

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL
Substantive session of 1996

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

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

UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND:
HONG KONG * **

[24 January 1996]

* The second periodic reports concerning rights covered by articles 10 to 12 (E/1986/4/Add.27 and E/1986/4/Add.28) and articles 13 to 15 (E/1990/7/Add.16) as well as additional information (E/1989/5/Add.9) submitted by the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland were considered by the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights at its eleventh session (E/C.12/1994/SR.33, 34, 36 and 37).

The annexes referred to in the present report are available for consultation in the secretariat.

** The information submitted by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland in accordance with the guidelines concerning the initial part of reports of States parties is contained in the core document (HRI/CORE/1/Add.62).

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Measures to promote the development of science

403. Science subjects are taught at primary and secondary schools and post-secondary educational institutions. Institutions of higher education obtain research funding from benefactors, private companies and the Hong Kong Government. In 1993/94, Government research grants totalled HK\$ 1,510 million about 0.2 per cent of Hong Kong's 1993 GDP. These grants were allocated as follows:

Subject or discipline	HK\$ million
Engineering	400
Physical Science	200
Biology and Medicine	400
Humanities, social sciences and business studies	510
Total	1510

404. The Hong Kong Government encourages the development and application of technology to industry in many different ways. External technology transfer is facilitated by the Hong Kong Productivity Council, the Industrial Technology Centre and the Applied Research Council. Inward investment, which is promoted by the Industry Department and assisted by the Hong Kong Industrial Estates Corporation, is also an important source of new technology. The Applied Research Council, which promotes cooperative applied research with

Chinese research institutions, also funds applied research and development. From its Industrial Support Fund, the Industrial Development Council supports technology development projects that have an industrial application. Prevention of using scientific and technical progress for purposes contrary to the enjoyment of human rights

405. The Hong Kong Government is aware of the need to prevent the use of scientific and technical progress for purposes contrary to the enjoyment of human rights. The Bill of Rights Ordinance provides, inter alia, that no one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment and, in particular, that no one shall be subjected without his free consent to medical or scientific experimentation.

406. The Convention against Torture and Other Cruel Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment was extended to Hong Kong in December 1992. To give effect to the provisions of the Convention, the Crimes (Torture) Ordinance was enacted on 21 January 1993.

Control of reproductive technology

407. In 1992, the Committee on Scientifically Assisted Human Reproduction recommended measures to regulate the practice of reproductive technology in Hong Kong. In 1993, these recommendations were published for public comment, and legislation is now being drafted to establish a Council on Reproductive Technology. This will be a regulatory, licensing and monitoring body with authority over all medical treatment or scientific intervention directed at assisting human reproduction by artificial means (including in vitro fertilization, artificial insemination, sex selection and manipulation of gametes or embryos outside the body). The Council will also be responsible for drawing up a code of practice and advising the Hong Kong Government on the need for legislation. A provisional Council on Reproductive Technology is expected to be appointed later in 1995 to advise on the drafting of the Reproductive Technology Bill, which is scheduled to be introduced into the Legislative Council in 1996.

Privacy protection of personal data

408. In 1994, the Hong Kong Government introduced the Personal Data (Privacy) Bill into the Legislative Council. Based on recommendations by the Law Reform Commission, the Bill aims to provide comprehensive protection for the privacy of the individual with respect to personal data. It completed its passage through the Legislative Council in July 1995.

Intrusion into private premises

409. The Personal Data (Privacy) Bill does not cover intrusion into private premises by electronic or other means or the interception of communications, but the Privacy Subcommittee is considering these issues. The Hong Kong Government will decide what measures it should take when it receives the Commission's report.

410. The United Kingdom and Hong Kong Governments recognize the right of authors to protection of their work. Accordingly, the United Kingdom has extended to Hong Kong the application of the main international treaties on intellectual property rights. These are: the revised Paris Conventions for the protection of industrial property, 1883-1967; the revised Berne Conventions for the Protection of Literary and Artistic Works, 1886-1948; the revised Universal Copyright Conventions and Protocols, 1952-1971; and the Convention for the Protection of Producers of Phonograms against Unauthorized Duplication of Their Phonograms, 1971. As a member of the World Trade Organization, Hong Kong is

preparing omnibus amending legislation to implement the provisions of the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights, including Trade in Counterfeit Goods, concluded in the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade Uruguay Round negotiations in 1994.