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IMPLEMENTATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL COVENANT ON ECONOMIC
SOCIAL AND CULTURAL RIGHTS

Second periodic reports submitted by States parties in accordance
with articles 16 and 17 of the Covenant

Addendum
EL SALVADOR* ** ****

[6 December 2004]

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Paragraph 67 of the guidelines

938. The National Science and Technology Council (CONACYT) was established by Legislative Decree No. 287, published in the *Diario Oficial* of 10 August 1992. The Council's purpose is to formulate and direct national policy for the advancement of science and technology for the country's economic and social development.

939. CONACYT is currently carrying out the following programmes: (a) management of national and international financial resources and technical assistance in support of the implementation of the national programme for the development science and technology; (b) installation of the necessary infrastructure for the establishment of a national system for technological innovation; (c) promotion of measures to extend the frontiers of knowledge by training scientists and technical experts and by providing for education, further training, and the diffusion of science and technology tailored to the requirements of the country's economic and social development; (d) leadership and coordination of the implementation of measures and policies relating to standardization, metrology, and quality control and certification; and (d) promotion and monitoring of quality and productivity.

940. The Natural History Museum conducts research on the country's fauna and flora, and puts on permanent, temporary and travelling exhibitions based on the official curricula of the various levels of education. These exhibitions range from the teaching aspects of the interpretation of nature to specialized topics and the diffusion of science.

941. The Museum keeps the inventories of wildlife up to date by means of cooperation agreements with public bodies such as the Ministry of the Environment and Natural Resources, NGOs, community development associations, universities and independent researchers.

942. As well as acting as custodian, it is also responsible for the compilation, inventory and maintenance of the national biological diversity collection kept in its storage facilities; this collection consists of: (a) petrological material, including a variety of rocks and minerals found in El Salvador; (b) palaeontological material, including three big groups of fossils: plant palaeontology (samples of fossilized plants); invertebrate palaeontology (samples of marine animals and of insects); and vertebrate palaeontology; (c) malacological material (marine and terrestrial invertebrates); (d) entomological material (samples of insects of all the orders); (e) ichthyological material (samples of fish); (f) herpetological material (samples of amphibians and reptiles of all the orders); (g) mastozoological material (skins and skulls of native mammals); (h) ornithological material (bird skins, nests and eggs); and (i) botanical material in three big groups: carpological (samples of fruits and seeds); xylological (samples of tree trunks); and general botanical.

943. The CONACYT Prize for the diffusion of science and technology was instituted in order to encourage journalistic activities which extend the frontiers of knowledge. It has been awarded since 2001 to mark sustained efforts to diffuse and popularize information about science and/or technology through the mass media and the work of producers of material on science and/or technology in relation to El Salvador.

944. CONACYT/ITCA/FEPAD⁷⁵ awards the National Press Prize for Science and Technology to mark sustained efforts by press, radio and television journalists and to encourage media managers to popularize scientific and technological subjects by making them easily accessible to society at large.

945. The periodical *El Salvador Ciencia y Tecnología*, the official organ of CONACYT published since 1999, deals with two main topics: scientific and technological development; and standardization, metrology and quality certification.

946. The CONCULTURA National Directorate for the Cultural Heritage, with support from the Spanish Agency for International Cooperation, has published a number of scientific research papers, including: (a) "Archaeological exploration of Ciudad Vieja, El Salvador" by William Fowler and Roberto Gallardo; (b) "The evolution of the ancient Nahuatl civilization: the Pipil- Nicarao of Central America" by William Fowler; (c) "Iron production at Metapán" by José Antonio Fernández; (d) "Chalatenango, urban history" (monograph) by Hugo de Burgos; (e) "Sonsonante, urban history" (monograph) by Hugo de Burgos; and "San Salvador, urban history" (monograph) by América Rodríguez.

947. El Salvador has bilateral cooperation agreements with countries of more advanced scientific development, which help to promote the transfer of technology.

948. The Framework Agreement of the Ibero-American Programme on Science and Technology for Development (CYTED) has played an important role since 1999⁷⁶ by helping to keep the scientific and technological knowledge of Salvadoran researchers up to date; this has facilitated technical innovation in the production sector through the involvement of enterprises from different countries under the IBEROEKA mechanism of the CYTED Programme.

949. A number of national seminars have been held, with the technical and financial support of outside bodies, in order to secure the transfer of knowledge to as many people as possible.⁷⁷

950. A course entitled “ Science, Technology, Society + Innovation” (CTS+I) was set up, in conjunction with 14 participating universities and two institutes of technical education, in order to enhance the awareness and improve the capacity of the academic sector with respect to the production and diffusion of science and technology with a view to innovation with popular participation.

951. The CTS+I course ran from September 2000 to May 2001; it consisted of six in-house seminar modules and telematic activities conducted by Ibero-American experts from the Organization of Ibero-American States; 74 Salvadoran professionals took the course.

952. The RedHUCyT project, supported by the Organization of American States (OAS), established links between three universities, a ministry, a research centre and a professional association with a view to obtaining and generating information on science and technology over the Internet. The institutions benefiting under phase III of the project were Albert Einstein University, the Catholic Universidad de Occidente, the Universidad de Oriente, the National Centre for Agricultural and Forestry Technology, the National Directorate for Higher Education of the Ministry of Education, and the Salvadoran Association of Engineers and Architects.

953. A directory of support services for scientific and technological innovation in medium-sized and small enterprises in El Salvador was compiled in December 1999 with assistance from OAS and the Commission for the Scientific and Technological Development of Central America and Panama (CTCAP); it is available at <http://www.conacyt.gob.sv>. This web site has pages on: (a) general technical assistance; (b) specialized academic training; (c) information and dissemination; (d) research; (e) measurement; (f) trials and testing.

954. The CONACYT Technological Information Centre is responsible for the management of the secretariat of SVNet (the national Internet authority); in 1996 it initiated the registration of subdomains. By September 2002 it had registered 5,919 new SVNet subdomains, which were already in operation under the EL Salvador top level (.sv).

955. The CONACYT information infrastructure improved steadily from June 1998, when the internet gateway had a communication channel capacity of 64 Mb/second, to October

2001, when the capacity was 384 Mb/second and the physical structure of the internal gateway network had also been improved. This has enhanced the quality and reliability of the services for the transfer of scientific and technological information to external users.

956. The web site of the Virtual Information Standards Centre of Central America and Panama went on line in November 1999 (*www.InfoQcentral.org.sv* and *www.infoq.org.sv*); it contains online information on compilations of Salvadoran technical standards and regulations, and ISO and Codex Alimentarius documents. Both pages were produced as part of the project on the integrated regional system of standards, metrology and quality accreditation under the auspices of CTCAP.

957. The information about CONACYT activities is constantly updated, as is the scientific and technological information on the web pages (*www.conacyt.gob.sv* and *www.infocyt.gob.sv*) to provide guidance for the country's production sectors.

958. Training has been given to 960 members of trade unions and universities and public and hospital employees by means of talks on Internet services and the uses and benefits of information technology.

959. One of the chief objectives of the National Standards System is to provide technical support for the activities envisaged in the free-trade agreements which El Salvador has signed with other countries. The production sectors collaborated on the development of this system with a view to establishing the official benchmark technical standards required for the standardization of the quality of the products and services involved in the free-trade activities.

960. The steps taken to improve the National System include: (a) establishment of the Central American Commission on Harmonization of Technical Regulations; (b) coordination of the work of technical standardization committees; (c) standardization of technical regulations in the Central American region; (d) adoption of international standards (500 UNE standards); and (e) diffusion of technical standards to enterprises.

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Paragraph 70 of the guidelines

965. Four framework agreements have been signed with foreign institutions: agreements on technical and scientific cooperation between the National Science and Technology Council and the Republic of Peru, LATU (Uruguay), SWISSCONTACT/PROEMPRESA, and Spain's Standardization and Certification Association.

966. Five framework agreements have been concluded with Salvadoran universities: the Evangelical University, Alberto Masferrer University, the Polytechnical University, Albert Einstein University, and Francisco Gavidia University.

967. Three framework agreements have been concluded with business and professional associations and trade unions: the Salvadoran Industrial Association, the Salvadoran Association of Engineers and Architects, and the Federation of Engineers and Architects.

968. Two framework agreements have been concluded with other public institutions: the National Commission on Micro-Enterprises and Small Businesses, and the National Public Housing Fund.

969. Three multilateral agreements have been signed, including a specific agreement with 11 universities, two institutes of higher education and the Organization of Ibero-American States concerning the course on science, technology, society + innovation (CTS+I) (university network of El Salvador).

970. A specific agreement has been signed with the Salvadoran Foundation for the Construction of Small Housing Units for the implementation of a pilot plan on house-construction technology under the CYTED programme.

971. Nine specific agreements have been concluded with business associations, support agencies and universities concerning the IDB/FOMIN project on quality control and food safety in small and medium-sized enterprises.

972. Cooperation is being maintained or increased with other institutions such as the Directorate-General for Consumer Protection (DPC) of the Ministry of the Economy.

973. An agreement on joint activities has been signed by CONACYT and DPC for the application of the metrological controls provided for in the CONACYT Act and the DPC Act. The first specific work programme is on the verification of shop scales, currently under implementation; the next one will be on the verification of the gross and net volume of prepackaged goods.

974. As mentioned earlier, CONCULTURA has a programme on the transfer of funds to nonprofit private organizations and foundations.

975. The proposal for the establishment of a national system for science, technology and innovation has been circulated; it concerns the scientific, technological, financial and production sectors.

976. Instruments have been drafted to facilitate the organization of the science and technology sectors of the proposed national system with a view to innovation in agriculture and forestry in order to stimulate academic interest in the production of and diffusion of scientific and technological knowledge for use in the process of innovation with popular participation.

977. A proposal was made to the National Centre for Agricultural and Forestry Technology (CENTA) in 2000 on the application of the national system to promote innovation in agriculture and forestry.

978. Regulations on a national network of science and technology researchers were proposed in 2000 for application to the thematic networks, and a web site (<http://www.redisal.org.sv>) was established in December 2001 to make the network's database available on the Internet; this database has sections on registration (including a form), researchers, thematic networks, and institutions.

979. A database list of 158 Salvadoran researchers was created in 2001. Modern technology was identified which can be used to support the country's economic development. Logistical support was furnished for the distance-learning course on basic cellular and molecular biology of the University of Chile, with assistance from OAS and CTCAP (1999); 14 Salvadoran professionals were involved in this undertaking.

980. A document was produced on "Elements of future biotechnology to boost the economic development of agro-industry in El Salvador"; it identifies state-of-art technology which can support the country's economic development. It covers the life-cycle of information technology, emerging technology (biotechnology and nanotechnology), the role of biotechnology in the bioeconomy century, and its potential contribution to the transformation of the country's agriculture and livestock sectors.

981. Information has been disseminated, in the shape of presentations made to various forums, conferences and workshops and to institutions, about the foundations, applications and future development of biotechnology, nanotechnology and the information sciences as a basis for analysis of their potential role in the country's technological development.⁷⁸

982. An agreement was concluded with the Ibero-American Programme on Science and Technology for Development (CYTED, CENTA and CONACYT-1999) on a capacity-building project entitled "Strengthening of the capacity of the National Centre for Agricultural and Forestry Technology with respect to biotechnology", to which the Spanish Agency for International Cooperation (AECI) contributed \$50,000. Project execution was completed in October 2001.

983. The second phase of this project was negotiated with AECI, which granted CENTA \$50,000 for implementation of the second phase between February 2002 and February 2004.

⁷⁴ See the annex "Principal concentrations of indigenous population in El Salvador".

⁷⁵ See the annex "CONACYT prizes for the diffusion of science and technology".

⁷⁶ See the annex "Participation of Salvadorans in CYTED events: scholarships taken up abroad".

⁷⁷ See the annex "CYTED courses, forums and workshops held in El Salvador".

⁷⁸ See the annex "Conferences on the applications and future development of biotechnology".