

E/1990/6/Add.21
15 October 1998

Original: ENGLISH

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL
Substantive session of 1999

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

Second periodic reports submitted by States parties under
articles 16 and 17 of the Covenant in accordance with the
programmes established by Economic and Social Council
resolution 1988/4

Addendum
JAPAN*

[28 August 1998]

* The initial reports concerning rights covered by articles 6 to 9 (E/1984/6/Add.6), by articles 10 to 12 (E/1986/3/Add.4) and by articles 13 to 15 (E/1982/3/Add.7) submitted by the Government of Japan were considered by the Sessional Working Group of Governmental Experts on the implementation of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in 1984 (see E/1984/WG.1/SR.910), in 1986 (see E/1986/WG.1/SR.2021 and 23) and in 1982 (see E/1982/WG.1/SR.1213) respectively.

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Right to enjoy the benefits of scientific progress and its application

(a) Promotion of scientific research

250. Full respect for the independence of researchers is indispensable so that scientific research can be truly fruitful. Towards this end, article 21 (Freedom of expression) and article 23 (Freedom of learning) of the Constitution guarantee the right to research, publish, and teach.

251. Universities are the centre of scientific research in Japan. Under the National Schools Establishment Law, national universities and affiliated research institutes, education and research centres attached to university faculties and inter-university institutes have been established. In addition, under the Private School Promotion Subsidy Law and the Law Concerning National Assistance for Research Equipment at Private Universities, the Government subsidizes a part of the cost of research conducted at private universities.

252. In addition, the Government carries out a multifaceted policy as follows: expanding scientific research grants which are the basic research expenses for the promotion of scientific research; setting up a system to use capital investment given to the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science for projects to promote scientific research; securing and training a sufficient number of young researchers through

improvement of the graduate schools responsible for educating researchers and enrichment of the fellowship system in line with the programme to support 10,000 postdoctoral fellows; emphasizing promotion of basic research; improving and expanding research facilities; improving and expanding the Scientific Information Systems (SIS) such as the National Centre for Science Information Systems (NACSIS); and promoting international academic exchanges such as research exchanges. Furthermore, as part of the promotion of basic research to create new technologies, the Government financially supports the Japan Science and Technology Corporation to establish and expand a basic research promotion system in which researchers at such institutions as national research institutes and universities can apply for funding on a competitive basis. Japan also actively carries out international joint research projects for international research exchange at national research institutions through the Special Coordination Funds for Promoting Science and Technology, and implements programmes such as the Fellowship Programme at the Japan Science and Technology Corporation.

253. Furthermore, the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science, as a special corporation established under the Law Concerning the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science, implements various projects for the promotion of science, such as assisting scientific research, granting researchers and promoting international cooperation in academic fields. The Law Concerning the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science was amended in May 1996 and has inaugurated research projects in the creative sciences, through capital investment from government contributions.

254. Furthermore, the Government takes financial measures to assist the Japan Academy by which to honour and award scientists for distinguished achievement in their respective field.

(b) Dissemination of related information

255. In Japan, the results of academic and scientific research are published by academic societies and applied in industry and for other practical applications.

256. The Government makes efforts to spread academic information by subsidizing various scientific periodicals published by academic societies and lectures for youth and the general public. The Japan Science and Technology Corporation (JST), established through the consolidation of the Japan Information Centre of Science and Technology (JICST) and the Research Development Corporation of Japan on 1 October 1996) offers an on-line information service to promote the distribution of information on science and technology, taking over the JICST's role as the key provider of Japanese scientific and technical information. To improve the infrastructure for the international dissemination of scientific and technical information, the JST took over the international scientific and technical information network (STN-International), which was put into service in 1987 and links the JICST to the Chemical Abstracts Service in the United States as well as to FIZ Karlsruhe in Germany. In addition, Japan opened the Machine Translation Centre for Japanese Science and Technology Literature in the United States in May 1996 under the Japan-United States Science and Technology Agreement and is planning to disseminate domestic scientific and technological research information to countries in the Asian-

Pacific region. These facts clearly indicate that the Government is vigorously dispatching information abroad.

257. Moreover, the Government makes efforts to provide the public with information through research on related fields, collection and preservation of materials, and public exhibitions at the National Science Museum, the National Museum of Ethnology and the National History and Ethnology Museum.

(c) Preservation of natural property and natural environments

258. Under the Nature Conservation Law, the Government conducts surveys to understand the natural environment of the nation, designates nature conservation areas, and manages such areas to preserve the natural environment appropriately.

259. The Government also designates and manages natural parks based on the Natural Parks Law to conserve and properly use the prominent natural landscapes, including those regions which have great academic value. The area covered by the Natural Parks Law amounted to 5,330,000 hectares in 1994, which is 14 per cent of the total land area of the nation.

260. Furthermore, to protect animal and plant life and preserve the natural environment through the preservation of primitive forests, Japan designates and manages a significant part of the national forests as protected forests such as the Forest Ecosystem Reserves.

261. "Yakushima" and "Shirakami-Sanchi", in particular, have been designated as natural heritage sites on the World Heritage List based on the Convention for the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage. Yakushima is famous for its typically vertical distribution of unique plant species including Yakusugi (*Cryptomeria japonica*). Shirakami-Sanchi has well-preserved primitive forests with diversified animal and plant life and is famous in East Asia for its prototype Japanese beech (*Fagus crenata*) forest, which was formed after the Ice Age. Japan has taken the necessary measures to protect these sites according to management plans formulated in 1995, including the implementation of various systems and promotion of various projects.

262. Japan also designates animals and plants as well as geological features having greater scientific value as natural treasures and tries to limit any alterations to their present conditions so as to protect and preserve nature with an emphasis on the ecosystem and animal and plant species.

(d) Measures taken to promote learning of and dissemination of scientific and technological knowledge

263. These measures include:

(a) Extending assistance to "Experience Centres of Frontier Science and Technology", which local governments hold to enhance the interest of youth in scientific technology;

(b) Helping the Japan Science and Technology Corporation to develop virtual scientific buildings where people can experience

science and technology first-hand, to create attractive exhibits and to hold seminars;

(c) Endorsing sponsorship of activities to promote learning of and to disseminate scientific and technological knowledge;

(d) Setting up preferential tax measures for non-profit organizations for the benefit of the public involved in the promotion of learning and dissemination of scientific and technological knowledge; and

(e) Honouring people who make great achievements in science and technology (medals and other awards by the Minister of State for Science and Technology, for noteworthy inventions, etc.).

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Encouragement and development of international exchange and cooperation

(a) International exchange and cooperation in the scientific field

269. Progress in science requires intellectual exchange among researchers beyond national boundaries, and the provision of assistance to encourage this is extremely important.

270. Japan takes various measures to encourage international exchange, for example, by providing travel expenses for those wishing to participate in international conferences and symposiums. The Japan Science Promotion Society also conducts various activities including the promotion of international cooperation related to the field of science, assists scientific research and gives grants to researchers. Japan has been actively cooperating with UNESCO; specifically, Japan implements scientific cooperation projects in developing countries, including global environmental projects operated through the trust funds of UNESCO.

271. From fiscal year 1991, Japan has held international workshops for information exchange and examining measures to promote international research exchange in the fields which are considered politically important, in light of the international science and technology cooperation agreements, etc.