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IMPLEMENTATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL COVENANT
ON ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL RIGHTS

Initial reports submitted by States parties
under articles 16 and 17 of the Covenant
Addendum

[Original: RUSSIAN]
KYRGYZSTAN

[5 May 1998]

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239. Article 36 of the Constitution establishes freedom of culture, art, literature, science and the mass media. Citizens have the right of access to the benefits of culture and the right to engage in artistic and scientific pursuits. Every citizen has the right freely to express and disseminate thoughts, ideas and opinions, the right freely to engage in creative work in literature, art, science and technology, and the right to freedom of the press and of the transmission and dissemination of information (art. 16).

240. The State preserves historic monuments and fosters the development of literature, art, science, the mass media and sports. In this connection, laws have been adopted to further the realization of each individual's right to participate in cultural life; they include the Culture Act of 15 March 1992, the Copyright and Associated Rights Act, the Science and Foundations of State Policy on Science and Technology Act and the Computerization Act. In addition, the "Madaniyat" State programme for the development and preservation of culture and art in the period 1997-2000 was adopted on 14 October 1996.

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255. Freedom of scientific research is guaranteed by the Science and Foundations of State Policy on Science and Technology Act, which establishes the researcher's freedom in his work and protects his results. Under this Act, the State supports international scientific and technological cooperation, creates legal and economic conditions for it and fosters scientific and technological activities carried out on free and equal terms with international scientific associations, provided such terms do not contravene national law.

256. Kyrgyz researchers are currently actively participating in programmes of the European Union, such as INTAS, INCOCOPERNICUS, LIEN, COST and humanitarian programmes, as well as in programmes of the American Civil Research Fund, NATO, etc. Kyrgyz researchers have been invited as experts to assess scientific projects within international programmes.

257. The Government of Kyrgyzstan is actively engaged in establishing a working relationship with the international scientific community. A programme has been established for the implementation of treaties, agreements and memoranda of understanding signed by Kyrgyzstan with the European Union. This work is carried out at the level of the Prime Minister and reports on it are submitted to the President. The results of the work are communicated to the population through the mass media.

Measures for the dissemination of information on scientific progress

258. Information activities form an integral part of the State policy on science and technology, the aim being to ensure that information relating to scientific and technological progress in Kyrgyzstan and elsewhere benefits all members of society. The legislation covering scientific and technological information consists of the Science and Foundations of State Policy on Science and Technology Act, the Scientific and Technological Information System Act and other instruments, international treaties, agreements and rules of international law ratified by the country.

259. The Scientific and Technological Information System Act stipulates that all citizens and all judicial persons however owned have equal rights to open scientific and technological information and to information products and services.

260. One of the most important factors assisting in the preservation, development and dissemination of scientific and cultural achievements is the national library network. State policy concerning libraries is aimed at creating conditions for general access to the information and cultural treasures in libraries' collections. The development of libraries is taken into account in the relevant State programmes.

261. A draft law on libraries has now been drawn up on the basis of the Culture Act. Under this Act, all citizens are entitled, without discrimination, to library services within Kyrgyzstan (art. 5, para. 1). There are, however, a number of problems which need to be addressed. Many libraries are located in unsuitable premises, some of which are in very bad repair. In the past four years both acquisitions and readership have declined.