally to all participating states. It is a fundamental principle that commitments within the human dimension are not to be regarded as part of member countries' domestic affairs. The OSCE assists states that formerly had totalitarian regimes to adjust to the OSCE's common values.

Great emphasis is also placed on protecting minorities. The OSCE's High Commissioner for National Minorities (HCNM) plays a key role in this field. In

2000 Norway contributed both personnel resources to the staff of the HCNM and funding for several projects run by the HCNM such as language training for minorities and legislation on languages.

At the weekly meetings in the Permanent Council and in other OSCE forums, Norway followed up its commitment from its year as chairman by drawing attention to serious breaches of obligations within the human dimension. In the Permanent Council, the OSCE delegations in Vienna are engaged in an ongoing dialogue on follow-up activities. This dialogue is largely based on the activities and reports of the OSCE missions and institutions. There is also increasing interaction between the missions and the OSCE's Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), the High Commissioner for National Minorities (HCNM) and the Representative for Free Media.

Norway maintained its annual funding of NOK 2.5 million for the ODIHR and its project-related activities, which primarily targeted member countries in Central Asia and the Caucasus region. Norwegian funding was also provided for an independent evaluation of ODIHR projects in Central Asia. During its chairmanship year, Norway initiated a programme of human rights training for candidates for missions from Central Asia, with a view to recruiting more Central Asians to the OSCE structures. Training at a total cost of more than NOK 1 million was carried out in 2000. Several countries have indicated their interest in continuing the concept.

Assistance for the implementation of free elections is an increasingly important part of ODIHR activities. Norwegian observers participated in most of the eighteen elections monitored by the ODIHR in 2000. The seconding of election observers to the ODIHR is an important practical contribution towards ensuring that countries observe their membership obligations. Active participation as election observers also gives the Norwegian resource base additional experience of OSCE work and knowledge of conditions in member countries.

During its chairmanship, Norway focused particular attention on gender equality issues, and several measures were implemented. At the Istanbul Summit in November 1999, particularly as a result of Norwegian pressure, a resolution was adopted to draw up an action plan for gender equality issues within the OSCE. In June 2000 the Permanent Council adopted the OSCE's gender equality plan. Gender equality was also promoted through projects in the ODIHR's Gender Equality Department, which were actively supported by Norway.

Norway attaches great importance to the efforts of the Helsinki Committees to promote respect for human rights, as well as to the activities of the International Helsinki Federation for Human Rights. Norway continued to provide support for this work, contributing over NOK 3 million in 2000.

During the Norwegian chairmanship, efforts to address Roma (Gypsy) issues were strengthened. The HCNM has played a pivotal role in this respect, but Norway gives priority to broad-based participation in this work. Among other things, both Norwegian non-governmental organizations and representatives of Roma special-interest organizations received assistance enabling them to participate in the Fifth Implementation Meeting within the Human Dimension, which took place in October 2000 in Warsaw. The Romas' deteriorating financial situation was one of the main issues discussed at the meeting.

The OSCE's Representative for Free Media is a relatively new institution. Activities in 2000 were concentrated on structural censorship, tendencies towards hateful speech, "insult" laws and its influence on free media, and protection of journalists in conflict-torn areas. Norway provided financial assistance for projects under the auspices of the Representative for Free Media.

### The Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS)

The Council of the Baltic Sea States was established in 1992 and its members comprise Russia, the Baltic States, Poland, Germany and all the Nordic countries. Cooperation in the CBSS covers a wide range of topics and issues, of which democratic development is one of the most important.

The post of Commissioner of the CBSS on Democratic Institutions and Human Rights, including the rights of ethnic minorities, was established in 1994. The Commissioner is based in Copenhagen. Over the years, the Commissioner on Human Rights has presented a number of reports on democratic development and human rights issues in CBSS member states. The Commissioner and his staff deal with approximately 200 requests and complaints from individuals and groups each year.

Norway chaired the CBSS in 1999-2000. Norway's period of chairmanship concluded with a meeting of foreign ministers of CBSS member states in Bergen in June, which, among other things, expressed its recognition of the work done by the Commissioner.

In the light of the significant changes that took place in the region in the 1990s, the Council adopted a new mandate for the Commissioner according to which the Commissioner is "an instrument for promoting and strengthening democratic development in member states based on respect for human rights". The Commissioner is guided by the objectives, principles and provisions of the UN Charter and the standards of the Council of Europe, the OSCE and other international organizations.

At the same time as the mandate was amended to focus more strongly on democracy-building, a new Commissioner was appointed. Ole Jespersen, the lawyer who had held the position since it was established, was succeeded by Helle Degn from Denmark. Helle Degn, who was formerly a politician, has comprehensive national and international experience, among other things as President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly. Commissioner Degn stresses the importance of building a democratic culture and aims to contribute towards sound legislative practice in member states. The fight against organized crime, trafficking in persons and corruption are also priority areas because these problems pose a threat to the development of stable democracies and legitimate forms of government.

### The Barents Cooperation

The Barents Cooperation was established in 1993 as a binding political structure of cooperation between the Nordic countries and Russia. A primary goal of this cooperation is to contribute towards strengthening democracy and safeguarding the rule of law in the Russian part of the Barents region. The political declarations of intent are concretized in the form of cooperation on a wide range of projects across national boundaries in the region. The term "the Barents generation" is heard increasingly frequently in the Russian language. It refers to the hundreds of young Russians who, in the past five or six years, by studying and working in Nordic countries, have gained insight into the way a democratic society is organized and deals with the challenges it faces, and who are now applying their experience in everyday life in Russia.

### Other regional mechanisms

Asia is the only continent to have no regional human rights mechanism. Norway provided financial support for an independent working group within ASEAN which is making efforts to promote the establishment of a regional mechanism for human rights in Asia.

### International efforts to promote the rights of indigenous peoples

In 1993, the UN World Conference on Human Rights proposed the establishment of a permanent forum for indigenous peoples. This goal was achieved when the UN General Assembly approved the establishment of such a forum in autumn 2000. The forum, which comprises sixteen independent experts on issues relating to indigenous peoples, eight nominated by UN member states and eight appointed by ECOSOC chairmen after consultations with indigenous groups and organizations, has been given a broad mandate which, in addition to human rights issues, will also address economic, social and cultural issues and issues relating more specifically to the right to development. The forum will be directly under ECOSOC and is expected to be established in 2002.

The preparation of a declaration on the rights of indigenous peoples is proceeding within the framework of the UN Commission on Human Rights. Some progress was made at the meeting of the working group responsible for formulating a final proposal for the declaration. Due to disagreement on parts of the contents of the instructions to the Norwegian delegation to this meeting, the Sami Parliament found it impossible to participate as a member of the Norwegian delegation.



BAL KAN © Knudsen Fotoenter

In autumn 2000 the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution to establish a Permanent Forum for Indigenous Peoples. The Forum's mandate includes the right to development.

## PARTICIPANTS IN INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS EFFORTS

### NORDEM

The Norwegian Resource Bank for Democracy and Human Rights (NORDEM) was established in 1993 at the Institute for Human Rights, University of Oslo, with funds provided by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Its purpose is to respond to international requests for expert assistance. NORDEM's assignments are channelled through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and must be defined in detail beforehand. Financing is provided through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which in 2000 disbursed more than NOK 9 million for a variety of projects. In 2000, NORDEM carried out 43 projects in 21 countries and 143 persons were assigned to these projects. The assignments included election monitoring and election personnel in connection with the elections in Ethiopia, Armenia, Georgia, Guatemala, Croatia, Macedonia, Mozambique, Nigeria, Russia, Ukraine and Uzbekistan, and monitoring of the registration of candidates prior to the election in Ethiopia. Assistance was also provided for the secondment of Norwegian participants to the observer corps in East Timor and various OSCE missions, and to the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia in the Hague. The vast majority of NORDEM's activities concern election monitoring and advisory services. Election assistance is provided by a stand-by force in cooperation with the Institute for Human Rights and the Norwegian Refugee Council.

The Plan of Action for Human Rights (Report No. 21 to the Storting (1999-2000)) states that "The Government will strengthen and expand NORDEM. The Government places strong emphasis on the need for professionalization, rationalization and institutionalization of this type of assignment. At the same time, it is clear that the demand for NORDEM's services is already greater than it is possible to meet and that demand will rise in the years ahead due to the increased emphasis on human rights in development activities, the expansion of human rights dialogues and the strengthening of the multilateral mechanisms described in other parts of this Action Plan. In cooperation with NORDEM, the government will initiate an external evaluation in order to ascertain how such strengthening and expansion may best take place." The evaluation has not yet been carried out.

### The Norwegian Human Rights Fund

The Norwegian Human Rights Fund provides assistance for projects run by local, regional and/or national non-governmental organizations in countries outside

Europe and North America. Assistance is normally provided for projects that do not fall within the scope of other Norwegian aid schemes, and often for projects with a high element of "risk".

The Norwegian Human Rights Fund is owned by the Institute for Human Rights, Norwegian Church Aid, the Norwegian Confederation of Trade Unions, Norwegian People's Aid, the Church of Norway Council on Foreign Relations, the Norwegian Red Cross, Redd Barna (Save the Children Norway) and Amnesty International. The latter organization became a full member of the board at the beginning of 2001 after formerly having observer status. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs normally contributes two thirds of the Fund's resources and participates as an observer at the Fund's board meetings. In 2000 the Ministry of Foreign Affairs contributed NOK 3.2 million while contributions from the owner organizations totalled approximately NOK 1.6 million. The Fund also received a transfer of NOK 1 million from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs especially earmarked for human rights measures in Nigeria.

Assistance is primarily provided for information and educational measures in the field of human rights and supplements the work of the member organizations.

The Government's Plan of Action for Human Rights indicates a possibility for strengthening the fund by including Norwegian business and industry. After consultations with the Fund and the Confederation of Norwegian Business and Industry (NHO), however, it does not appear appropriate for the NHO to be a formal member of the Fund. Ad-hoc cooperation between the Fund and companies in individual countries may be relevant. The reader is otherwise referred to the section below on the involvement of Norwegian business and industry in the human rights sphere.

### The Human Rights House Foundation

The purpose of the Human Rights House Foundation is to enhance respect for human rights in Norway and internationally. The most important means of doing this is by bringing together strong, established local human rights organizations under the same roof to establish a new, permanent institution that can strengthen civil society and serve as a focal point for human rights activities in the country.

Today there are human rights houses in Bergen, Moscow, Oslo, Sarajevo and Warsaw, in addition to a human rights centre in Tirana. The possibility of establishing human rights houses in Albania, Kenya and Turkey is also being considered. The Human Rights House Foundation takes the initiative for new houses, helps them get established and provides advice in the start-up phase. It also builds up a network between the human rights houses, primarily to promote the exchange of information and competence-building.

The Foundation receives financial contributions from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and private individuals in Norway to establish new human rights houses in other countries.

### Support to NGOs

NGOs that work to promote human rights are important cooperation partners for the authorities. It is important to strengthen civil society in order to detect violations of human rights, disseminate information and influence the authorities. Independent and active NGOs help to enhance respect for human rights, both in Norway and in other countries. Norwegian human rights organizations share their ideas with the authorities and thus help to shape Norwegian policy in this field.

Many Norwegian organizations have cooperation partners or sister organizations in countries where human rights are violated. Insofar as possible, the



authorities channel their support to foreign organizations through Norwegian organizations with a view to encouraging cooperation and facilitating the transfer of knowledge and experience. Support is also provided to local organizations through the Norwegian embassy in the country in question. Norway also provides support to international organizations working in certain countries and regions or on specific issues, such as children's rights, freedom of expression, etc. The many organizations that received support for human rights efforts in 2000 include the Norwegian Helsinki Committee, the Norwegian Forum for Freedom of Expression, Norwegian PEN, the Norwegian Confederation of Trade Unions, the Oslo Coalition on Freedom of Religion and Belief, Forum 18, the International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs, the Minority Rights Group, Worldview Rights, International Alert, Food First Information and Action Network (FIAN), the Coalition to stop the use of Child Soldiers and Olympic Aid.

## HUMAN RIGHTS DIALOGUES

The goal of all Norwegian efforts to promote human rights is to increase respect for internationally recognized human rights standards. Human rights dialogue is one of several instruments used by Norway to achieve this goal. Human rights dialogues are based on a long-term perspective and are not expected to produce immediate results. The strength of dialogue lies in the fact that it builds networks between the parties to the dialogue – politicians, academics, non-governmental organizations and government officials. Within these networks, exchanges of information, concerns and criticism take place in an atmosphere of mutual trust that makes it possible to exert influence and promote positive changes over time.

Norway is currently engaged in human rights dialogues with three countries:

### China

In the past few years, Norway has made active efforts to involve the Chinese authorities in a structured technical and political dialogue on human rights. One aspect of this dialogue is an ongoing Roundtable Conference on the Rule of Law and Human Rights, the fourth round of which took place in Beijing in May 2000. The Norwegian delegation was headed by State Secretary Raymond Johansen and also included representatives of the Church of Norway, the Parliamentary Ombudsman, the Institute for Human Rights, the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD) and non-governmental organizations. The principles of the rule of law, freedom of religion and belief, the right to development, national monitoring of the implementation of human rights and the role of non-governmental organizations in civil society were among the main topics discussed during the fourth round of the conference. An open, fruitful discussion took place on the human rights situation in China. Bilateral political consultations between State Secretary Raymond Johansen and Deputy Foreign Minister Wang Guangya also took place in connection with the Roundtable Conference, where individual cases were taken up and possible cooperative projects in the human rights area were discussed.

With China and Canada, Norway hosted a human rights symposium in Bangkok, Thailand, in June. This was the third such conference at which crucial human rights issues were discussed with invited observers from most countries in Asia.

In December, Deputy Foreign Minister Wang Guangya headed a delegation to Oslo. Discussions took place on Norwegian-Chinese cooperation in connection with Norway's membership of the UN Security Council. Norway initiated discussions on certain issues in the human rights area in connection with this meeting.

Human rights dialogue with China was initiated in 1993. In order to make it more concrete, the Institute for Human Rights was asked to develop a China Project. The project currently comprises a number of cooperative projects financed from the Ministry's budget:

- Cooperation between Chinese universities and the Institute on the development of a curriculum and courses for instruction on human rights has been completed.
- The Institute is cooperating with a number of Chinese institutions for the purpose of promoting the rule of law, the rights of women, the rights of ethnic minorities and education in the field of human rights legislation.
- For the third time, grants were provided for students in Kunming, Yunnan Province, to promote the right of minorities to higher education. One of the students is studying in Norway.
- Assistance was provided for training Chinese judges
- A delegation comprising representatives of various religious communities visited China to establish contact and dialogue with representatives of the Chinese authorities and various religious communities.
- Assistance was provided for humanitarian projects in China, a research project on Tibetan culture and a visit from the All China Women's Federation.

Human rights issues are discussed in connection with the exchange of visits at political and senior government level. For example, human rights issues were addressed in connection with the Norwegian-Chinese authors' seminar in Oslo in September and during the visit to Norway of the Chief Justice of the Chinese Supreme Court in November.

Human rights dialogue neither precludes nor replaces Norway's possibilities for addressing the human rights situation in China in multilateral forums. Norway's interventions on human rights at the UN Commission on Human Rights in spring 2000 and at the UN General Assembly in autumn 2000 included criticism of several aspects of the human rights situation in China.

The human rights situation in Tibet has been a central topic of political discussions between representatives of the Norwegian and Chinese authorities in recent years. Human rights dialogue with China has given Norway the opportunity to raise issues relating to Tibet at a high level. The situation in Tibet was taken up during State Secretary Raymond Johansen's discussions with China's Deputy Foreign Minister Wang Guangya in connection with the Roundtable Conference in Beijing in May, and in connection with the consultations in Oslo in December. The Norwegian authorities have for several years urged the authorities in Beijing to initiate a dialogue with the Dalai Lama. Norway has also emphasized the importance of religious freedom and the preservation of cultural traditions. Individual cases are taken up on a regular basis.

Since 1993, Norway has provided substantial and increasing assistance to Tibet. In addition to projects under the auspices of organizations such as the Red Cross and Médecins Sans Frontières, in 1994 the Ministry of Foreign affairs supported a five-year agreement on extensive cooperation between the University of Tibet and four Norwegian universities. This agreement was renewed for a further five-year period in autumn 1999. A number of projects are being implemented under the Tibet-Norway Network for University Cooperation, with particular emphasis on strengthening Tibetan culture. This agreement has made it possible to bring a relatively large number of Tibetans to Norway to pursue their education and take part in research projects.

Norwegian assistance is also channelled to Tibetan refugees in India.



TIBET © Foto: Magnum / ALL OVER PRESS Norway

Norway has raised the issue of Tibet at a high level in its human rights dialogue with China.

## Turkey

Norway's involvement in efforts to promote human rights in Turkey is part of a broad-based dialogue. Norway raises the issue of the human rights situation in Turkey in bilateral contacts at both political and senior government level. Norway also takes up the human rights situation in Turkey in relevant international forums. Norway also provides assistance for cooperation between non-governmental organizations.

Turkey acquired the status of candidate to the EU in December 1999. Norway will closely follow the effect of this on the human rights situation in Turkey and will also consider whether Norway can contribute towards strengthening focus on human rights in connection with Turkey's adaptation to the EU.

Efforts are being made to further develop the dialogue on human rights established by State Secretary Bjerke during her visit to Turkey in April 1997. Prime Minister Stoltenberg raised the issue of the human rights situation in Turkey during Prime Minister Bülent Ecevit's visit to Norway on 6 June 2000. In November, Energy Minister Axelsen participated in a conference in Turkey arranged by the Confederation of Norwegian Business and Industry (NHO) and its Turkish sister organization TÜSIAD on business ethics and the social responsibility of commercial enterprises. The Turkish Energy Minister also attended this conference, as did representatives of Norwegian human rights organizations. Norway is looking forward to supporting the further development of cooperation between the NHO and TÜSIAD.

At the meeting of the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment in December, Norway initiated and facilitated a joint Nordic declaration on the situation in Turkish prisons in connection with the prisoners' uprising.

In February 2001, Foreign Minister Jagland took up human rights issues in his bilateral political discussions with Foreign Minister Cem and Prime Minister Ecevit.

The gender equality issue has increasingly been incorporated into the dialogue. Norway supports several Turkish women's and gender equality organizations.

In its cooperation with the Turkish authorities and non-governmental organizations in Turkey and Norway, Norway is particularly concerned to contribute towards improving the situation for human rights defenders, and towards improving the situation in areas such as freedom of expression, the rule of law, torture and disappearances.

Norway regards the increasingly frequent contacts between Norwegian and Turkish non-governmental organizations as an important part of the dialogue.

Norway regards the situation of the Kurds as a primary issue. Norway has emphasised that legal safeguards for and the cultural rights of the Kurds as a minority must be respected. The Turkish authorities do not consider the situation of the Kurds to be a human rights issue, since they do not recognize the Kurds as a minority.

## Cuba

Despite certain signs of liberalization, Cuba has still made considerably more progress in implementing social, economic and cultural rights than in respecting political and civil rights. Ideological regimentation still gives rise to violations of the human rights of dissidents.

The Cuban authorities attempt to ascribe all of Cuba's problems, from its economic difficulties to limited freedom of expression and human rights violations, to the US boycott of Cuba. Lifting the US boycott would undoubtedly bring about major changes in Cuba, both economic and political.

At the 55th UN General Assembly in autumn 2000, Norway voted in favour of a resolution to lift the US embargo against Cuba. In Norway's explanation of this vote, reference is made to the fact that unilateral trade measures are not considered to be an appropriate instrument for solving human rights problems.

In March 2000, Norway also voted in favour of a resolution in the Commission on Human Rights which criticized the human rights situation in Cuba.

In 1998, Norway succeeded in establishing a constructive dialogue with Cuba on human rights. This dialogue has focused on the judicial system, democracy and human rights violations. Norway is so far the only country to have succeeded in developing a dialogue with Cuba on these politically sensitive issues. In spring 2000, however, the Cubans announced that they were suspending the dialogue. This was partly a result of the Norwegian vote against Cuba in the UN Commission on Human Rights. After political discussions, the two countries have now agreed to resume the human rights dialogue at both the technical and the political level.

Human rights dialogue with Cuba primarily has a long-term perspective. The dialogue is based on networks at various levels, between politicians, academics, non-governmental organizations and, not least, between senior officials in various parts of the judicial system. Within these networks, information and criticism are exchanged in an atmosphere of mutual trust. It is hoped that increased contact may lead to positive changes. The decision to open a Norwegian embassy in Havana in summer 2001 may be viewed in this light.

## HUMAN RIGHTS AND DEVELOPMENT

### Rights-based development

The promotion of human rights and development cooperation have traditionally been regarded as separate areas of focus. Today we see clear connections between development and the human rights situation. The realization of civil and political rights may liberate forces in society that help to promote development. There is little doubt that the realization of economic, social and cultural rights improves people's quality of life and their ability to contribute towards the development of society. Development cooperation therefore largely concerns assistance to realize the rights laid down in the international human rights conventions.

The Declaration on the Right to Development, which was adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1986, also establishes important guiding principles for the way states should promote human rights. The Declaration states that every person and all peoples are entitled to participate in, contribute to and enjoy economic, social, cultural and political development.

### Guidelines

The guidelines for development cooperation that were formulated in 1999 emphasize the importance of positive instruments in efforts to promote human rights through development cooperation. The guidelines are presented in the Plan of Action for Human Rights. Priority is given to countries and organizations that demonstrate their willingness to prepare plans and set concrete objectives in the human rights sphere. The Government's Report to the Storting on Foreign Policy in 2000 emphasized that human rights are the foundation for all

development processes. In its development policy, Norway will therefore make demands on its partner countries with respect to the human rights situation and matters relating to good governance. If these conditions are not met, there may no longer be a basis for effective cooperation on poverty reduction.

The guidelines place particular emphasis on consideration for women, children and persons with disabilities in the implementation of human rights-related measures. They also stress the importance of human rights efforts being poverty-oriented.

Development cooperation is intended to help strengthen the ability of partner countries to meet their international human rights obligations. In this context, the guidelines underline the importance of institutional development.

### Rights-based development and channels for strengthening the human rights dimension in development cooperation

Development cooperation must, to a greater extent, be rights-based. Rights-based development is in accordance with the poverty orientation of Norwegian development cooperation because it entails a holistic approach that is intended to contribute towards realizing the rights of poor people. The follow-up to international conferences and reporting related to international conventions must be used actively to create a common frame of reference for the promotion of human rights. The human rights aspect will then become an integral dimension of all development cooperation. All relevant measures must be assessed from the human rights perspective and there are plans for more systematic assistance for human rights-related projects.

Through development cooperation, Norway will conduct a dialogue with partner countries on the human rights-related international conventions to which they have acceded, and help them to report on and clarify their own situation. Norway thus strengthens partner countries' knowledge of international human rights efforts and contributes towards raising awareness of how international human rights instruments may be applied in their own country. The development of expertise and capacity to deal with national challenges in the human rights area and the ability to meet international obligations are core elements of this effort.

Basing development cooperation to a stronger degree on rights is also a central element of the work Norway does through multilateral development and financing institutions. Both by virtue of its standard-setting function and in its development activities, the UN system plays a key role in promoting human rights.

In order to strengthen the UN's efforts to develop a framework for sustainable development, Norway decided in 1999 to support the new Human Rights Strengthening (HURIST) programme, which is a joint programme between the UN Development Programme (UNDP) and the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights. Through HURIST, Norway aims to strengthen the UNDP's ability to deal with human rights-related issues and test new methods for improving national capacity in this area. Assistance for this programme continued in 2000.

The World Bank and the regional development banks are increasingly stressing the connection between human rights and economic and social development. In order to achieve a more holistic approach to development issues, Norway and the other Nordic countries have advocated extending the banks' mandates. Norway has influenced the agenda and work of the development banks by participating on their executive boards, through meetings with their managements and staff, and by co-financing projects. Norway also exerts influence through periodic negotiations on basic capital replenishments. The work of the development banks is focused on combating poverty through education, health projects and other measures.



TIDL JUGOSLAVIA © Curt Carlemark/Mira/Samfoto

The development banks are increasingly emphasizing the connection between human rights and economic and social development.



In autumn 2000 the World Bank published its World Development Report, which was devoted solely to poverty reduction. The report strongly emphasizes the importance of taking the poor into account in the development process and improving their opportunities for being heard. Norway supports the World Bank's efforts to follow up the World Development Report. Both joint financing and the assignation of Norwegian experts are contributions currently being considered.

The African Development Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank are active in areas directly or indirectly related to human rights issues. Norway has supported the banks' involvement in peace processes, the modernization of judicial systems, anti-corruption measures, measures to prevent violence, and cooperation with civil society. In the case of the Asian Development Bank, good governance was one of the main themes of the development policy perspectives on which the latest capital replenishment for the Asia Fund was based. Several donor countries advocated that the bank expand its human rights efforts to include combating child labour and the introduction of minimum labour standards. Norway supported these proposals. The lack of protection of such rights is not compatible with sustainable and socially equitable economic growth.

### Certain priority areas and examples of measures

The Plan of Action for Human Rights specifies nine areas to which particular importance is to be attached, and some of these areas have been the subject of particular focus in Norwegian development cooperation for some time.

#### *Good governance and strengthening the rule of law*

In accordance with the fundamental principles of the rule of law, society must be governed according to a set of democratically adopted laws that are enforced by competent, independent judicial authorities. The rule of law lays the foundations for settling conflicts and for stability and predictability, and thereby also for social and economic development. A strong state that is subject to the rule of law, with courts of law and a police force that operate in accordance with internationally recognized standards, is an important prerequisite for respect for human rights.

Reform of judicial systems and other measures to strengthen legal safeguards are becoming increasingly important in development cooperation. So far, Norway has not been a central participant in the field of judicial reform, but Norway supports such measures in cooperation with other donors in several partner countries, including Guatemala, Bangladesh and Angola. Assistance is normally channelled through multilateral organizations or bilateral donors and is provided for constitutional reform, legislation with associated regulations and procedural rules, enhancing the expertise of the prosecuting authority, judges, lawyers and prison officers, and strengthening infrastructure and processing systems.

Supporting the rule of law through civil society is also a relevant strategy in several partner countries. By strengthening the expertise of civil society, Norway seeks to contribute towards the establishment and strengthening of government institutions and government practice. In Pakistan, Guatemala and the Palestinian Area, assistance was provided in 2000 for groups of non-governmental organizations that work particularly in the field of human rights and legal safeguards. People's access to the legal system is an important component of these efforts. In Bangladesh and Mozambique, assistance is therefore provided for legal aid schemes which give marginalized population groups advice and guidance on legal matters. They also assist clients in cases that come before the courts.

Democracy and human rights are crucial elements of good governance. Expertise and infrastructure are often deficient. In development cooperation throughout 2000 there was increasing emphasis on contributing towards strengthening efficient, just administrative practice. The Government's efforts

have, among other things, been focused on the preparation and follow-up of anti-corruption strategies. These efforts are important because corruption hinders development. The Government bases this view on the fact that in countries where the administration is efficient, transparent and just, international aid will also lead to the best results in the form of poverty reduction.

#### *Education and research*

In 2000, Norway continued to actively support the realization of the UN Declaration on the Right to Education. The ten-year review of the declaration took place in 2000.

Knowledge of human rights improves the ability to protect, respect and promote rights. Expertise is a prerequisite for effective protection of human rights at the national level. Through the programme for cooperation on research between universities in Norway and research institutions in the South (the NUFU Programme), Norway continued its efforts to strengthen research expertise in developing countries in 2000. Participation in this type of research cooperation enhances expertise and gives researchers in the South the opportunity to forge international ties and develop critical sociological research. The agreement on the NUFU Programme between NORAD and the Norwegian Council of Universities and Colleges expired in 2000 and the programme has been evaluated. The evaluation was generally extremely positive and a decision was made to continue this cooperation. A new five-year agreement will be signed in 2001.

The building of local expertise is the theme of cooperation with the Inter-American Institute of Human Rights (IIDH) in Costa Rica. In this connection, in 2000 Norway supported a regional programme aimed at strengthening the capacity of government agencies and non-governmental organizations involved in human rights education and training. Efforts are being made to develop the project into a regional programme. Norwegian assistance for the IIDH is part of an overall effort to promote human rights in this region, which until recently has been the scene of armed conflicts.

Cooperation between Pakistan and Norway on human rights education continued in 2000. It comprises a media campaign on human rights issues and measures to introduce human rights as a subject in school curricula.

In South Africa Norway supported the production of a TV series on human rights issues which sheds light and comments on the human rights-related problems most people face in their everyday lives. This project is playing an important role in efforts to improve knowledge and raise awareness among large population groups.

#### *Freedom of expression and differentiated media*

The largest single project in bilateral development cooperation in the media sector in 2000 continued to be the Zambia Programme, which comprises four institutions, the Evelyn Hone College, the Zambia Institute of Mass Communication, the Media Trust Fund and the Zambia Independent Media Association. Norwegian assistance helps to strengthen Zambia's own capacity for training journalists and technicians and to develop media companies. Norway also cooperates with international organizations in this connection.

In Mozambique Norway is contributing to a programme to support independent media. The programme includes training for journalists at the Nordic SADC Centre for Journalism, the establishment of local radio stations and support for a foundation that provides paper for local newspapers. This assistance is channelled through UNESCO.

In 2000 Norway also provided substantial assistance for Worldview International and for the Media Institute of Southern Africa, which monitors media coverage of sensitive issues and makes recommendations.

### *Women's rights*

The UN special session to follow up the World Conference on Women in Beijing, Women 2000: Gender Equality, Development and Peace for the 21st Century, was held in New York in June 2000. The final document from the special session comprises measures to strengthen the implementation of the Plan of Action from Beijing and strengthen the rights perspective in comparison with the five-year-old plan. This accords with Norway's interventions during the preparations for the special session. It should be pointed out that honour killing is mentioned for the first time in a negotiated UN document. Honour killing is condemned as a violation of human rights.

In 2000 the Government adopted a plan of action against genital mutilation. The international part of the plan comprises measures to intensify bilateral cooperation with countries in Africa to combat genital mutilation. The Government will also cooperate with organizations capable of helping immigrant girls who are taken to their parents' home country for genital mutilation and who seek assistance there.

In 2000 the Department of Women's Law at the University of Oslo cooperated with the University of Peshawar, Pakistan, on the establishment of a Department of Women's Law. The Department of Women's Law at the University of Oslo also cooperated with the Human Rights Study Centre at the University of Peshawar on human resource development in the area of women's rights and Islam. The Department of Women's Law in Oslo has been working with the University of Harare, Zimbabwe, on a regional programme on women's rights for many years.

### *Children's rights*

Efforts to promote the rights of children in Norwegian development cooperation are based on the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Plan of Action from the World Summit on Children in 1990 and the Norwegian Strategy for Development Assistance for Children of 1992 (the Strategy for Children). The Strategy for Children was evaluated in 1998, and in 1999 a working group was established to review it. In 2000 the group prepared a guideline document on Norwegian assistance for children which emphasizes that assistance for children must be based on a holistic approach to human rights. The document is based on the Strategy for Children but incorporates certain new priority areas. In the years ahead, important priority areas will be education, health and nutrition, care and early stimulation of children, registration of birth, HIV/AIDS, child labour, sale of children, sexual exploitation of children and children affected by war and conflict.

In the process prior to the UN Special Session on Children in 2001, Norway emphasizes that children's rights must provide the fundamental framework for the Plan of Action from the special session.

In 2000 the Ministry of Foreign Affairs continued to finance the Norwegian-based Childwatch International Research Network. Childwatch identifies current research needs and develops relevant research projects, including those relating to children's rights, environment and health, the impact of political and economic changes and the importance of modern ICT. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs commissioned a review of Childwatch in 2000. The evaluation was generally positive. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is considering continuing to provide support for this network.

### *Indigenous peoples*

At the UN Commission on Human Rights, Norway participated actively in 2000 in the preparation of a proposal for a declaration on the rights of indigenous peoples. After an evaluation of the Norwegian Programme for Indigenous Peoples, in 1999 a follow-up plan was prepared for activities targeting indigenous peoples in development cooperation. The follow-up plan provides that Norway, through its participation in the governing bodies of UN development agencies and develop-



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Education, health, nutrition and care are some of the priority areas in Norway's efforts to promote the rights of children.

ment banks, will contribute to sound policy and practice in matters relating to indigenous peoples. In development cooperation with priority countries, the situation of indigenous peoples will be addressed in connection with poverty orientation and in efforts to improve human rights. In order to strengthen the work of the aid administration with regard to indigenous peoples, the Norwegian Programme for Indigenous Peoples was transferred back to NORAD.

In cooperation with the Sami Parliament, Norway has supported the work of the WHO relating to the health of indigenous peoples, both in connection with the World Health Assembly and at the annual meeting of the European Region.

At its 2000 session, the UN Commission on Human Rights recommended that ECOSOC establish a permanent forum for indigenous peoples. The reader is referred to the section on the Commission on Human Rights for further information on this topic.

#### *Persons with disabilities*

Persons with disabilities are often among the poorest in developing countries. There will therefore be focus on the situation of persons with disabilities in efforts to orient development cooperation towards poverty reduction.

The aid administration's efforts in this field are based on the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' Plan for the Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities in Development. The primary goal of this plan is the social integration of persons with disabilities. In following up the plan, in 2000 NORAD formulated a working document on persons with disabilities in bilateral development cooperation. This effort will continue in 2001. NORAD cooperates with the Atlas Alliance to improve the situation of persons with disabilities in developing countries. Strengthening persons with disabilities' awareness of their rights and help for self-help are important elements of the programme.

A Nordic conference entitled Nordic Development Cooperation and the Disability Dimension. Good Practices – Challenges of Inclusion was arranged in November. The conference was planned by organizations for persons with disabilities and government authorities. In a joint communiqué, the four Nordic ministers committed themselves to following up efforts to include persons with disabilities in development cooperation, both in their own bilateral cooperation and in relation to multilateral agencies. This effort will be evaluated within five years.

#### *Employment and labour standards*

In recent years the International Labour Organization (ILO) has been undergoing a reform process in an effort to bring the organization closer to member states. This process continued to have priority in 2000. A great deal of progress has been made in defining priority tasks for individual member states. With its Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, the ILO has intensified its efforts to ensure that member states respect, promote and implement the principles laid down in the ILO's basic human rights conventions. The campaign for increased ratification of the core conventions led to a number of new ratifications in 2000. Measures to ensure the legal and practical implementation of these conventions continued.

It is an increasingly important challenge for the ILO to improve working conditions in the informal sector, where the majority of the world's poor are employed. In 2000 attention was focused on the effort to combat child labour and the role of women in working life. In December 2000, Norway ratified ILO Convention No. 182 concerning the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour. Norway supports the efforts of employers' organizations and trade unions to combat child labour. Efforts are also made to eliminate child labour by supporting education and training and by improving statistics.



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There has been strong focus on the role of business and industry in promoting democracy and human rights.



In development cooperation, the right to work is viewed in close conjunction with private sector development. In 2000 considerable efforts were made to make the industrial and commercial facility simpler and more effective. Work on issues relating to the role of business and industry in the promotion of democracy and rights in working life continued.

#### *The right to food*

In the Plan of Action adopted at the 1996 World Food Summit, states committed themselves to the task of securing their populations' right to food and halving the number of undernourished persons in the world by 2015. In 2000 Norway worked actively in international forums to promote the right to food. In the FAO's Committee on World Food Security (CFS), Norway pointed out that food security is also extremely important in efforts to combat HIV/AIDS. Norwegian experts have made important contributions in the field of human rights and nutrition. This was one of the factors that led to the agreement between the Institute for Human Rights and the Institute for Nutritional Research at the University of Oslo and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 2000 on the establishment of a research-related two-year project on the right to food as a human right.

Norway has emphasized the importance of supporting private sector development in the South, including the primary industries. The Survey of Development Cooperation Targeting the Agricultural Sector, which was prepared in 2000, reviews assistance for agriculture-related measures in development cooperation. Contributions to the international agricultural research institutes (the CGIAR centres) remained at the same high level in 2000 as in 1999 after being increased by 50 per cent from 1997 to 1998. An arrangement enabling Norwegian researchers to work at CGIAR centres was also established.

#### **Expertise**

If Norway is to play an active role in promoting human rights through development cooperation, expertise is essential. Through the Research Council of Norway, financing is provided for a major research programme on globalization and marginalization in which human rights-related research is one of several topics. Efforts are made to incorporate the human rights perspective into research that is financed under these programmes. This applies, not least, to poverty research.

In 2000 work proceeded on the "Millennium Edition" of the Human Rights Yearbook, which the Christian Michelsen Institute was responsible for editing. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs provided financial support for the Yearbook.

NORAD completed its Handbook in Human Rights Assessment – State Obligations, Awareness and Empowerment in 2000. The handbook provided the basis for comprehensive course activities. Its purpose is to strengthen human rights expertise in the aid administration.

Human rights education has for many years been an integral part of the training programme at the Foreign Service Institute. In cooperation with the Institute for Human Rights, a programme for human resource development in the field of human rights and democratization was prepared in 2000. The programme will include elements such as rights-based development, evaluation of the impact of aid projects on the human rights situation in developing countries, and human rights and the multilateral system.

Independent, national human rights institutions have been established in several of Norway's partner countries. They are normally entitled Ombudsman for Human Rights or Commission for Human Rights and are modelled on the Nordic ombudsman function. Their mandate is to monitor the human rights situation, report on human rights violations and recommend follow-up measures. The establishment of such institutions is important in the development of



national expertise on rights issues. Moreover, in fragile democracies or states with poorly developed legal systems it is vitally important for the human rights situation that there be correctives to government authority that possess a certain status and position. Norway supports Ombudsmen for Human Rights in countries such as Honduras, Guatemala and India.

## RIGHTS-BASED HUMANITARIAN AID

Improvement of the UN organization's coordination of humanitarian aid is a continuous process and remained a topical theme in 2000. Consequently, Norway always raises this issue in relevant forums and in the governing bodies of the specialized agencies.

Efforts to ensure good coordination of projects run by Norway's own non-governmental organizations and the international Red Cross system are just as important as improving the coordination of humanitarian aid through UN agencies. In order to achieve this, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs increasingly attaches political conditions to budget funds that are allocated to non-governmental organizations. They include requirements for improved coordination and closer cooperation with the agency appointed by the UN to have the main responsibility for humanitarian aid in the area in question. There is focus on vulnerable groups, such as women, children and the persons with disabilities, when funds are allocated for various projects.

## HUMAN RIGHTS AND THE PRIVATE SECTOR

Consumers, politicians and, not least, the private sector itself are concerned about the ethical requirements that should be imposed on companies that establish operations in countries where labour legislation is weak. Consumers expect companies not to use forced labour or child labour, not to discriminate against employees and not to offer jobs that are hazardous to health. The scope and content of social responsibility requirements have not been ultimately defined. A great deal of work is being done at the international level to establish voluntary standards and give companies advice and guidance as to how they can ensure that their operations are socially responsible. Many companies have formulated their own ethical guidelines. Norwegian companies have taken this challenge seriously. Work is in progress on this issue both in the Confederation of Norwegian Business and Industry (NHO) and in certain large companies. The authorities wish to contribute towards increasing awareness in business and industry and will facilitate practical cooperation and the development of mechanisms that will help companies to run their businesses in a socially responsible manner.

### KOMPakt

The work of KOMPakt, the Consultative Body for Human Rights and Norwegian Economic Involvement Abroad, involves representatives of business and industry, the trade union movement, human rights organizations, research communities and the authorities. It is a forum for raising awareness and exchanging opinions on the ethical responsibilities of the private sector when investing or engaging in other economic activities abroad.

The group has discussed topics such as companies' reporting on ethical responsibility, possible systems for independent control and verification, the responsibility of Norwegian ship-owners for working conditions in connection with the scrapping of ships in developing countries, relations with individual countries, management of the Petroleum Fund, ethical trading in the grocery sector and development policy aspects.

The working group established to define the content of the private sector's social responsibility continued its activities in 2000. The group was headed by the NHO and included representatives of all five groups taking part in KOMpakt. The report of the working group has been published in KOMpakt's series of papers in Norwegian and English and may be found on the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' website.

KOMpakt has been informed of the establishment of an Initiative for Ethical Trade by Norwegian Church Aid and the Norwegian Confederation of Trade Unions. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has provided financial support for this project.

The Plan of Action for Human Rights proposes the establishment of a pilot project to encourage the development of mechanisms for voluntary reporting, monitoring and verification of companies' practical fulfilment of their social responsibility. The ECON Centre for Economic Analysis and the Institute for Human Rights have each received funding for subsidiary projects. ECON will be working on the development of voluntary mechanisms in close contact with business and industry. The Institute will study practice in inter-governmental organizations and at the national level in various countries. The two projects will complement each other and the institutions will remain in close contact with each other. KOMpakt will be included in the follow-up to the projects.

### The OECD's voluntary guidelines for multinational enterprises

The OECD's Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises comprise recommendations from the governments of the OECD countries concerning how companies that have established operations in other countries should conduct themselves in relation to legislation and other conditions in those countries. The guidelines are voluntary recommendations that cover various areas of company activities. They are part of the OECD Declaration on International Investments and Multinational Enterprises adopted in 1976.

In June 1998 it was decided that the guidelines would be revised. The revised guidelines were adopted at the OECD Council of Ministers in June 2000 by the thirty OECD countries and the observer countries Argentina, Brazil and Chile. Negotiations on the revision took place in dialogue with representatives of business and industry, employees and non-governmental organizations, who have given their support to the new guidelines.

New elements in the revised guidelines include:

- Specific reference to human rights in the chapter on general political guidelines
- An updated chapter on employment which covers the four "core labour standards" set out in the ILO Declaration adopted in 1998.

The revised guidelines have been divided into chapters covering various areas of company activities. The chapters are:

- General political guidelines
- Information
- Employee relations
- Environment
- Corruption
- Consumer interests
- Science and technology
- Competition
- Taxation

The institutional framework for the guidelines consists of two bodies, the National Contact Point and the OECD Committee for International Investments and Multinational Enterprises (CIME).

The task of the National Contact Points is to inform, process enquiries and discuss with interested parties all matters covered by the guidelines so that they may contribute towards solving any problems. The Norwegian Contact Point is a cooperative body comprising representatives of several ministries, employees (LO) and business and industry (NHO).

The task of the CIME is to organize exchanges of opinion on matters covered by the guidelines and on lessons learned from their implementation. Such exchanges of opinion take place regularly or at the request of an associated country. The Committee invites the OECD's Business Industry Advisory Committee and the OECD's Trade Union Advisory Committee (TUAC) and other non-governmental organizations to express their opinions on matters covered by the guidelines.

### Labour standards in the ILO

The ILO has been undergoing a process of reform in recent years. Its purpose is to bring the organization closer to member states, and this issue had high priority in 2000. A great deal of progress has been made in defining priority tasks for individual member states. The ILO has intensified its efforts to ensure that member states respect, promote and implement the principles laid down in the ILO's basic human rights conventions by adopting the Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work. The campaign to increase ratification of the ILO's core conventions led to a number of new ratifications in 2000. Measures to ensure legal and practical implementation of the conventions continued. One of the organization's increasingly important challenges is to improve working conditions in the informal sector, where the majority of the world's poor are employed. A great deal of attention was focused on the effort to combat child labour and the role of women in working life in 2000.

In December, Norway ratified ILO Convention No. 182 concerning the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour. Norway supports the efforts of employers' organizations and trade unions to combat child labour. Efforts are also made to eliminate child labour by supporting education and training and by preparing statistics.

### Labour standards in the WTO

The primary function of the WTO is to ensure that world trade is not based on purely arbitrary factors but on a set of common rules. These rules cover many fields, including the main principles for non-discriminatory trade in goods and services, protection of immaterial rights and the settlement of disputes.

Since the multilateral trading system cannot be viewed in isolation from broader economic and social processes, Norway has in recent years sought to initiate a dialogue on labour standards in the WTO. Its purpose has been to gain acceptance of the view that the trade regimes of member states must to a greater extent be based on fundamental rights. Norway emphasizes the importance of ensuring that trade regimes all over the world not only aim at promoting increased economic prosperity but also pay greater attention to improving social conditions. Norway plays a proactive international role in these efforts.

Although labour standards have primarily been an ILO concern, Norway has sought to place this issue on the WTO agenda since before the WTO's first Ministerial Conference in Singapore in December 1996. The Declaration adopted at the Singapore conference established that WTO members undertake to respect fundamental labour standards, but also that labour standards are the responsibility of the ILO.

Norway proposed that fundamental labour standards be mentioned in the Final Declaration adopted by the Ministerial Conference in Seattle in December 1999 and that a reference to labour standards be included in the mandate for the new round of negotiations that is planned.

However, the discussions in Seattle revealed that developing countries still unanimously and clearly oppose the inclusion of labour standards in the WTO's work programme. Developing countries fear that the industrialized countries' initiative aimed at linking trade and labour standards will limit the developing countries' market access and hamper their social and economic development. They also argue that the debate on labour standards is merely an attempt to take from countries where production costs are low the comparative advantage of low wages. Their determined resistance to introducing labour standards into the WTO agenda is, not least, due to the fact that the WTO is a rule-based system that permits trade sanctions as an instrument against contraventions of the rules.

Norway wishes to ensure that the debate on the links between trade/economic development and social standards/labour standards is further developed in the WTO. In consultation with other countries, Norway wishes to try to contribute towards reducing the differences and finding constructive solutions for handling the connection between economic growth and social issues.

Since the Ministerial Conference in Seattle, several industrialized countries have sought to put labour standards in a broader framework. For example, the EU has proposed discussing the connection between economic and social development and wishes, in this context, to involve institutions such as the World Bank, the IMF and the UNDP as well as the ILO, the WTO and UNCTAD. Labour standards will continue to be a crucial issue. Norway has supported this solution as a viable way out of a gridlocked situation.

## SPECIAL PRIORITY AREAS

### Children

#### *ILO Convention No. 182 concerning the Worst Forms of Child Labour*

ILO Convention No. 182 concerning the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour was adopted on 17 June 1999. The Convention is an important supplement to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and the ILO Convention concerning Minimum Age for Admission to Employment. It is expected to be a useful instrument in the fight against hazardous child labour. Norway became a party to the Convention in December 2000.

#### *Optional Protocol to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child on the prohibition against participation in armed conflict of children under 18 years of age*

In May 2000 the UN General Assembly adopted an optional protocol to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child which raises the age limit for recruitment of children in war from 15 to 18 years of age. Norway made an active contribution to the formulation of the optional protocol. Norway supported the work of the Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers, which is a group comprising a number of international organizations. With others, such as the UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, Olara Otunnu, the Coalition played an important role in the preparation of the optional protocol. Norway signed the optional protocol in June 2000 and the process of necessary amendments to national legislation prior to ratification is under way. Norway is expected to become a party to the Convention in summer 2001. The international goal is to achieve ten ratifications by the first anniversary of the adoption of the optional protocol and fifty before the UN Special Session on Children in September 2001. The protocol will enter into force three months

after ten states have ratified it. At the beginning of 2001, it had been signed by 75 states and ratified by three.

In 2000 Norway supported a number of international and regional conferences on children in war. The first took place in Accra, Ghana, in April and another in Winnipeg, Canada in September, where an agenda for children in war was adopted. Norway provided financial support for a follow-up study to Graca Machel's report on children in war that was presented at the Winnipeg conference. An unusually large number of youth representatives took part in the conference. With Norway's support, Redd Barna (Save the Children Norway) arranged a conference in Kampala, Uganda, for the Great Lakes region in December. Its purpose was to mobilize regional players to address the issue of children in armed conflict.

*Optional Protocol to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography*

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child contains certain provisions relating to the prohibition of sexual exploitation of children, but it was widely agreed that more detailed regulations were required. After six years' work and long negotiations, in May 2000 the UN General Assembly adopted an Optional Protocol to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography. The protocol contains provisions relating to punishability, jurisdiction and the extradition of criminals. The terms "sale of children", "child prostitution" and "child pornography" are defined. Provisions relating to preventive efforts, including information, and assistance for children who are the victims of sale or sexual exploitation have an important place in the protocol, and there is emphasis on international cooperation.

Norway participated actively in the negotiations and signed the optional protocol in June 2000. The necessary amendments are being made to national legislation and it is anticipated that Norway will be able to sign the optional protocol in the first quarter of 2001.

*UN Commission on Human Rights*

Under the agenda on the rights of the child, Norway emphasized the importance of topics such as children's right to participate, girls' rights, children in war, the sale of children, child labour, and children and the media. The work associated with the adoption of the optional protocols to the Convention on the Rights of the Child came in addition to this.

*Monitoring bodies*

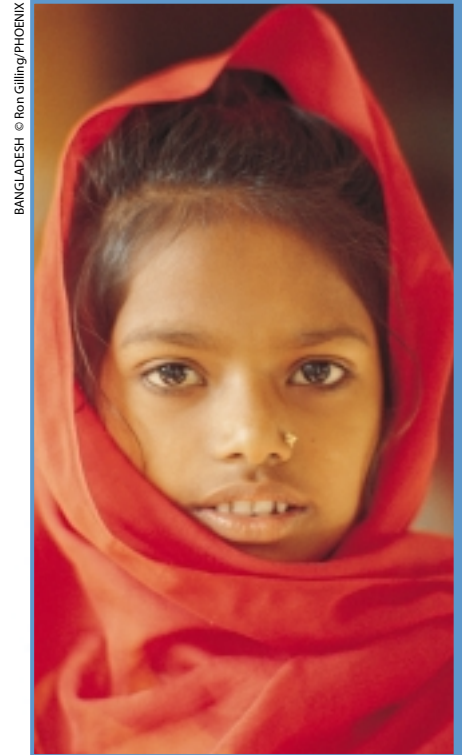
In 2000, the UN Committee on the Convention on the Rights of the Child reviewed Norway's compliance with its obligations as a party to the Convention. A number of proposed measures to follow up the recommendations of the Committee have been distributed for consultation. They include the question of exercise of religious freedom in relation to the subject Christian Knowledge and Religious and Ethical Education in primary and lower secondary schools, children's right to be heard in custody cases and stronger incorporation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child into Norwegian legislation.

*The Norwegian Strategy for Development Assistance for Children*

The Norwegian Strategy for Development Assistance for Children, which was published in 1992 and provides guidelines for Norwegian development assistance, was evaluated in 1997-98. It was concluded that the document does not focus sufficiently on rights. As a result of this evaluation, a new document has been prepared on Norwegian development assistance for children.

*Follow-up to the World Summit for Children*

As a follow-up to the World Summit for Children, which took place in 1990, the



BANGLADESH © Ron Gilling/PHENIX

There was focus on efforts to combat child labour in 2000. Support for education is an important instrument in these efforts.



UN Secretary-General has decided that a Special Session on Children will be held in September 2001. The purpose of the special session is to evaluate what has been achieved in the 1990s. Norway has participated actively in the preparations for the special session.

#### *Child labour*

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs provides earmarked contributions to UNICEF. NOK 169 million was allocated for a programme that supported primary education for girls in Africa in the period 1996-2000. NOK 200 million has been allocated for the second phase of the programme, which will be implemented from 2001-2003. The programme has made good progress and there are many indications that it has influenced other, similar initiatives. For example, the UN Secretary-General recently asked UNICEF to head a ten-year joint UN initiative on education for girls. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs also supports special programmes to combat child labour in Nicaragua and the Philippines.

#### *The World Bank*

Norway makes active efforts to ensure that more attention is paid to the situation and rights of children at the World Bank. Norway has provided support for the development of programmes targeting pre-school-age children. In 2000 Norway's contributions for these World Bank programmes totalled approximately NOK 4 million.

#### *Cooperation*

Cooperation between the ILO, UNICEF and the World Bank with a view to improving the collection of data, analysis, research and expertise relating to child labour, which began in 1999, is now bearing fruit. These organizations emphasize that cooperation prevents overlapping and leads to more efficient utilization of knowledge and resources. Donors take a positive view of cooperation between the UN agencies and the World Bank.

### **Capital punishment**

All Norwegian legal provisions relating to the death penalty were abolished in 1979.

Capital punishment is not prohibited under the European Convention on Human Rights or the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, but a prohibition against the death penalty is laid down in separate optional protocols which are binding on the countries that have acceded to them. Norway is a party to both protocols.

The Government is opposed to all forms of capital punishment and regularly states its opposition to the use of such punishment. The Norwegian authorities take up the issue of use of the death penalty on a bilateral basis with states that apply the death penalty and in multilateral forums such as the UN, the OSCE and the Council of Europe.

At the annual session of the UN Commission on Human Rights, Norway co-sponsored a resolution on capital punishment which requests states that still use the death penalty to establish a moratorium on executions with a view to total elimination of the death penalty at a later date. Norway has also supported several EU declarations on capital punishment.

Financial support has been provided for projects that focus on capital punishment.

### **Women**

Norway has for many years made active efforts to improve the situation of women and strengthen gender equality, both nationally and internationally. Important forums in this area include the UN General Assembly, the UN

Commission on the Status of Women, the UN Commission on Human Rights, the UN specialized agencies and the development banks. Gender equality is also important in development cooperation.

Through submissions on several occasions, Norway has tried to persuade more countries to ratify the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the related optional protocol of 1999. Norway was also instrumental in the inclusion of a reference to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women in the negotiations on a political declaration from the UN Special Session on the follow-up to the World Conference on Women in Beijing. In the negotiations on the final document from the Special Session, women's human rights were a central issue, and it is the first time that honour killing is mentioned in a UN document. In the final document, honour killing is condemned as a violation of human rights.

At the 54th General Assembly of the UN, a resolution was proposed for the first time on combating honour killing. Norway made efforts to ensure that the text focused strongly on human rights.

The Government's Plan of Action against Genital Mutilation includes international measures, and at the multilateral level Norway made substantial contributions to UNICEF and UNFPA. Support was also provided through FOKUS, an umbrella organization for Norwegian women's organizations.

The Government has supported the establishment of a liaison and information centre in Pakistan for women with ties to Norway.

*The Protocol to prevent, suppress and punish trafficking in persons, especially women and children, supplementing the UN Convention on Transnational Organized Crime*

Negotiations on the UN Convention on Transnational Organized Crime and its optional protocols on trafficking in persons and smuggling of migrants, respectively, were completed in autumn 2000. Norway has participated in the negotiations, which began in 1999. The optional protocol on trafficking in persons supplements the main convention by providing more detailed rules for combating transnational organized crime in the form of trafficking in persons. The purpose of the protocol is to combat trading in human beings, particularly women and children, and to protect and help the victims of such trade.

### Racism

In 2000, Norway's involvement in international efforts to combat racism were primarily reflected in the preparations for the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance, which is to take place in Durban, South Africa, in August-September 2001.

Preparations for the World Conference are based at the UN Commission on Human Rights and headed by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (HCHR), Mary Robinson.

In 2000 the UN arranged expert seminars and regional preparatory conferences, which presented their submissions for the final declaration and plan of action from the World Conference. Mary Robinson has been requested to prepare drafts of these documents. Under the leadership of the High Commissioner, informal consultations were also held in which countries and non-governmental organizations participated.

The UN's first preparatory meeting took place in May 2000 in Geneva. The regional preparatory conference for Europe was held at the Council of Europe in October 2000.



COLOMBIA © Curt Carlemark/Mira/Samfoto

Norway has for many years been making active efforts, in various UN fora and elsewhere, to strengthen gender equality and improve the situation of women.

Responsibility for the Norwegian preparations for the European Conference rested with the Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development, which appointed representatives from the Directorate of Immigration to represent Norway in the Technical Working Group for the European Conference. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs also attended the meetings of the Technical Working Group.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is responsible for coordinating further preparations for Norway's participation at the World Conference in 2001. In order to ensure that the preparatory work was broadly based, in September 2000 a National Preparatory Committee was established, headed by State Secretary Raymond Johansen. Seventy institutions, organizations and ministries are represented on the Committee.

A Working Committee established in December 2000 and headed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is assisting the Preparatory Committee. The Working Committee comprises representatives of the Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development, the Directorate of Immigration, the Antiracist Centre and the Centre for Combating Ethnic Discrimination. In Norway, the Antiracist Centre coordinates the inputs and participation of non-governmental organizations in connection with the World Conference with financing provided by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The Antiracist Centre works with the Centre for Combating Ethnic Discrimination to disseminate information about the conference, in cooperation with the UN Association, the Norwegian Union of Teachers and others.

In the preparatory process, the High Commissioner has emphasized that the conference must look ahead and be action-oriented. So far, the following main topics have been included on the conference agenda:

- Sources, causes, forms and contemporary manifestations of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance.
- Victims of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance.
- Measures of prevention, education and protection aimed at the eradication of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance at the national, regional and international levels.
- Provision of effective remedies, recourse, redress, [compensatory] and other measures at the national, regional and international levels.

Norway has made efforts to include a gender equality perspective and an indigenous peoples' perspective. Norway and Canada have taken the initiative for a youth arrangement prior to the conference, in connection with the non-governmental organization forum in Durban.

The UN budget for the conference is USD 10 million. In 2000 Norway contributed approximately USD 350,000. A similar amount was contributed to South Africa as host country for the conference.

### Freedom of religion and belief

The Government has given priority to efforts to promote freedom of religion and belief. Norway was co-sponsor of a resolution in the UN Commission on Human Rights and the UN General Assembly that condemns all forms of discrimination and intolerance based on religion or belief. In 2000 the title of the Special Rapporteur was changed to Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion or Belief. This change will apply from the date the mandate is renewed in 2001.

The Government has provided financial support for the Oslo Coalition for Freedom of Religion and Belief, including its visit to China, and for the project activities of non-governmental organizations.

## Torture

The use of torture is prohibited pursuant to two special conventions elaborated by the UN and the Council of Europe in 1984 and 1987 respectively, but this also follows from the general human rights conventions. The conventions forbid all use of "Torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment". In this context, torture is defined as an action whereby "severe pain or suffering, whether physical or mental, is intentionally inflicted on a person" to obtain information or confessions, punish, intimidate or coerce, or for reasons of discrimination of any kind, when such pain is inflicted by or with the consent or acquiescence of a public official or other person acting in an official capacity. This prohibition is absolute. There can be no question of possible worthy causes, such as averting an act of terrorism. Nor does the existence of a consent to the action give absolution from responsibility.

In Norway, torture is also prohibited under the Constitution, and Norway has traditionally made active efforts, both nationally and internationally, to ensure the physical integrity and personal safety of the individual. Despite these efforts, Norway has been criticized by both the Council of Europe's Committee for the Prevention of Torture and the UN Committee against Torture for prolonged use of police cells and isolation of remand prisoners.

## NORWAY'S EFFORTS TO PROMOTE HUMAN RIGHTS IN INDIVIDUAL COUNTRIES

### Europe

The human rights situation in **South-Eastern Europe** in 2000 improved somewhat in comparison with the previous year. Among other things, the extremely positive political developments in Croatia and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, where democratic governments assumed power, made a strong contribution to this improvement. However, the newly elected governments will need both time and international assistance to raise human rights standards in the two countries to an acceptable level. Norway contributes to the democratization effort in these countries through measures that strengthen public institutions and civil society. Despite the progress made in reforming the judicial systems and police forces in the region, however, much remains to be done in these areas, particularly in Kosovo, Albania and Bosnia-Herzegovina. The Norwegian authorities give very high priority to projects in this sector. Among other things, the Norwegian chairmanship of the Stability Pact for South-Eastern Europe Working Table III on Security Issues has placed great emphasis on such matters. Relations between ethnic Slavs and ethnic Albanians in Macedonia were still tense in 2000. It is important that the Macedonian authorities demonstrate a somewhat more accommodating attitude to the minority rights of the country's ethnic Albanian population, including language rights.

However, one of the prerequisites for respect for human rights is a willingness to address the war crimes that were committed in connection with the war in the Balkans. In 2000 Norway continued to support the work of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia to investigate and prosecute human rights violations in the region.

Most of the large number of Kosovo-Albanian refugees who arrived in **Albania** in 1999 had returned to their homes by the beginning of 2000. Consequently, Norwegian humanitarian aid to this country was phased down. Norway's involvement in Albania in 2000 focused on cooperative measures in the field of institutional development, with emphasis on the judicial and police sector. Widespread lawlessness, combined with deficient training and remuneration for the police, judges and other employees in the judicial sector, adds to the deterioration of the general human rights situation in the country. Women and



children are particularly vulnerable. Norway supported projects to help women who were the victims of violence and a more general project for children in 2000, including efforts in the education sector. As a reflection of weak institutions in the judicial sector, problems relating to trafficking in persons appear to be increasing. In 2000 Norway continued to cooperate with the office of the Director General of Public Prosecutions in Albania with a view to modernizing and strengthening the prosecuting authority. Parallel with this, Norway continued to support the Multinational Advisory Police Element (MAPE) of the Western European Union.

Respect for human rights in Bosnia is still unsatisfactory, although slight progress is being made. It takes time to build institutions and a civil society capable of protecting the human rights of the population. Norway makes an active contribution towards supporting institutional development in the public sector at the national level and in the two entities, the Federation and Republika Srpska. Norway continued to provide assistance for reform of the judicial system and the police force in **Bosnia-Herzegovina** in 2000. In this connection, Norwegian police personnel were seconded to the UN International Police Task Force (IPTF) and Norway made an active contribution to reform efforts under the auspices of the OSCE delegation to Bosnia and the Office of the High Representative (OHR). Assistance for the Human Rights House in Sarajevo continued. Norway supported the involvement of Bosnian civil society in dialogue and reconciliation efforts by substantially increasing Norwegian efforts to establish Nansen Dialogue Centres in Mostar, Sarajevo and Banya Luka. Funding was also provided for the Helsinki Committee in 2000. Norway supported the repatriation of refugees, both in the form of aid for reconstruction and legal aid, particularly for minority refugees.

The election of a democratic coalition government in January 2000 and a new democratic president in February the same year marked a turning point in **Croatia's** willingness to respect internationally recognized human rights. Norway welcomed the election result and expressed its intention to support the new government's reform programme. The election result was a spur to reform efforts in sectors associated with human rights. The newly elected coalition government made a commitment to cooperate with the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, and this was followed up by concrete measures. Throughout 2000, the cooperation of the Croatian authorities with the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia continued to be extremely controversial in many parts of the Croatian population. Permitting the return of ethnic Serbian refugees was another controversial reform measure. Despite reasonably good progress in the repatriation of refugees, there is still, in some cases, strong local resistance in certain municipalities. Norway supported the return of minorities to Croatia in 2000. Norway also contributed towards the provision of legal advice for refugees, the secondment of police personnel to the OSCE Police Force in Eastern Slavonia, and the establishment of a Nansen Dialogue Centre in Osijek. Norway continued to make an active contribution to the OSCE delegation in Croatia. Norway also continued to support the Croatian Helsinki Committee in 2000.

Developments in **Macedonia** in 2000 were characterized by "normalization" in comparison with the refugee situation in 1999. Accusations of excessive use of force by the police and continued complaints of discrimination from the country's ethnic Albanian minority continued. Norway continued to support human rights measures in cooperation with the Nansen Dialogue Centre in Skopje and through the Helsinki Committee's efforts to map the human rights situation in the country. Assistance was also provided for the Norwegian Ombudsman for Children's visit to Skopje for discussions with the Macedonian authorities. Norway continued to support the OSCE delegation in Macedonia in 2000.



The human rights situation in **the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia** in 2000 was difficult up to the time of the democratic political upheaval that took place in Serbia in September. The peaceful democratic revolution marked a new epoch in the Yugoslavian authorities' willingness to conform to international human rights standards. Norway actively supported democratic forces in the period prior to the election, and also in its wake. Norway implemented various measures to support the independent media and civil society, including the Serbian Helsinki Committee and continued support for the Nansen Dialogue Centre in Belgrade. Norwegian contributions towards free legal aid for refugees continued in 2000.

The human rights situation in **Kosovo** was still extremely difficult in 2000, primarily for minority groups. The use of force and the harassment of ethnic Serbians and Roma people (Gypsies) in Kosovo was widespread throughout the year, despite the efforts of KFOR and UNMIK. However, certain progress was made towards establishing a new police force and judicial authority. Norway focused on supporting the development of functioning, local police structures, among other things by supporting the OSCE-run Kosovo Police Service School and seconding Norwegian police personnel. Norway also supported human rights measures under the auspices of the UN through UNMIK and the Helsinki Committee, and efforts to document violations of human rights committed during the Kosovo conflict. Norway continued to support the Nansen Centre in Pristina.

In **Montenegro**, the human rights situation was unchanged from 1999. Norway continued to support the Montenegrin Helsinki Committee and the Nansen Dialogue Centre in Podgorica. Measures were implemented to support independent media and democratization efforts in the republic.

The situation in **Chechnya** continued to give cause for concern in 2000. Like the rest of the international community, Norway is closely monitoring events. This issue has been raised on a bilateral basis with the Russian authorities on several occasions. Norway has also participated in the debate on this issue in international forums, such as the UN Commission on Human Rights, the Council of Europe and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe. At the 56th session of the UN Commission on Human Rights, Norway was co-sponsor of the resolution on Chechnya.

Norway provided NOK 24 million for Chechnya-related measures in 2000, primarily emergency relief through Norwegian and foreign non-governmental organizations, the UN and the Red Cross. Many of these programmes also include human rights elements, such as help for children traumatized by war, the protection of civilians and prisoners, and information on international humanitarian law. The work being carried out by experts from the Council of Europe at the office of the Russian President's Special Representative for Human Rights in Chechnya is partially financed by Norway.

### Central Asia

The human rights situation in the five Central Asian countries continues to give cause for concern, particularly in **Turkmenistan** and **Uzbekistan**. Norway has repeatedly raised the issue of human rights in the OSCE, both in the organization's forums and bilaterally with countries in the region. In both 1999 and 2000, security in the region was threatened by militant groups who invaded Uzbekistan and **Kirghizstan** in an attempt to destabilize the situation. The leaders of all five countries have, in this connection, pointed to religious extremism spreading from neighbouring countries as one of the main threats to the stability of the region. This perceived threat is also used to justify attacks on oppositional and religious groups. In 2000 Norway provided NOK 10 million for various humanitarian measures and human rights projects in the region, mainly channelled

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In relations with Afghanistan, there is strong emphasis on human rights, particularly women's lack of rights to education, health and work outside the home.

through the UN system and the Red Cross. In the sphere of human rights, the most important projects financed by Norway were a UNDP programme Building Capacity of Women's Organizations in Kazakhstan, the assignment of an NGO Coordinator for the Central Asian countries and a course on human rights for representatives of all five countries under the auspices of NORDEM and the OSCE.

### Asia and Oceania

The human rights situation in **Afghanistan** is extremely serious, particularly as regards women's access to education, health services and employment outside the home. Reports on the use of child soldiers and massacres of civilians in connection with military actions in autumn 2000 gave cause for serious concern.

Norway finances a special post of Human Rights Adviser through the United Nations Development Programme to gain information about the situation in Afghanistan. Otherwise, Norway participates actively in the Afghanistan Support Group (ASG), which focuses strongly on human rights. Human rights and the situation of women are among the ASG's main topics in its dialogue with the parties to the conflict. A number of approaches were made to the Taliban leadership after they imposed further limitations on women's right to participate in working life in summer 2000. The Norwegian delegation placed strong emphasis on these issues at the Afghanistan Support Group meeting in Montreux, Switzerland, in December 2000. Norwegian assistance is also provided for human rights-related measures through the UN system and Norwegian non-governmental aid organizations.

Support for human rights and democratic development is one of three priority areas in Norway's development cooperation with **Bangladesh**. On the basis of this cooperation, there is a desire to prepare a strategy for Norwegian assistance for human rights and democratic development. The strategy is expected to be approved in the first half of 2001. Since the situation for women is difficult in Bangladesh, Norwegian assistance has been concentrated on the women's and gender equality perspective in development cooperation.

Assistance for human rights totalled NOK 17.6 million in 2000. These initiatives and projects have included support for:

- A number of non-governmental organizations engaged in educational measures for women in the human rights area. They apply particularly to trafficking in women and children, sexual abuse and violence against women. Several of these organizations also offer free legal aid and promote and protect women's human rights.
- Measures to promote the rights of persons with disabilities.
- The general information activities of non-governmental organizations relating to democracy and human rights.

In its ongoing dialogue with the authorities, Norway has expressed its concern about the general human rights situation, particularly the exercise of violence in connection with growing political differences. Norway has also expressed concern about the situation as regards child labour and trafficking in women and children. At donor meetings and elsewhere, Norway has deplored the rise in corruption and the absence of law and order. The apparent lack of political willingness to implement political reforms has also been pointed out.

In autumn 2000 a group of parliamentarians from **Bhutan** was invited to Norway. The delegation came to Norway in March 2001. The purpose of the visit was to show how democracy functions in Norway at both national and local levels.

Reports of serious, systematic human rights violations in **Burma** continued throughout the year, despite the efforts of the Burmese political opposition,



BANGLADESH © EPA/SCANPIX

In its dialogue with Bangladesh, Norway has expressed concern about child labour, trafficking in women and children, and violence in connection with political differences.

Burmese groups in exile and the international community. The military regime's suppression of the opposition party, the National League for Democracy, appears to have increased during the year. Aung San Suu Kyi and other central opposition politicians were held under house arrest from September. It is estimated that there are more than 1,500 political prisoners in the country. The regime's abuse of ethnic minorities, including forced migration and forced labour, continued to lead to a rise in the number of refugees. At the end of the year, there were some 130,000 registered refugees in camps in Thailand. The UN Special Envoy reported in autumn 2000 that discussions had commenced between representatives of the regime and Aung San Suu Kyi. At the end of the year, these discussions had not resulted in any concrete improvements in the situation.

Norway's policy towards Burma is based on expressed criticism of the regime's excesses, political support for the opposition and humanitarian aid for refugees in Thailand. Norwegian companies are urged not to invest in or trade with Burma, and not to arrange tourist visits to Burma. An arms embargo has been imposed, and Burma is excepted from the GSP preference scheme. Moreover, Burmese officials have been refused visas. This has largely been in accordance with the stance of the EU. Norway was co-sponsor of the UN Commission on Human Rights' resolution on Burma in 2000 and the resolution in the UN General Assembly. Norway has also supported the EU declarations on the situation in Burma. Norway has expressed political support for the efforts of the UN Special Envoy to establish a political dialogue.

Norway has remained in close contact with the democracy movement in Burma and with the Burmese government in exile and associated organizations. The situation in Burma has also been taken up with the authorities of other countries, among other things through approaches to the authorities in the ASEAN capitals, who have been asked to use their influence in Rangoon to encourage the regime to initiate a national reconciliation and democratization process, and to start a dialogue with Aung San Suu Kyi.

The situation in Burma is closely followed by the Norwegian public at large and a number of non-governmental organizations. An active exile community is involved in matters relating to Burma. Norwegian parliamentarians seek to intensify political pressure on the military regime by participating in the international network PD Burma.

Norwegian assistance for the **Philippines** has mainly been provided through non-governmental organizations (Caritas, Adoption Forum, Ma-Ma's Hope Haven, Norwegian Church Aid, the Salvation Army and others). Norway has supported a UNDP programme aimed at developing peace and democracy on Mindanao and various UNICEF projects targeting children and efforts to combat child labour. The Government has supported various projects run by the Norwegian Confederation of Trade Unions aimed at strengthening trade union rights in the Philippines for several years.

Last year, the Norwegian authorities supported a project under the auspices of the non-governmental organization Philrights. The project was completed in December and has contributed towards mapping the human rights situation in the country.

With several EU countries, Switzerland and Canada, Norway financed a human rights seminar in Cebu City last year, organized by the University of the Philippines. Its purpose was to shed light on matters relating to capital punishment and encourage public debate on this issue.

The Norwegian authorities support a regional human rights project, headed by the prestigious Ateneo University in Manila, which is working to establish a regional human rights mechanism within ASEAN.



BURMA © John Einar Sandvold/SCANPIX

Norway has been in close contact with the democracy movement in Burma. Through the ASEAN countries, Burma has been urged to promote democratization and initiate a dialogue with Aung San Suu Kyi.



In 2000 Norway lifted the limitations on development cooperation that were introduced after **India's** nuclear tests in 1998. The foundations have now been laid for a resumption of government-to-government development cooperation with India.

Norway has provided assistance for measures to combat child labour in India. Efforts are concentrated on five educational projects under the auspices of local non-governmental organizations and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The embassy has prepared a strategic document on child labour, the main priorities of which are awareness raising, network building, research and documentation. The Norwegian Human Rights Fund also supported several non-governmental organizations in India in 2000.

With the historic election of a new national assembly in June 1999, **Indonesia** is in the process of establishing itself as the third largest democracy in the world. The government is facing serious challenges in many areas, including democracy and human rights.

Human rights issues play a central role in the government's efforts to establish democratic governance throughout the country, a process which also has regional significance. Indonesia has an influential position in South-East Asia, not least in connection with the development of human rights in the ASEAN countries.

As a result of poverty, ethnic tensions and religious differences, Indonesia is suffering from widespread social unrest. The secession of East Timor in 1999 has led to demands for independence from other provinces, particularly in Aceh in the far north of the island of Sumatra, but also in the rich province of Irian Jaya in the south-east of the country.

The establishment of national commissions of investigation in autumn 1999 to investigate claims of human rights violations by the Indonesian authorities in East Timor and Aceh have led to demands that those responsible be brought to justice. Although the country adopted new human rights legislation in November 2000, which provides for the establishment of special human rights tribunals, the legal process is still at the initial stage. The main reasons for this are the slow functioning of the bureaucracy and the courts, and the authorities' general lack of knowledge of how they are to follow up their human rights obligations.

Norway has on several occasions pointed out that the Indonesian authorities should be given the opportunity of pursuing and clarifying these issues themselves before possible international intervention is considered.

Both Indonesia and Norway wish to cooperate more closely on human rights issues. In the Government's Plan of Action for Human Rights, Indonesia is named as one of the countries with which it is appropriate to enter into a human rights dialogue.

Norway has previously pointed out that such dialogue must be based on mutual respect and equality, and seeks to ensure that Indonesia receives support for the development of democratic governance and the rule of law.

The Indonesian authorities have shown considerable interest in cooperating with Norway on human rights in order to develop national expertise and regulations and strengthen the judicial system, the prosecuting authorities, non-governmental organizations and technical institutions in order to meet its national and international human rights commitments.

In 2000, Norway contributed NOK 6 million to the UNDP/World Bank Partnership Programme for Democratic Development in Indonesia and has so



INDONESIA © John Einar Sandvold/SCANPIX

In 2000, Norway provided funding for long-term development, humanitarian aid and human rights in Indonesia.

far provided NOK 4 million in support for the UNDP's humanitarian programme in Aceh. Norway has also supported the aid efforts of international non-governmental organizations in areas of conflict, such as Aceh and the Moluccas. In 2000, NOK 35 million was disbursed to Indonesia, divided between long-term development, humanitarian aid and human rights activities. The same amount has been allocated for this year, with greater focus on the humanitarian sector.

Norway has also been an important contributor to the UN's humanitarian aid operation for reconstruction in East Timor. Norway contributed NOK 46 million in 2000 and expects its contribution to remain at the same level this year.

In development cooperation with **Cambodia**, Norway has particularly emphasized promoting democracy, human rights and good governance. Assistance is provided for UN agencies, Norwegian humanitarian organizations and non-governmental human rights organizations in Cambodia. Assistance is also provided for national information campaigns relating to the planned trial of the Red Khmer.

The Cambodian Minister for Women visited Norway in 1999 and 2000, which must primarily be regarded as an expression of Norwegian support for the government's efforts to promote women's and children's rights.

The international community has placed great emphasis on Cambodia initiating a just legal process against the leaders of the Red Khmer regime as soon as possible. Norway has expressed its willingness to support a legal process of this nature, both to the Cambodian authorities and in international contexts. There is also emphasis on ensuring that the planned local elections in 2001 take place in a democratic manner.

In 2000 Norway was co-sponsor of a resolution on Cambodia in the UN Commission on Human Rights.

#### **China** – see Human Rights Dialogues

In **Laos**, Norway has supported measures to develop administrative capacity, both in central government and at the provincial level for several years. Norway has supported a project to improve the capacity and working conditions of the Laotian national assembly. Norway also supports measures in the tax and customs administration, the purpose of which is to contribute towards the development of a good system of government. Through its support for the Laotian Women's Union, Norway helped to ensure that differences between women and men are documented in official statistics for the first time, and courses are arranged for decision-makers at all levels on how the women's perspective can be integrated into development planning. This project is regarded as important in efforts to improve women's rights in Laos.

Norway has requested the Malaysian authorities to adopt the two UN international covenants on political and civil rights and economic, social and cultural rights, respectively. **Malaysia** decided to accede to the ILO Convention on Child Labour in 2000.

In August 2000 Norway supported the statement of the French EU Chairmanship concerning the conviction of former Deputy Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim for sodomy.

Political developments, particularly matters such as freedom of religion, freedom of expression and the position of women are closely monitored.

The growing violent conflict in **Nepal**, caused by the Maoist revolutionary movement, has led to a strong rise in human rights violations in the past year. In



this situation, Norway has participated actively in a local Peace Support Group under the leadership of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the purpose of which is to coordinate donors' efforts to help reduce the scope of the conflict, make peace and create a basis for poverty-oriented development. The Group is working on a plan of action and a seminar under the auspices of the UN Staff College which will provide a basis for the establishment of a fund administered by the UNDP. The fund will offer financing for various conflict-reducing measures run by local non-governmental and governmental organizations.

Norway has also made efforts to ensure that the conflict and its consequences for development are on the agenda in donors' dialogue with the authorities. This was mentioned by several donors at the Nepal Development Forum in Paris in April.

The right to education is one of the main priorities in Norway's cooperation with Nepal. Norway has supported the national programme to increase the number and quality of primary schools in the country. Projects that focus on the rights of children have also received support. With its sister organization in Nepal, the Norwegian Bar Association established offices for free legal aid and received NOK 0.6 million for this purpose. Two local organizations have also received a total of NOK 0.7 million for the preparation of a human rights yearbook and for legal advice for women.

Human rights issues are included in the ongoing dialogue between Norway and Nepal. Among other things, Norway has supported the establishment of a national Human Rights Commission, which was established in June. Norway has also participated in the working group that is planning financial support for the work of the Commission.

In the past year, Norway has donated substantial humanitarian aid for **North Korea**. In the light of the systematic and widespread human rights violations in North Korea, Norway has, in this connection, expressly pointed out that it expects this aid to be used in accordance with internationally recognized principles. Norway has also pointed out the necessity of reforms, including democratization, openness and respect for human rights, to the North Korean authorities.

Democracy and human rights are a priority area in Norwegian assistance for **Pakistan**, which is provided through direct support for the authorities, multi-lateral agencies and local non-governmental organizations.

Norway deplored the military coup in autumn 1999 and has requested the regime to cede control to democratically elected bodies as soon as possible.

The Pakistani Government has launched a plan for decentralization and local government. In cooperation with the UN Development Programme and the British Department for International Development (DFID), Norway supports a project that seeks to mobilize women to stand as candidates and vote at elections. This effort is headed by a non-governmental women's organization, the Aurat Foundation, and a network of local organizations is taking part. Experience gained from the first round of elections is positive and the project has succeeded in filling as many as 86 per cent of the places reserved for women.

The Election Commission of Pakistan has strengthened its independence and extended its mandate in connection with the local elections. In cooperation with the UN Development Programme and the DFID in this case, too, Norway is supporting a project that involves institutional and human resource development for the Election Commission. The project includes efforts to mobilize voters at the local level with the help of non-governmental organizations.

The human rights programme that Norway is supporting in cooperation with

Switzerland made good progress in 2000 and is providing assistance for a comprehensive human rights campaign that was launched by the authorities in spring 2000. As part of this programme, a Centre for Human Rights Studies has been established at the University of Peshawar, in close cooperation with the Department of Women's Law at the University of Oslo. Cooperation with the ILO on the training of public employees, trade union representatives and non-governmental organizations on fundamental human rights concepts and conventions continued in 2000.

The Norwegian Embassy supports several non-governmental organizations working to promote human rights in general, and organizations working to protect the rights of women and children in particular. An independent review of this assistance was carried out in autumn 2000. It concluded that the organizations supported by Norway are among the most important agents promoting human rights in Pakistan. The organizations are engaged in serious human rights efforts, often with impressive results, and they have considerable influence in civil society. The majority of organizations cooperate with the authorities in important areas, including local elections. They are also involved in the implementation of the authorities' human rights campaign. The embassy encourages both parties to strengthen such cooperation.

In autumn 2000 a feasibility study was carried out in order to evaluate the possible establishment of a liaison and information centre in Pakistan for women with ties to Norway.

The human rights situation in **Sri Lanka** must be viewed in the light of the fact that the country is fighting a bloody civil war that has been going on for eighteen years, cost 60,000 human lives and forced hundreds of thousands to flee. Thus, the most serious human rights problems are linked to the military conflict. Reports are regularly received about violations against civilians in the conflict areas. Both parties must take responsibility for serious human rights violations. The war is brutal, as may be seen from the fact that very few prisoners of war are registered. Both civilian and military losses are increasing. The use of child soldiers by the LTTE is also a problem, and the government states that it is widespread. Such information is difficult to verify, but there is little doubt that many of the LTTE soldiers are young.

Among non-governmental organizations, the general opinion is that the human rights situation in the areas controlled by the government has improved under President Kumaratunga's period in office. In general, the situation is better in the south and west than in the north and east.

Sri Lanka has fairly comprehensive legislation to protect human rights, and human rights have a prominent place in the new draft constitution. However, enforcement of the law has been deficient. An independent Human Rights Commissioner was appointed in 1997. So far, this office has not functioned as well as had been hoped. Its efficiency is highly dependent on the people working for the institution. Since the new leadership took over in spring 2000, an improvement is anticipated. One of the Human Rights Commissioner's main problems is that the office is currently inundated with the "wrong" types of cases, for instance labour cases relating to persons who have been bypassed for promotion. The office has therefore lacked the capacity to concentrate on serious human rights cases.

According to the guidelines, development cooperation with Sri Lanka must concentrate on promoting human rights and on projects that contribute to peace and reconciliation, democratic development, rehabilitation and development in areas affected by conflict.

SRI LANKA © Reuters/SCANPIX



Due to the civil war in Sri Lanka, the human rights situation is unsatisfactory. Norway has tried to help the conflicting parties to initiate negotiations on a political solution.

In 2000 Norway contributed towards supporting human rights in Sri Lanka primarily by playing a central role in efforts to help the parties to initiate negotiations on a political solution to the conflict.

Other projects supported by Norway included:

- A programme to promote national integration and reconciliation between population groups.
- Monitoring elections in connection with the parliamentary election. This included support for monitoring the activities of the media.
- The work of non-governmental organizations relating to education, free legal aid and the publication of legal publications.

Norway raises issues relating to human rights in both bilateral and international forums, including donor meetings under the auspices of the World Bank and in connection with the annual consultations.

The human rights situation in **South Korea** has improved considerably in the last decade, although human rights violations still occur. In the past year, Norway has raised the question of human rights with the Korean authorities.

**Thailand** has undergone a comprehensive process in the field of democratization and human rights. In the last couple of years, Norway has been in close contact with Thailand on the subject of human rights and democracy. In addition to a number of visits at ministerial level, most recently in September 2000 by Thai Foreign Minister Surin Pitsuwan, the Lysøen process has played a central role in dialogue with Thailand. There are regular contacts at senior official level.

Norway has, among other things, expressed its support for Thailand's initiative for a more open foreign policy among the ASEAN countries. There has been dialogue on the preparation of the two countries' respective national plans of action for human rights. The effort to establish a regional human rights mechanism has also been touched on. Norway has provided financial support for a regional working group which is considering the establishment of a human rights mechanism for the ASEAN countries.

Representatives of institutions and organizations involved in the preparations for the establishment of a national Thai Human Rights Commission spent a week in Norway in May, where they met representatives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Institute for Human Rights, the Christian Michelsen Institute in Bergen and non-governmental organizations.

Norway also cooperated with Thailand on human rights dialogues. Thailand played a special role as host to the Human Rights Symposium that was arranged by China, Canada and Norway in June 2000. Ten Asian countries took part in this dialogue.

Norway supported the Thai candidacy to the UN Commission on Human Rights for 2001-2003. Norway also supported the Thai candidate to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (2001).

Norway has provided financial support for non-governmental organizations based in Thailand which are involved in human rights and democratization at both national and regional levels. Such organizations may also have considerable influence outside Thailand's borders. Thailand can be a leading country in efforts to establish regional human rights mechanisms and national human rights institutions in other countries. By promoting democratic rights where possible in South-East Asia, it may be possible to achieve effects that may lead to more effective, democratic forms of government in other Asian countries, closer and more binding regional cooperation, and improved prospects for social and economic development.

Norwegian non-governmental organizations have also received financial support for their work on human rights issues in Thailand and South-East Asia. Norway has not found grounds for criticizing the general human rights situation in Thailand, but has proposed that Thailand give the UN High Commissioner for Refugees an extended mandate to protect refugees in camps along the Burmese border. Norway has also requested that Thailand follow internationally recognized principles for the treatment of refugees.

The human rights situation in **Vietnam** has improved considerably in the past ten to fifteen years, not least as a result of the general opening up of the country and the Doi Moi process that began in 1986. Ordinary Vietnamese have greater freedom. As a result of rapid economic development in the 1990s, many people are no longer living below the poverty line, although Vietnam is still a poor country.

The political and civil rights situation in Vietnam has improved. The Government is more open to discussing human rights and democracy. However the situation is still characterized by the party's and the authorities' desire to ensure stability and centralized control. Consequently, there are still serious limitations on freedom of expression, freedom of religion and freedom of association. Ethnic minorities are still controlled.

The human rights issue is raised at the annual meetings on development cooperation between Norway and Vietnam, most recently in 2000. Vietnam has been a member of the UN Commission on Human Rights since 1 January 2001. With the exception of the Convention on Torture, the country has signed the six most important UN human rights conventions.

In connection with the visit of the Vietnamese Prime Minister to Norway in 1999, a delegation was invited to Norway to study the Norwegian legal system. This visit is expected to take place in the course of 2001.

## America

**Colombia** is one of the most violent societies in the world. The armed conflict has gone on for forty years. The most frightening aspect of developments in recent years has been the strong growth of paramilitary groups. This was the reason for the negotiations between the guerrilla movement, FARC, and the government, which had been in progress since October 1999, almost breaking down. Now that the negotiations have resumed, the parties are under strong national and international pressure to reach concrete agreements, primarily in the humanitarian area. At the same time, there are hopes that negotiations with the other guerrilla organization, ELN, which reached a breakthrough in April 2000, will also be opened. In the same way as with the FARC, the country's government has agreed to the possible establishment of a demilitarized zone with a view to negotiations. With Spain, Cuba, Switzerland and France, Norway is a member of a Group of Friendly Nations that will follow the negotiations with the ELN. The Group of Friendly Nations has been actively involved in efforts to facilitate a negotiation zone. Due to opposition from paramilitary groups and parts of the population, this is a complicated process. Work is in progress on plans for international observation of a zone of this nature.

In 2000, a total of NOK 45.5 million was disbursed from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' budget items for Colombia. For Norway, in addition to humanitarian assistance, it has been important to strengthen the presence of the UN in the country and to support efforts that may protect the population from abuse and strengthen the participation of civil society in the peace process. These will also be the most important priority areas in 2001. Measures that the parties may agree on in the course of their negotiations will have priority.



VIETNAM © Jean-Léo Dugas/PHOENIX

Most Vietnamese have been given more freedom in recent years, although the authorities continue to limit rights relating to freedom of expression and religion.



## **Cuba** – see Human Rights Dialogues

Four years after the peace accord in **Guatemala** was signed, there is still a long way to go before the whole agreement is implemented. While the important agreements on demobilization and the return and reintegration of refugees have largely been fulfilled, much remains to be done in other areas, for example the agreements that guarantee a democratic state and social and political rights.

The new president, Alfonso Portillo from Frente Republicano Guatemalteco (FRG), declared after the election that the peace accords were a national concern and that his government was committed to continue implementing them. A number of initiatives point in a positive direction. An increasing number of people realize that reforms will be Guatemala's entrance ticket to modern times. However, strong groups in society have still not realized this, as has been reflected in certain serious setbacks in the human rights arena.

Since the peace accord was signed, Norwegian assistance for Guatemala has been in the region of NOK 80-100 million a year. In the initial period, much of this assistance was devoted to demobilizing and integrating former combatants, supporting the return and integration of refugees and internally displaced persons, verification, human rights monitoring and information campaigns. In recent years, efforts have focused more strongly on the judicial sector (police training and reform of the judicial system) and measures to promote democracy. In 2000 an agreement was signed with the OAS concerning assistance for a training programme for political parties. Assistance for civil society and programmes relating to the rights of indigenous peoples have had high priority throughout the period.

Norway has been one of the most important contributors to the Truth Commission and has stated that it is willing to assist the authorities in its efforts to follow up the recommendations of the report. More than two years after the report was presented on 25 February 1999, much still remains to be done in this area, which Norway will continue to follow up this year.

**Nicaragua** became one of Norway's priority partner countries in 1987. Since the democratic elections and change of power in 1990, the goal of Norwegian assistance has been to help to secure peace, strengthen democracy and human rights and build up the economy after many years of civil war and rising poverty.

Despite an extremely high level of aid in the 1990s and comprehensive macro-economic reforms, with a tightening of fiscal policy and a significant reduction in inflation, living conditions for the majority of the population have scarcely improved. Democratic development in Nicaragua also gives cause for concern. A series of constitutional changes adopted at the beginning of 2000 threaten to weaken democracy. The independent state authorities (the Supreme Electoral Council and the Supreme Court) have become dominated by the party political interests of the governing party and the Sandinistas. These parties negotiated a pact in November 1999 on the "division of power and benefits". The Office of the Auditor General is controlled by the governing party, which has shown little willingness to permit itself to be controlled by independent bodies. This is the reason why the Nordic countries decided in January 2001 to halt cooperation with Nicaragua on support for the Office of the Auditor General.

Development cooperation between Norway and Nicaragua has a budget of approximately NOK 100 million. The primary goal of cooperation is to strengthen Nicaragua's ability and potential to meet the basic needs of broad sectors of the population. Poverty reduction, good governance and transparency are key concepts in Norway's dialogue with the authorities. Norway is currently considering the future direction of cooperation with Nicaragua.



GUATEMALA © Jeremy A. Homer/GV Press

Assistance for Guatemala has gradually been re-oriented to focus on the justice sector and measures to promote democracy.



### North Africa and the Middle East

The human rights situation in **Algeria** remains opaque and complex. The President initiated radical measures in 1999 to neutralize Islamic terrorism. The use of violence has declined, but development in 2000 did not meet expectations. There have been national and international accusations that the various security forces participate in violent acts and other forms of abuse. International organizations and journalists still have little possibility of investigating the human rights situation in Algeria.

Norway has on several occasions expressed its sympathy with the Algerian people and reminded the Algerian government of its responsibility for protecting the civilian population from acts of terrorism within the framework of generally accepted human rights. The Ministry provides assistance for traumatized children through various organizations.

The Norwegian Government's request to Norwegian business and industry to refrain from industrial and commercial cooperation in **Libya** has been withdrawn. There was no particular international focus on the human rights situation in Libya in 2000.

International human rights organizations continue to express concern about the situation as regards freedom of expression and human rights in **Tunisia**, and Norway is closely following events. Tunisia's president announced several measures to strengthen human rights and freedom of the press in November, but is pursuing a cautious policy.

The positive development that has taken place in **Iran** since President Khatami was elected in 1997 has led to a gradual normalization of relations between Norway and Iran. It has thus been easier to enter into dialogue with the Iranian authorities on a wide range of issues, including human rights. The human rights situation in Iran, both in general and as regards individual cases, including the situation for the Baha'i community, was on the agenda at meetings between Norwegian and Iranian authorities in 2000.

In the course of 2000 the struggle for power between the reformist and conservative movements in Iranian society were particularly apparent in their different approaches to human rights. There were a number of setbacks in this area. Several reformist newspapers were closed down and reform-minded opinion leaders and journalists were imprisoned.

Norway followed up work on human rights issues in Iran at the UN Commission on Human Rights by emphasizing the need for respect for freedom of expression and the rule of law. Through the United Nations Development Programme, Norway contributes funding for a course in human rights at the University of Teheran.

The United Nations' Special Rapporteur for Human Rights in **Iraq** reports that the Iraqi authorities are behind a number of human rights violations. There is widespread use of extra-judicial executions, disappearances, imprisonment without due legal process and torture. The Iraqi people lack the most fundamental freedoms and the situation gives cause for deep concern. Norway was therefore actively involved in the preparation of resolutions on this serious situation in the UN's human rights agencies.

**Israel's** political system is based on democratic principles. All citizens have legal safeguards under the law. Israel has signed the most important human rights conventions. The fundamental political, civil, economic, social and cultural rights of Jewish citizens are largely respected in Israel. The law also largely safeguards the rights of the Arab minority in the country. In practice, however, the non-Jewish population is still subjected to systematic discrimination.

From a historical point of view, Israel's greatest problems in the human rights field have been associated with the occupation of the Palestinian Area. Israel is responsible for a number of serious human rights violations against the Palestinian population and against Lebanese prisoners in Israeli gaols. The Israeli authorities have made extensive use of administrative detention for Palestinian and Lebanese prisoners, and prison conditions for these detainees are often below the international minimum standard. Other serious human rights violations include limitations on Palestinians' freedom of movement, including the confiscation of ID cards, the destruction of Palestinian homes and inequitable distribution of water. However, human rights violations by the Israeli authorities declined as a result of the peace process and the peace accords.

The new Palestinian "Intifada" led to a deterioration in the human rights situation. According to the US State Department's Human Rights Report, between the beginning of the Intifada and the end of the year, Israeli security forces killed 307 Palestinians and injured at least 11,300 people. During the same period, Israel imposed strict restrictions on freedom of movement and transport of goods in and out of the Palestinian Area. Strict restrictions were also imposed on internal freedom of movement on the West Bank and in Gaza, and from the West Bank to Gaza. During the new Intifada, Israel has pursued a policy of systematic elimination (killing) of Palestinians who have been involved in attacks or the planning of attacks against Israelis. Moreover, Israeli security forces have shot at civilian residential areas with tank shells, destroyed olive groves and torn down a number of Palestinian homes. At the beginning of the Intifada, thirteen Arabs, all Israeli citizens, were killed in Israel by Israeli security forces. These killings led to widespread criticism, also in Israel, and an investigative commission was established.



ISRAEL © Reuters/SCANPIX

All Israeli citizens have legal rights under the law. Israel's most serious problems in the human rights sphere are related to the occupation of the Palestinian Area.

Norway's criticism of Israeli human rights violations are particularly related to the conflict with the Palestinian population. In international forums, such as the UN General Assembly and the UN Commission on Human Rights, and in bilateral discussions, Norway has deplored Israeli human rights violations and urged Israel to comply with the conventions it has signed in this area. Norway has consistently deplored acts of terrorism against Israeli citizens, but has also deplored Israel's use of excessive force in connection with control of demonstrations, and Israeli retaliations. Within the framework of the international committee of donor countries, the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee (AHLC), Norway has raised human rights-related issues with Israel, including the closure of borders, which prevents the freedom of movement of Palestinians. Norway has also espoused the cause of prisoners in administrative detention, both by supporting the work of the International Red Cross and by taking up individual cases. Norway supports several human rights organizations working in Israel and the Palestinian Area.

**The Palestinian Area** is not an independent state and can therefore not be a party to international legal instruments, such as the human rights conventions. Nevertheless, the Palestinian authorities are expected to conform to international custom as regards safeguarding human rights principles.

The Palestinian Area is characterized by a poorly developed judicial system and a weak democratic structure. A number of laws that have been fully processed, including the Constitution, which outlines a clear division of power, have not yet been ratified by the president, and this has weakened the Palestinian legislative assembly. Unclear dividing lines between the civil judicial apparatus, the military judicial apparatus and the security courts, and the lack of follow-up of court rulings undermine the civil judicial apparatus. Freedom of expression is limited and there is little acceptance of criticism or political opposition.

In connection with the new Intifada, which began on 28 September, Israeli military and civilian targets have been subjected to attacks by various armed

Palestinian groups. More than sixty Israelis have been killed. More than thirty civilians have been killed in connection with bomb explosions in public places in Israel, shootings at passing civilian Israeli settlers and shootings at settlements in the Palestinian Area.

Norwegian assistance for the Palestinian Area is intended to support the peace process. The development of democracy and conformity to human rights principles in Palestinian society are priority areas in development assistance. Norway is concerned that well functioning public institutions be established which fully respect fundamental human rights. Consequently, a large proportion of aid is devoted to building institutional capacity in the public sector and to supporting organizations in civil society. Assistance continues to be provided for non-governmental organizations working to ensure that the rights of women and other human rights are included in Palestinian legislation. Financial support is provided for both Palestinian and Israeli non-governmental organizations involved in monitoring and recording human rights violations in the Palestinian Area.

### Sub-Saharan Africa

The human rights situation in **Angola** continues to give cause for concern. Human rights violations can roughly be divided into two categories: direct, war-related violations and violations arising from institutional weaknesses in the judicial system, the police force and the prison system. Assistance for capacity-building in civil society and general information activities have led to stronger demands from civil society that human rights be respected. However, the capacity of the judicial system is so limited that there is little possibility of dealing with the increased number of cases that are being reported.

The UN Human Rights Office in Luanda is the only international player making efforts to strengthen the Angolan judicial system. With the Netherlands and Sweden, Norway has been supporting these efforts since 1998. In the past year, Norway has also provided assistance for local non-governmental organizations in Angola.

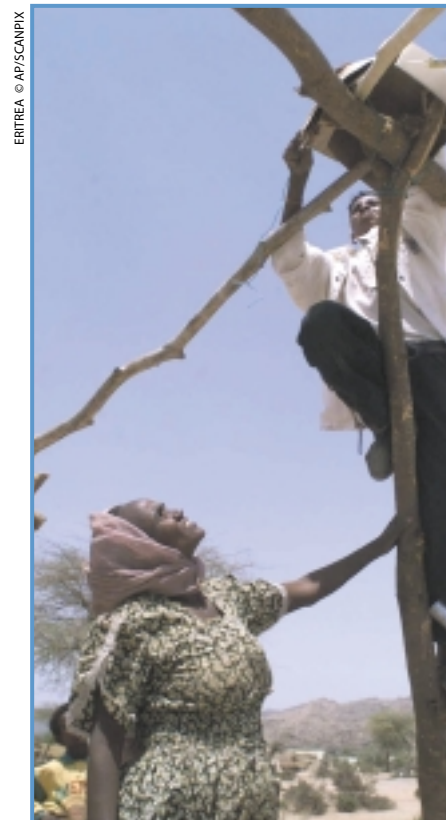
The war in Angola is regarded as being the most important cause of human rights violations. In cooperation with Canada, Norway is supporting a church-based peace initiative. Based on the churches' broad contacts with the population, its aim is to facilitate contact between the authorities and the local population so that the population's voice is heard when decisions are made.

In 2000 Norway provided NOK 51.5 million in humanitarian aid for Angola, channelled through Norwegian non-governmental organizations, the Red Cross and UN agencies. The Norwegian Refugee Council received a substantial contribution to support activities for internally displaced persons, while emergency relief for children affected by war was channelled through Redd Barna (Save the Children Norway).

The human rights situation in **Ethiopia** and **Eritrea** still gives cause for concern. In the past year, there have been many violations arising from the conflict between the two countries. Widespread deportations of the other country's citizens have not conformed to guarantees of due process of law for individuals pursuant to international law.

The conflict between the two countries entered a positive phase with the signing of a cease-fire on 12 December 2000.

In 2000, the Norwegian authorities provided substantial assistance for Ethiopia and Eritrea, mainly through the UN system, the Red Cross and Norwegian non-governmental organizations. A considerable proportion was devoted to efforts to



ERITREA © AP/SCANPIX

Efforts to promote human rights and democracy figured centrally in Norwegian support to Ethiopia and Eritrea.

promote human rights and democracy. Assistance for the International Committee of the Red Cross contributed to the organization's important work to safeguard the rights of deported persons, prisoners of war and civilian internees. Norway has focused on the situation of children internally displaced due to the war by contributing NOK 6 million to a joint appeal from Olympic Aid, UNICEF and the UNHCR.

Through Redd Barna (Save the Children Norway), Norway has seconded an expert on children's rights to the UN programme for internally displaced persons in Eritrea. Representatives from the Institute for Human Rights participated as observers during the parliamentary election in 2000.

There has been a substantial increase in Norwegian aid for local organizations working in the field of human rights. In 2000 NOK 3 million was allocated for these efforts, which cover general education in human rights, monitoring the human rights situation, voter education, trade union rights and the rights of women and children. The assistance provided for a women's rights project, the main components of which were free legal aid for women and the preparation of legislation in the field of family law, is regarded as having been highly successful.

Due to the conflict with Eritrea, preparatory work on assistance for the justice sector came to a halt, but it has now been resumed. Cooperation between the University of Addis Abeba and the Institute for Human Rights at the University of Oslo is well established and research results will be published. Norwegian assistance for observation and analysis of the trial of those responsible for human rights violations under the Mengistu regime continued in 2000.

One of the important goals of Norwegian political and humanitarian involvement in the **Great Lakes region** is to contribute towards political stability at the regional and national levels, by supporting the peace and reconciliation process. Since human rights violations in this region are largely linked to the ongoing, complicated violent conflicts, much of Norwegian aid is directed towards conflict prevention, democracy and human rights and reconciliation projects.

As part of a strategy to increase Africa's capacity in the field of conflict resolution, reconciliation and peace-keeping activities, Norway has supported the efforts of the Organization for African Unity (OAU) to build capacity and expertise in this area. In order to contribute towards strengthening the peace processes that are in progress in the region, Norway has channelled funding for mediation activities in Burundi and the Democratic Republic of Congo. Norway has also supported projects relating to the demobilization of guerrilla soldiers in the Democratic Republic of Congo and Uganda and the repatriation of refugees. Norwegian efforts aim to help reduce the level of conflict and thereby improve the human rights situation. In 2000 Norway also supported the work of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights in the Great Lakes region, and a conference on children and armed conflict in the region through Redd Barna (Save the Children Norway).

In **Rwanda** Norway supported various reconciliation and confidence-building measures at both national and local levels, partly through the UN system and cooperation with the Red Cross and partly through Norwegian non-governmental organizations. Norway has actively supported the establishment of the ad hoc International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda and is closely following political developments and the human rights situation in the country. This particularly applies to the working conditions of the National Human Rights Commission, which was established in 1999, and the establishment and activities of the traditional tribunal, Gacaca, in its efforts to relieve the burden placed on the judicial system by genocide cases.



In **Burundi**, Norway supported regional mediation efforts under the leadership of the former president of Tanzania, Julius Nyerere, and the former president of South Africa, Nelson Mandela. Mr Mandela was appointed to the task on 1 December 1999. A peace accord for Burundi was signed in August 2000. Since two of the largest Hutu revolutionary movements have not signed the accord, however, the situation remains tense. In 2000 funding was provided for Mr Mandela's mediation efforts and for the human rights organization International Alert's Burundi programme.

The human rights situation in the **Democratic Republic of Congo** is serious and the ongoing conflict is exacerbating the situation. A solution to the conflict is of the greatest importance for the human rights situation in the entire Great Lakes region. In 2000, assistance was provided for the following:

- through the Norwegian Refugee Council, for the assignment of personnel to IMR/UNHCR (a computer expert and an investigator)
- through the Pentecostal Mission of Norway, for democracy measures and humanitarian aid
- through the Christian Relief Network, for the repatriation of refugees and the demobilization of guerrilla soldiers
- USD 1.2 million to the UN Contribution Fund for the Democratic Republic of Congo. Of this amount, USD 500,000 was earmarked for the mediation efforts of the former president of Botswana, Sir Ketumile Masire, in the ongoing conflict (the Inter-Congolese Dialogue)
- Through international non-governmental organizations (channelled through the Norwegian Red Cross to the ICRC).

Norway contributed NOK 500,000 towards the elections in **Ivory Coast** in autumn 2000. The elections introduced civilian rule in the country after the army had assumed power in a coup in 1999.

Norwegian assistance for the peace and democratization process in **Mali** continued in 2000 through the UNDP programme to demobilize and reintegrate former soldiers from the civil war. Discussions were also arranged between settled and nomadic groups in order to prevent and resolve conflicts and collect weapons. Through the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIDE), assistance was provided for a project relating to land rights, decentralization and conflict resolution in the agricultural sector in Mali. Some projects through multilateral channels and non-governmental organizations focus on developing and strengthening local democracy. Several projects particularly target women and girls. The women's perspective is integrated into all measures.

Human rights activities are an important component of general development cooperation with **Mozambique**, and there is regular focus on this issue in the ongoing dialogue with the authorities. Human rights violations occur particularly in the government apparatus and the population has little confidence in the police or the judicial system. Norway has provided assistance for independent local organizations working in the field of education, information and legal aid in the human rights area. A media project, which includes the development of a press centre and the establishment of independent local radio also received assistance from Norway. In 2000 Norway continued to provide assistance for the Roman Catholic organization *Comunità de St. Égidio*'s programme to promote civil society in Mozambique.

The introduction of a civilian, popularly elected government in 1999 marked a turning point in **Nigeria's** political history. The political rights situation has improved significantly, but there are still serious rights problems in connection with the police, the judicial system and the social and economic situation.

Dialogue with the Nigerian authorities was strengthened in connection with the



In Mali, the UNDP, with the support of Norway and other countries, has contributed towards the demobilization and re-integration of former civil war combatants.



visit of the Norwegian Prime Minister to Nigeria in February and the visit of President Olusegun Obasanjo to Norway in June. The democratization process and the human rights situation were discussed on several occasions at these bilateral meetings. In February, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Norwegian embassy arranged a human rights seminar in Lagos in cooperation with the national Human Rights Commission and a local human rights organization.

In 1999, up to NOK 15 million over three years was earmarked for democracy and human rights measures in Nigeria. In 2000, contracts were signed between the embassy and two Nigerian human rights organizations. Assistance is provided for two different democratization projects, for legislative reform and for democratic education in civil society. The latter project is part of a follow-up programme that seeks to strengthen awareness of democratic values in civil society in the period prior to the next election. In 2000 assistance was also provided for participation in the African Human Rights Commission, and for a human rights seminar in Nigeria.

The embassy continued to cooperate closely with the Norwegian Human Rights Fund and the Fund's local part-time consultant in Nigeria. During the year, the Fund approved eight new projects with a total budget of approximately USD 100,000. In order to improve the quality of the Fund's project portfolio, the embassy has assisted in the preparation of proposals for revised guidelines for project assistance in Nigeria. An external evaluation of the Fund's activities in October concluded that the type of projects supported by the Fund are relevant to the human rights situation. The Fund itself says that the follow-up of projects supported in Nigeria is better than the follow-up of projects in many other countries in which it is involved.

The embassy continues to participate in donor coordination meetings on the subject of democracy and good governance headed by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and other more informal groups. A database has been developed which shows the assistance provided by various donors to local human rights organizations.

Through the World Bank, Norway contributes towards the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme aimed at rehabilitating soldiers and members of guerrilla groups who have taken part in the ten-year civil war in **Sierra Leone**. Special attention is paid to the many child soldiers in the country.

In **Sudan**, comprehensive human rights violations have largely been associated with the civil war, which has been in progress since 1983. However, the situation has recently improved somewhat, and partly for this reason there was a cease-fire declaration for parts of the war zone in 1999. There have also been certain improvements in 2000, but a great deal remains to be done. Certain setbacks towards the end of 2000, such as in the area of press freedom and freedom of expression, indicate that the situation may well deteriorate.

In 2000 Norway continued to provide assistance for humanitarian projects, human rights projects and projects associated with the peace process. Assistance in the order of NOK 75 million was largely channelled through Norwegian non-governmental organizations and through the FAO and the UNDP.

Norway has been willing to support the constitutional reform process in **Kenya**. In practice, this has largely taken place through a nationwide social education programme under the auspices of four consortia of non-governmental organizations. Norwegian assistance was also provided for preparatory work on a Human Rights House in Nairobi and for projects relating to constitutional reform and democracy-building measures. Norway also provided substantial support for a regional conference on handguns in Nairobi in 2000.



NIGERIA © EPA/SCANPIX

When Nigeria introduced a form of government based on popular elections in 1999, it was an important political turning point. Dialogue between the Norwegian and Nigerian authorities has been strengthened.

In **Tanzania**, Norway co-financed and participated actively in a process headed by the Secretary-General of the British Commonwealth to establish a reconciliation agreement between the parties to the conflict in Zanzibar. Its purpose was to change the Election Commission prior to the presidential and parliamentary elections in 2000 and ensure the release of eighteen opposition politicians from prison. The reconciliation agreement has not yet been completed, but the eighteen politicians were released soon after the election in October after some of them had been in prison for more than three years. Norway allocated substantial funds for election monitoring in autumn 2000.

Human rights have also had priority in work on the new strategy for cooperation between Norway and Tanzania in the years ahead. Events in connection with the elections in autumn 2000, both on the mainland and particularly in Zanzibar, gave additional relevance to the need to focus on this issue. The most important initiative concerns cooperation with other donors with a view to accelerating plans for judicial reform, and funds have been allocated for this purpose for the next two years.

Assistance through non-governmental organizations has been an important channel for strengthening civil society. In this connection, assistance for organizations working in the field of free legal aid for women and efforts to raise awareness of women's rights are important.

The Norwegian embassy in **Uganda** has been an active partner in dialogue with the authorities and donors on human rights issues. In 2000 Norway continued to provide assistance for capacity-building in Uganda's Human Rights Commission in cooperation with the UNDP. Norway and several like-minded donors provided financial assistance for voter education and monitoring of the election process in connection with a referendum in June 2000.

Through UNICEF and the UNFPA, assistance was provided for measures targeting children who have fled from the rebels in northern Uganda and for measures against the genital mutilation of women.

Through non-governmental organizations, assistance was provided for free legal aid and human rights education, for instance in public institutions such as the prison system, the police force and the judicial system, the improvement of prison conditions, safeguarding the rights of workers, children and persons with disabilities, and the rehabilitation/integration of internally displaced persons and persons who have been in exile due to the unrest in the country.

In September, Norway and **Zambia** signed a new framework agreement for development cooperation between the two countries, where good governance is one of the priority areas for cooperation.

Human rights issues play a central role in public debate in Zambia and the country has a number of active organizations which help to put important issues on the agenda, including those relating to the police, the prison system and the judicial apparatus. Freedom of expression and freedom of the press have largely been respected, but there have been examples of the authorities intervening against private newspapers. In general, the abuse of children and women is a serious social problem.

The main goal of development cooperation with **South Africa** is to consolidate democracy and further develop efforts to promote human rights.

In addition to direct support for individual organizations, the Norwegian embassy cooperates with the Institute for Human Rights, which has helped the embassy to prepare a comprehensive project portfolio in this area. The aim is to

contribute towards strengthening and further developing human rights expertise in South Africa, and to contribute towards the implementation of existing legislation and international human rights conventions which South Africa has signed. Another goal is to establish contacts between Norwegian and South African technical institutions that will be sustainable above and beyond the aid period.

Of concrete projects that have received assistance in 2000, the following may be mentioned:

- Cooperation with the Electoral Institute of South Africa (EISA) on the participation of women in politics and with Rape Crisis on assistance for abused and raped women.
- Cooperation with the Centre for Applied Legal Studies at the Faculty of Law, Witwatersrand University (CALS) on anti-discrimination measures in working life.
- Cooperation with the Centre for Conflict Resolution (CCR) on conflict resolution, particularly related to race.
- Cooperation with the School of Government at the University of Western Cape on land rights. Zimbabwe is also involved in this project and the Agricultural University of Norway is taking part in the project through NORAGRIC.
- Cooperation with the Institute for Justice and Reconciliation on the follow-up to the Truth Commission.
- Cooperation with the South African Human Rights Commission on monitoring and reporting on social and economic rights.
- Cooperation with the South African Broadcasting Corporation on co-financing of Justice for All, a TV series on human rights.
- Cooperation with the South African Resource Bank for Democracy and Human Rights (SAFDE).

Norway has also provided approximately NOK 500,000 for the destruction of handguns.

The human rights situation in **Zimbabwe** deteriorated in 2000 and gives cause for concern. Due to the growing political violence targeting the opposition prior to the parliamentary election in June and the government-supported occupations of large commercial land properties, Norway decided to freeze parts of government-to-government assistance in May 2000.

The violence in connection with the land occupations and the government's attempts to confiscate and re-distribute land properties continued after the election, as did the harassment of the opposition party, the MDC, and the free press by the police, etc. From January 2001, Zimbabwe is no longer a priority partner country.

As a result of the deterioration in the human rights situation, Norway's assistance for Zimbabwe has increasingly been focused on supporting civil society, democracy-building and human rights. In 2000 assistance was provided for the following:

- Measures in connection with the referendum on a new constitution and the parliamentary election, including support for voter education and election monitoring.
- Efforts to prevent the abuse of women and children and promote respect for the rights of women and children.
- Support for the independent trade union movement and support for efforts to safeguard the rights of agricultural workers in connection with the ongoing land reform.
- Efforts to strengthen freedom of expression and support the anti-corruption efforts of non-governmental organizations.
- Efforts to strengthen parliament and train parliamentarians.



ZIMBABWE © AP/SCANPIX

Zimbabwe has been criticized for human rights violations, including violence against the political opposition. Since January 2001, Zimbabwe is no longer a priority partner country. Assistance for Zambia now focuses more on civil society, particularly measures to promote democracy and human rights.

#### *Handguns – West Africa*

Norway has been supporting efforts to achieve a moratorium on light handguns in West Africa since they were initiated. The moratorium includes Mali, Ivory Coast, Ghana, Guinea, Burkina Faso, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Gambia and Senegal. Norway has provided USD 1 million for the moratorium implementation programme. Norway regards the moratorium as the most comprehensive international measure against handguns so far.



STATISTICS





# STATISTICS RELATING TO FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FOR INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS MEASURES

(NOK 1000)

## REGIONS

<b>AFRICA</b>	<b>Total</b>
Africa unspecified	99 829
Algeria	983
Angola	47 249
Botswana	7 940
Burundi	4 926
Egypt	127
Ivory Coast	658
Eritrea	8 719
Ethiopia	27 417
Ghana	857
Guinea-Bissau	61
Cameroon	205
Cape Verde	214
Kenya	8 667
Congo (Dem. Rep.)	4 694
Lesotho	783
Madagascar	5 344
Malawi	9 590
Mali	16 818
Mauretania	791
Mauritius	76
Mozambique	61 202
Namibia	2 234
Niger	2 307
Nigeria	1 514
Rwanda	20 320
Sub-Saharan Africa unspecified	8 145
Centr. Afr. Republic	2 795
Sierra Leone	19 235
Somalia	2 500
Sudan	40 495
South Africa	36 715
Tanzania	25 491
Tchad	408
Togo	500
Tunisia	200
Uganda	16 115
Zambia	41 571
Zimbabwe	34 668
<b>Total AFRICA</b>	<b>562 363</b>

<b>ASIA</b>	<b>Total</b>
Afghanistan	11 395
Armenia	1 084
Azerbaijan	2 206
Asia unspecified	29 142
Bangladesh	28 421
Bhutan	9 409
Burma	10 642
Philippines	2 202
Georgia	2 538
India	31 806
Indonesia	15 888
Iraq	4 500
Iran	160
Jordan	8 892
Cambodia	16 594
Kazakhstan	164
China	22 966
Kirghizstan	134
Laos	13 094
Lebanon	6 450

Malaysia	704
Middle East unspecified	9 771
Mongolia	476
Nepal	13 622
North Korea	275
Pakistan	12 068
Palestinian Area	98 402
Sri Lanka	22 508
South Asia unspecified	41
Tadzhikistan	2 542
Thailand	468
Vietnam	5 358
Yemen	1 000
East Timor	8 693
<b>Total ASIA</b>	<b>393 612</b>

<b>EUROPE</b>	<b>Total</b>
Albania	12 029
Bosnia-Herzegovina	27 553
Europe unspecified	136 606
Croatia	13 277
Macedonia (FYRoM)	3 413
Moldova	289
Serbia & Montenegro	70 502
Former Yugoslavia unspecified	19 807
Turkey	1 887
<b>Total EUROPE</b>	<b>285 362</b>

<b>GLOBAL</b>	<b>Total</b>
Global unspecified	284 907
<b>Total GLOBAL</b>	<b>284 907</b>

<b>LATIN AMERICA</b>	<b>Total</b>
America unspecified	12 201
Argentina	64
Belize	539
Bolivia	4 541
Brazil	18 536
Chile	3 509
Colombia	34 005
Costa Rica	557
Cuba	4 350
Dominican Republic	1 853
Ecuador	7 770
El Salvador	9 030
Guatemala	55 068
Haiti	6 613
Honduras	6 103
Jamaica	448
Central America unspecified	9 957
Mexico	3 381
Nicaragua	36 436
Paraguay	3 940
Peru	6 897
South America unspecified	1 425
Uruguay	233
<b>Total LATIN AMERICA</b>	<b>227 455</b>

<b>OCEANIA</b>	<b>Total</b>
Papua New Guinea	1 315
<b>Total OCEANIA</b>	<b>1 315</b>

<b>Total</b>	<b>1 755 014</b>
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## COUNTRY

	Total
Afghanistan	11 395
Africa unspecified	99 829
Albania	12 029
Algeria	983
America unspecified	12 201
Angola	47 249
Argentina	64
Armenia	1 084
Azerbaijan	2 206
Asia unspecified	29 142
Bangladesh	28 421
Belize	539
Bhutan	9 409
Bolivia	4 541
Bosnia-Herzegovina	27 553
Botswana	7 940
Brazil	18 536
Burma	10 642
Burundi	4 926
Chile	3 509
Colombia	34 005
Costa Rica	557
Cuba	4 350
Dominican Republic	1 853
Ecuador	7 770
Egypt	127
El Salvador	9 030
Ivory Coast	658
Eritrea	8 719
Ethiopia	27 417
Europe unspecified	136 606
Philippines	2 202
Georgia	2 538
Ghana	857
Global unspecified	284 907
Guatemala	55 068
Guinea-Bissau	61
Haiti	6 613
Honduras	6 103
India	31 806
Indonesia	15 888
Iraq	4 500
Iran	160
Jamaica	448
Jordan	8 892
Cambodia	16 594
Cameroon	205
Cape Verde	214
Kazakhstan	164
Kenya	8 667
China	22 966
Kirghizstan	134
Congo (Dem. Rep.)	4 694
Croatia	13 277
Laos	13 094
Lesotho	783
Lebanon	6 450
Madagascar	5 344
Macedonia (FYROM)	3 413
Malawi	9 590
Malaysia	704
Mali	16 818
Mauretania	791

Mauritius	76
Central America unspecified	9 957
Mexico	3 381
Middle East unspecified	9 771
Moldova	289
Mongolia	476
Mozambique	61 202
Namibia	2 234
Nepal	13 622
Nicaragua	36 436
Niger	2 307
Nigeria	1 514
North Korea	275
Pakistan	12 068
Palestinian Area	98 402
Papua New Guinea	1 315
Paraguay	3 940
Peru	6 897
Rwanda	20 320
South America unspecified	1 425
Sub-Saharan Africa unspecified	8 145
Central Afr. Republic	2 795
Serbia & Montenegro	70 502
Sierra Leone	19 235
Somalia	2 500
Sri Lanka	22 508
Sudan	40 495
South Asia unspecified	41
South Africa	36 715
Tadzhikistan	2 542
Tanzania	25 491
Tchad	408
Thailand	468
Former Yugoslavia unspecified	19 807
Togo	500
Tunisia	200
Turkey	1 887
Uganda	16 115
Uruguay	233
Vietnam	5 358
Yemen	1 000
Zambia	41 571
Zimbabwe	34 668
East Timor	8 693

<b>Total</b>	<b>1 755 014</b>
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## Human rights measures by type of aid

### REGIONS

### TYPE OF AID

AFRICA	Bilateral	Multi-bilateral	Total
Africa unspecified	39 942	59 887	99 829
Algeria	983		983
Angola	25 849	21 400	47 249
Botswana	6 632	1 308	7 940
Burundi	4 926		4 926
Egypt	127		127
Ivory Coast	158	500	658
Eritrea	7 483	1 236	8 719
Ethiopia	16 511	10 907	27 417
Ghana	857		857
Guinea-Bissau	61		61
Cameroon	205		205
Cape Verde	214		214
Kenya	8 667		8 667
Congo (Dem. Rep.)		4 694	4 694
Lesotho	783		783
Madagascar		5 344	5 344
Malawi	2 865	6 725	9 590
Mali	15 718	1 100	16 818
Mauretania	791		791
Mauritius	76		76
Mozambique	44 702	16 500	61 202
Namibia	2 234		2 234
Niger	2 307		2 307
Nigeria	1 514		1 514
Rwanda	20 320		20 320
Sub-Saharan Africa unspecified	8 145		8 145
Centr. Afr. Republic		2 795	2 795
Sierra Leone	19 235		19 235
Somalia		2 500	2 500
Sudan	39 778	718	40 495
South Africa	35 978	737	36 715
Tanzania	25 491		25 491
Tchad	408		408
Togo	500		500
Tunisia		200	200
Uganda	16 115		16 115
Zambia	41 571		41 571
Zimbabwe	33 732	936	34 668
<b>Total AFRICA</b>	<b>424 876</b>	<b>137 487</b>	<b>562 363</b>
<b>ASIA</b>	<b>Bilateral</b>	<b>Multi-bilateral</b>	<b>Total</b>
Afghanistan	11 395		11 395
Armenia	1 084		1 084
Azerbaijan	2 206		2 206
Asia unspecified	7 173	21 969	29 142
Bangladesh	27 461	960	28 421
Bhutan	9 409		9 409
Burma	10 642		10 642
Philippines	2 202		2 202
Georgia	2 538		2 538
India	25 085	6 721	31 806
Indonesia	9 388	6 500	15 888
Iraq	4 500		4 500
Iran	160		160
Jordan	8 892		8 892
Cambodia	9 594	7 000	16 594
Kazakhstan	164		164
China	22 966		22 966
Kirghizstan	134		134
Laos	8 687	4 407	13 094
Lebanon	6 000	450	6 450
Malaysia	704		704

## REGIONS

## TYPE OF AID

	Bilateral	Multi-bilateral	Total
Middle East unspecified	9 771		9 771
Mongolia	476		476
Nepal	5 842	7 779	13 622
North Korea	275		275
Pakistan	9 918	2 151	12 068
Palestinian Area	72 534	25 868	98 402
Sri Lanka	22 508		22 508
South Asia unspecified	41		41
Tadzhikistan	2 542		2 542
Thailand	468		468
Vietnam	5 173	185	5 358
Yemen		1 000	1 000
East Timor	4 693	4 000	8 693
<b>Total ASIA</b>	<b>304 622</b>	<b>88 990</b>	<b>393 612</b>

EUROPE	Bilateral	Multi-bilateral	Total
Albania	12 029		12 029
Bosnia-Herzegovina	27 553		27 553
Europe unspecified	36 606	100 000	136 606
Croatia	13 277		13 277
Macedonia (Fyrom)	3 413		3 413
Moldova	200	89	289
Serbia & Montenegro	68 910	1 592	70 502
Former Yugoslavia unspecified	19 807		19 807
Turkey	1 887		1 887
<b>Total EUROPE</b>	<b>183 681</b>	<b>101 681</b>	<b>285 362</b>

GLOBAL	Bilateral	Multi-bilateral	Total
Global unspecified	140 524	144 383	284 907
<b>Total GLOBAL</b>	<b>140 524</b>	<b>144 383</b>	<b>284 907</b>

LATIN AMERICA	Bilateral	Multi-bilateral	Total
America unspecified	4 028	8 173	12 201
Argentina	64		64
Belize	539		539
Bolivia	4 541		4 541
Brazil	18 536		18 536
Chile	3 509		3 509
Colombia	28 505	5 500	34 005
Costa Rica	557		557
Cuba	4 350		4 350
Dominican Republic	1 853		1 853
Ecuador	7 770		7 770
El Salvador	8 530	500	9 030
Guatemala	34 945	20 123	55 068
Haiti	6 613		6 613
Honduras	6 103		6 103
Jamaica	448		448
Central America unspecified	6 522	3 435	9 957
Mexico	3 381		3 381
Nicaragua	30 936	5 500	36 436
Paraguay	3 940		3 940
Peru	6 897		6 897
South America unspecified	1 425		1 425
Uruguay	233		233
<b>Total LATIN AMERICA</b>	<b>184 223</b>	<b>43 231</b>	<b>227 455</b>

OCEANIA	Bilateral	Multi-bilateral	Total
Papua New Guinea	1 315		1 315
<b>Total OCEANIA</b>	<b>1 315</b>		<b>1 315</b>

<b>Total</b>	<b>1 239 243</b>	<b>515 772</b>	<b>1 755 014</b>
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## COUNTRY

## TYPE OF AID

	Bilateral	Multi-bilateral	Total
Afghanistan	11 395		11 395
Africa unspecified	39 942	59 887	99 829
Albania	12 029		12 029
Algeria	983		983
America unspecified	4 028	8 173	12 201
Angola	25 849	21 400	47 249
Argentina	64		64
Armenia	1 084		1 084
Azerbaijan	2 206		2 206
Asia unspecified	7 173	21 969	29 142
Bangladesh	27 461	960	28 421
Belize	539		539
Bhutan	9 409		9 409
Bolivia	4 541		4 541
Bosnia-Herzegovina	27 553		27 553
Botswana	6 632	1 308	7 940
Brazil	18 536		18 536
Burma	10 642		10 642
Burundi	4 926		4 926
Chile	3 509		3 509
Colombia	28 505	5 500	34 005
Costa Rica	557		557
Cuba	4 350		4 350
Dominican Republic	1 853		1 853
Ecuador	7 770		7 770
Egypt	127		127
El Salvador	8 530	500	9 030
Ivory Coast	158	500	658
Eritrea	7 483	1 236	8 719
Ethiopia	16 511	10 907	27 417
Europe unspecified	36 606	100 000	136 606
Philippines	2 202		2 202
Georgia	2 538		2 538
Ghana	857		857
Global unspecified	140 524	144 383	284 907
Guatemala	34 945	20 123	55 068
Guinea-Bissau	61		61
Haiti	6 613		6 613
Honduras	6 103		6 103
India	25 085	6 721	31 806
Indonesia	9 388	6 500	15 888
Iraq	4 500		4 500
Iran	160		160
Jamaica	448		448
Jordan	8 892		8 892
Cambodia	9 594	7 000	16 594
Cameroon	205		205
Cape Verde	214		214
Kazakhstan	164		164
Kenya	8 667		8 667
China	22 966		22 966
Kirghizstan	134		134
Congo (Dem. Rep.)		4 694	4 694
Croatia	13 277		13 277
Laos	8 687	4 407	13 094

## COUNTRY

## TYPE OF AID

	Bilateral	Multi-bilateral	Total
Lesotho	783		783
Lebanon	6 000	450	6 450
Madagascar		5 344	5 344
Macedonia (Fyrom)	3 413		3 413
Malawi	2 865	6 725	9 590
Malaysia	704		704
Mali	15 718	1 100	16 818
Mauretania	791		791
Mauritius	76		76
Central America unspecified	6 522	3 435	9 957
Mexico	3 381		3 381
Middle East unspecified	9 771		9 771
Moldova	200	89	289
Mongolia	476		476
Mozambique	44 702	16 500	61 202
Namibia	2 234		2 234
Nepal	5 842	7 779	13 622
Nicaragua	30 936	5 500	36 436
Niger	2 307		2 307
Nigeria	1 514		1 514
North Korea	275		275
Pakistan	9 918	2 151	12 068
Palestinian Area	72 534	25 868	98 402
Papua New Guinea	1 315		1 315
Paraguay	3 940		3 940
Peru	6 897		6 897
Rwanda	20 320		20 320
South America unspecified	1 425		1 425
Sub-Saharan Africa unspecified	8 145		8 145
Centr. Afr. Republic		2 795	2 795
Serbia & Montenegro	68 910	1 592	70 502
Sierra Leone	19 235		19 235
Somalia		2 500	2 500
Sri Lanka	22 508		22 508
Sudan	39 778	718	40 495
South Asia unspecified	41		41
South Africa	35 978	737	36 715
Tadzhikistan	2 542		2 542
Tanzania	25 491		25 491
Tchad	408		408
Thailand	468		468
Former Yugoslavia unspecified	19 807		19 807
Togo	500		500
Tunisia		200	200
Turkey	1 887		1 887
Uganda	16 115		16 115
Uruguay	233		233
Vietnam	5 173	185	5 358
Yemen		1 000	1 000
Zambia	41 571		41 571
Zimbabwe	33 732	936	34 668
East Timor	4 693	4 000	8 693
<b>Total</b>	<b>1 239 243</b>	<b>515 772</b>	<b>1 755 014</b>

## Funds channelled through Norwegian and foreign non-governmental organizations

### REGIONS/COUNTRIES

	Non- Norwegian NGO	Local NGO	Regional NGO	Global NGO	Research foundation	Total
<b>AFRICA</b>						
Africa unspecified	72 796	16 467		100	10 467	99 829
Mozambique	24 958	30 771	4 923		550	61 202
Angola	28 900	15 949	2 344		4	47 249
Zambia	16 909	8 332	13 899	30	2 400	41 571
Sudan	4 072	36 424				40 495
South Africa	5 477	19 292	25		1 280	36 715
Zimbabwe	23 202	5 963	4 953		550	34 668
Ethiopia	15 783	7 814	2 763		37	27 417
Tanzania	15 156	7 205	2 715			25 491
Rwanda	150	20 170			415	20 320
Sierra Leone		19 235				19 235
Mali	2 417	12 691			1 710	16 818
Uganda	2 971	13 144				16 115
Malawi	7 427		564			9 590
Eritrea	4 047	4 448	225		1 599	8 719
Kenya	1 970	6 698				8 667
Sub-Saharan Africa unspecified	300	3 957	3 946		-57	8 145
Botswana	5 022	2 917				7 940
Madagascar	5 344					5 344
Burundi	2 660	1 767		500		4 926
Congo (Dem. Rep.)	4 694					4 694
Central Afr. Republic	2 795					2 795
Somalia	2 500					2 500
Niger		2 307				2 307
Namibia	3	2 231				2 234
Nigeria	1 046	468				1 514
Algeria	983					983
Ghana		857				857
Mauretania		791				791
Lesotho		783				783
Ivory Coast	500	158				658
Togo	500					500
Tchad		408				408
Cape Verde		214				214
Cameroon		205				205
Tunisia	200					200
Egypt		127				127
Mauritius		76				76
Guinea-Bissau		61				61
<b>Total AFRICA</b>	<b>252 781</b>	<b>241 927</b>	<b>36 357</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>17 498</b>	<b>562 363</b>
<b>ASIA</b>						
Palestinian Area	62 936	28 211	3 925		3 330	98 402
India	16 740	4 182	9 984		900	31 806
Asia unspecified	24 114	3 174			1 700	29 142
Bangladesh	3 830	6 223	17 868		500	28 421
China	3 259	11 170	121	688	1 523	22 966
Sri Lanka	6 240	9 531	6 532		205	22 508
Cambodia	7 235	6 519	2 840			16 594
Indonesia	14 034	1 733			121	15 888
Nepal	8 809	4 713	100			13 622
Laos	4 531	8 563				13 094
Pakistan	2 847	299	8 716		207	12 068
Afghanistan		11 221			174	11 395
Burma	6 166	3 576			900	10 642
Middle East unspecified	6 527	3 164			80	9 771
Bhutan	9 409					9 409
Jordan	8 892					8 892
East Timor	4 826	646			3 221	8 693
Lebanon	450	6 000				6 450
Vietnam	4 376	982				5 358
Iraq		4 500				4 500

## REGIONS/COUNTRIES

	Non- NGO	Norwegian NGO	Local NGO	Regional NGO	Global NGO	Research foundation	Total
<b>ASIA continued</b>							
Tadzhikistan	8	2534					2542
Georgia	109	2429					2538
Azerbaijan	237	1969					2206
Philippines	90	2112					2202
Armenia		1084					1084
Yemen	1000						1000
Malaysia		704					704
Mongolia		476					476
Thailand	468						468
North Korea	275						275
Kazakhstan		164					164
Iran	80		80				160
Kirghizstan		134					134
South Asia unspecified		41					41
<b>Total ASIA</b>	<b>197487</b>	<b>126052</b>	<b>50166</b>	<b>688</b>	<b>4829</b>	<b>14390</b>	<b>393612</b>
<b>EUROPE</b>							
Europe unspecified	113000	3100			3581	16925	136606
Serbia & Montenegro	40120	29982				400	70502
Bosnia-Herzegovina	15981	11572					27553
Former Yugoslavia unspecified	7182	12626					19807
Croatia	7527	5751					13277
Albania	8084	3945					12029
Macedonia (FYRoM)	2410	853				150	3413
Turkey	1542	244				100	1887
Moldova	289						289
<b>Total EUROPE</b>	<b>196134</b>	<b>68072</b>			<b>3581</b>	<b>17575</b>	<b>285362</b>
<b>GLOBAL</b>							
Global unspecified	185173	57925		98	39508	2203	284907
<b>Total GLOBAL</b>	<b>185173</b>	<b>57925</b>		<b>98</b>	<b>39508</b>	<b>2203</b>	<b>284907</b>
<b>LATIN AMERICA</b>							
Guatemala	28276	19742	5836	1214			55068
Nicaragua	11522	17695	7124	95			36436
Colombia	11741	19046		2378		840	34005
Brazil	4811	10291	3433				18536
America unspecified	8173	4028					12201
Central America unspecified	3435	1541	623	4358			9957
El Salvador	3906	4074	50	1000			9030
Ecuador		7770					7770
Peru	1292	3062	2544				6897
Haiti	9	6603					6613
Honduras	2150	3953					6103
Bolivia		4541					4541
Cuba		4350					4350
Paraguay	1880	1674	386				3940
Chile	300	1748	1056	404			3509
Mexico	150	3231					3381
Dominican Republic	17	1836					1853
South America unspecified		1425					1425
Costa Rica		557					557
Belize		539					539
Jamaica		448					448
Uruguay		233					233
Argentina		64					64
<b>Total LATIN AMERICA</b>	<b>77663</b>	<b>118452</b>	<b>21051</b>	<b>9448</b>		<b>840</b>	<b>227455</b>
<b>OCEANIA</b>							
Papua New Guinea		1315					1315
<b>Total OCEANIA</b>		<b>1315</b>					<b>1315</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>909238</b>	<b>613744</b>	<b>107574</b>	<b>10365</b>	<b>65416</b>	<b>48677</b>	<b>1755014</b>

## FURTHER SOURCES OF INFORMATION

The following is a list of some of the NGOs and public institutions that work on human rights issues.

### **Amnesty International**

P.O. Box 702 Sentrum  
N-0106 OSLO  
Tel.: +47 22 40 22 00  
Fax: +47 22 42 94 70  
E-mail: [admin@amnesty.no](mailto:admin@amnesty.no)

### **Antiracist Centre**

#### **Antirasistisk Senter**

P.O. Box 244 Sentrum  
N-0103 OSLO  
Tel.: +47 22 11 60 00  
Fax: +47 22 11 61 00  
E-mail: [nadeem@antirasistisk-senter.no](mailto:nadeem@antirasistisk-senter.no)

### **Ombudsman for Children**

#### **Barneombudet**

P.O. Box 8036 DEP  
N-0030 OSLO  
Tel.: +47 22 24 26 30  
Fax: +47 22 24 95 24  
E-mail: [fokuskvinner@online.no](mailto:fokuskvinner@online.no)

### **Christian Michelsen Institute**

#### **Chr. Michelsens Institutt**

Fantoftveien 38  
N-5036 FANTOFT  
Tel.: +47 55 57 40 00  
Fax: +47 55 57 41 66  
E-mail: [cmi@cmi.no](mailto:cmi@cmi.no)

### **Norwegian Helsinki Committee**

#### **Den norske Helsingforskomité**

Urtegata 50  
N-0187 OSLO  
Tel.: +47 22 57 12 20  
Fax: +47 22 57 00 88  
E-mail: [nhc@nhc.no](mailto:nhc@nhc.no)

### **Norwegian Medical Association's Committee on Human Rights**

#### **Den norske lægeforenings MR-utvalg**

#### **Bjørn Oskar Hoftvedt**

P.O. Box 1152 Sentrum  
N-0107 OSLO  
Tel.: +47 23 10 90 00  
Fax: +47 23 10 90 01  
E-mail: [bjorn.hoftvedt@legeforeningen.no](mailto:bjorn.hoftvedt@legeforeningen.no)

### **Norwegian Tibet Committee**

#### **Den norske Tibet-komite**

Urtegata 50  
N-0187 OSLO  
Tel.: +47 22 68 88 84  
Fax: +47 22 57 00 88  
E-mail: [info@tibetkomite.no](mailto:info@tibetkomite.no)  
[andrew.preston@online.no](mailto:andrew.preston@online.no)

### **Norwegian Council for Africa**

#### **Fellesrådet for Africa**

Osterhaugsgata 27  
N-0183 OSLO  
Tel.: +47 22 98 93 10  
Fax: +47 22 98 93 01  
E-mail: [africa@online.no](mailto:africa@online.no)

### **Norwegian Refugee Council**

#### **Flyktningerådet**

P.O. Box 6758 St. Olavs Plass  
N-0130 OSLO  
Tel.: +47 23 10 98 00  
Fax: +47 23 10 98 01  
E-mail: [ragna.vikoren@nrc.no](mailto:ragna.vikoren@nrc.no)

### **UN Association of Norway**

#### **FN-sambandet**

Storgata 33 A  
N-0184 OSLO  
Tel.: +47 22 20 91 70  
Fax: +47 22 20 81 42  
E-mail: [hovedkontoret@fn-sambandet.no](mailto:hovedkontoret@fn-sambandet.no)

### **FOKUS - Forum for Women and Development**

#### **Forum for kvinner og utviklingsspørsmål**

Storgata 33 C  
N-0184 OSLO  
Tel.: +47 23 01 03 00  
Fax: +47 23 01 03 01  
E-mail: [fokuskvinner@online.no](mailto:fokuskvinner@online.no)

### **Norwegian Federation of Organizations of Disabled People**

#### **Funksjonshemmedes Fellesorganisasjon**

P.O. Box 4568 Torshov  
N-0404 OSLO  
Tel.: +47 22 79 91 00  
Fax: +47 22 79 91 98  
E-mail: [info@ffo.no](mailto:info@ffo.no)

### **Norwegian Humanist Association**

#### **Human-Etisk Forbund**

P.O. Box 6744 St. Olavs Plass  
N-0166 OSLO  
Tel.: +47 22 11 10 10  
Fax: +47 22 11 02 40  
E-mail: [human@human.no](mailto:human@human.no)

### **Norwegian Institute for Human Rights**

#### **Institutt for menneskerettigheter (UiO)**

Universitetsgata 22 - 24  
N-0162 OSLO  
Tel.: +47 22 84 20 01  
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