CHAPTER XVI
STATUS OF WOMEN

1. CONVENTION ON THE POLITICAL RIGHTS OF WOMEN

New York, 31 March 1953

ENTRY INTO FORCE: 7 July 1954, in accordance with article VI.
REGISTRATION: 7 July 1954, No. 2613.
STATUS: Signatories: 47. Parties: 123.

Note: The Convention was opened for signature pursuant to resolution 640 (VII), adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations on 20 December 1952.

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<th>Participant</th>
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XVI.1. STATUS OF WOMEN
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Declarations and Reservations
(Unless otherwise indicated, the declarations and reservations were made upon ratification, accession or succession. For objections thereto and territorial applications, see hereinafter.)

ALBANIA

1. As regards Article VII: The People's Republic of Albania declares its disagreement with the last sentence of article VII and considers that the juridical effect of a reservation is to make the Convention operative as between the State making the reservation and all other States parties to the Convention, with the exception only of that part thereof to which the reservation relates.

2. As regards Article IX: The People's Republic of Albania does not consider itself bound by the provisions of article IX which provides that disputes between Contracting Parties concern the interpretation or application of this Convention shall at the request of any one of the parties to the dispute be referred to the International Court of Justice for decision, and declares that for any dispute to be referred to the International Court of Justice for decision the agreement of all the parties to the dispute shall be necessary in each individual case.

ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA

"The Government of Antigua and Barbuda reserves from the application of this Convention all matters relating to the recruitment to, and conditions of service in, the armed forces of Antigua and Barbuda."

ARGENTINA

The Argentine Government reserves the right not to submit to the procedure set out in this article [article IX] any dispute which is directly connected with territories which fall within Argentine sovereignty.

AUSTRALIA

"The Government of Australia hereby declares that the accession by Australia shall be subject to the reservation that article III of the Convention shall have no application as regards recruitment to and conditions of service in the Defence Forces."

"The Government of Australia furthermore declares that the Convention shall not extend to Papua New Guinea."

AUSTRIA

"The Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh will apply article III of the Convention in consonance with the relevant provisions of the Constitution of Bangladesh and in particular, article 28 (4) allowing special provision in favour of women; article 29.3 (c) allowing reservation of any class of employment or office for one sex on the ground that it is considered by its nature to be unsuited to members of the opposite sex; and article 65 (3) providing for reservation of 30 seats in the National Assembly for women in addition to the provision allowing women to be elected to any and all of the 300 seats."

For the submission of any dispute in terms of this article to the jurisdiction of the International Court of Justice, the consent of all the parties to the dispute will be required in each case."

BELARUS

As regards article VII:

[Same declaration as the one reproduced under "Albania".]

BELGIUM

As regards article VII:

[Same declaration and reservation as the one reproduced under "Albania".]

BULGARIA

As regards article VII:

[Same declaration and reservation as the one reproduced under "Albania".]

CANADA

"Inasmuch as under the Canadian constitutional system legislative jurisdiction in respect of political rights is divided between the provinces and the Federal Government, the Government of Canada is obliged, in acceding to this Convention, to make a reservation in respect of rights within the legislative jurisdiction of the provinces."

CZECH REPUBLIC

DENMARK

Subject to a reservation with respect to article III of the Convention, in so far as it relates to the right of women to hold military appointments or to act as heads of recruitment services or to serve on recruitment boards.

ESWATINI

"(a) Article III of the Convention shall have no application as regards remuneration for women in certain posts in the Civil Service of the Kingdom of Swaziland;

(b) The Convention shall have no application to matters which are regulated by Swaziland Law and Customs in accordance with Section 62 (2) of the Constitution of the Kingdom of Swaziland. [(a) The office of Nggwenyama; (b) the office of Ndlovukazi (the Queen Mother); (c) the authorization of a person to perform the functions of Regent for the purposes of section 30 of this Constitution; (d) the appointment, revocation of appointment and suspension of Chiefs; (e) the composition of the Swazi National Council, the appointment and revocation of appointment of members of the Council, and the procedure of the Council; (f) the Newala Ceremony; (g) the Libutfi (regimental) system.]

FIJI

"The reservations of the United Kingdom (a), (b), (d) and (f) are affirmed and are redrafted as more suitable to the situation of Fiji in the following terms:

"(a) Article III is accepted subject to reservations, pending notification of withdrawal of any case, insofar as it relates to:

"(a) succession to the Crown;

"(b) certain offices primarily of a ceremonial nature;

"(d) recruitment to and conditions of service in the armed forces;

"(f) the employment of married women in the civil service.

"All other reservations made by the United Kingdom are withdrawn."
FINLAND

As regards Article III: "A decree may be issued to the effect that only men or women can be appointed to certain functions, which because of their nature, can be properly discharged either only by men or by women."

FRANCE

"The Federal Republic of Germany accedes to the Convention with the reservation that article III of the Convention does not apply to service in the armed forces."

GERMANY

"The Government of Mexico will not deposit its instrument of ratification pending the entry into force of the amendment to the Political Constitution of the United Mexican States which is now under consideration, providing that citizenship rights shall be granted to Mexican women."

GUATEMALA

"The last sentence of article VII and the whole article IX do not apply to Indonesia."

HUNGARY

"Article III is accepted subject to reservation, pending notification of withdrawal in any case, so far as it relates to: Matters regulated by Basotho Law and Custom."

INDIA

"Article III of the Convention shall have no application as regards recruitment to, and conditions of service in any of the Armed Forces of India or the Forces charged with the maintenance of public order in India."

"Article III of the Convention shall have no application as regards recruitment to and conditions of service in the armed forces or to jury service."

"It is expressly understood that the Government of Mexico will not deposit its instrument of ratification pending the entry into force of the amendment to the Political Constitution of the United Mexican States which is now under consideration, providing that citizenship rights shall be granted to Mexican women."

"The last sentence of article VII and the whole article IX do not apply to Indonesia."

"The Government of Mauritius hereby declares that it does not consider itself bound by article III of the Convention in so far as that Article applies to recruitment to and conditions of service in the armed forces or to jury service."

"The last sentence of article VII and the whole article IX do not apply to Indonesia."

"As regards article VII: [Same declaration as the one reproduced under "Albania"]."

"As regards article VII: [Same declaration and reservation as the ones reproduced under "Albania"]."

"As regards article VII: [Same declaration as the one reproduced under "Albania"]."

"As regards article VII: [Same declaration and reservation as the ones reproduced under "Albania"]."

"As regards article VII: [Same declaration as the one reproduced under "Albania"]."

"As regards article VII: [Same declaration as the one reproduced under "Albania"]."

"As regards article VII: [Same declaration as the one reproduced under "Albania"]."

"As regards article IX of the Convention: "A dispute shall be referred for decision to the International Court of Justice only at the request of all the parties to the dispute."

"As regards article VII: [Same declaration and reservation as the ones reproduced under "Albania"]."

"As regards article VII: [Same declaration as the one reproduced under "Albania"]."

"As regards article VII: [Same declaration as the one reproduced under "Albania"]."

"As regards article VII: [Same declaration as the one reproduced under "Albania"]."

"As regards article VII: [Same declaration as the one reproduced under "Albania"]."
recruitment to and conditions of service in the Armed Forces or to jury service."

**Slovakia**

**Solomon Islands**

The Government of Solomon Islands declared that Solomon Islands maintains the reservations entered by the United Kingdom save in so far as the same cannot apply to Solomon Islands.

**Spain**

Articles I and III of the Convention shall be interpreted with out prejudice to the provisions which in current Spanish legislation define the status of head of family.

Articles II and III shall be interpreted without prejudice to the fact that certain functions, which by their nature can be exercised satisfactorily only by men or only by women, shall be exercised exclusively by men or by women, as appropriate, in accordance with Spanish legislation.

**St. Vincent and the Grenadines**

“The Government of St. Vincent and the Grenadines reserves from the application of article III of this Convention all matters relating to the recruitment to, and conditions of service in, the armed forces of St. Vincent and the Grenadines.”

**Tunisia**

[Article IX] For any dispute to be referred to the International Court of Justice, the agreement of all the parties to the dispute shall be necessary in every case.

**Ukraine**

*As regards article VII:*

\[Same declaration as the one reproduced under "Albania".\]

**United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland**

The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland accedes to the Convention with the following reservations submitted in accordance with article VII:

"(1) Article III is accepted subject to reservations, pending notification of withdrawal in any case, in so far as it relates to:

'(a) succession to the Crown;

(b) certain offices primarily of a ceremonial nature;

(c) the function of sitting and voting in the House of Lords pertaining to holders of hereditary peerages and holders of certain offices in the Church of England;

(d) recruitment to and conditions of service in the armed forces;

(e) jury service in Grenada, [...] as well as in the Kingdom of Tonga;

(f) ..."

*Reservation with regard to article IX:*

[...] Hong Kong, as well as of the Protectorate of Swaziland;

"(h) ..."

"(i) in the State of Brunei, the exercise of the royal powers, jury service or its equivalent and the holding of certain offices governed by Islamic Law.

"(2) The United Kingdom reserves the right not to apply this Convention to Rhodesia unless and until the United Kingdom informs the Secretary-General of the United Nations that it is in a position to ensure that the obligations imposed by the Convention in respect of that territory can be fully implemented."

**Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)**

*Reservation with regard to article IX:*

[Venezuela] does not accept the jurisdiction of the International Court of Justice for the settlement of disputes concerning the interpretation or application of this Convention.

**Yemen**

(a) The People's Democratic Republic of Yemen declares that it does not accept the last sentence of article VII and considers that the juridical effect of a reservation is to make the Convention operative as between the State making the reservation and all other States parties to the Convention with the exception only of that part thereof to which the reservation relates.

(b) The People's Democratic Republic of Yemen does not consider itself bound by the text of article IX, which provides that disputes between Contracting Parties concerning the interpretation or application of this Convention may, at the request of any one of the parties to the dispute, be referred to the International Court of Justice. It declares that the competence of the International Court of Justice with respect to disputes concerning the interpretation or application of the Convention shall in each case be subject to the express consent of all parties to the dispute.

**Objections**

(Unless otherwise indicated, the objections were received upon ratification, accession or succession.)

(Note: In accordance with article VII of the Convention, a State which objects to a reservation, may ".. within a period of ninety days from the date of the [notification of the reservation by the Secretary-General], notify the Secretary-General that it does not accept it. In such case, the Convention shall not enter into force as between such State and the State making the reservation.")

**Canada**

Objection to the reservations made in respect of articles VII and IX by the Governments of Albania, Bulgaria, the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic and Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.
CZECH REPUBLIC

Denmark

Objection to the reservations in respect of articles VII and IX:
[ Same States as the ones listed under "Canada". ]

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

Objection to the reservations made by the Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics in respect of articles VII and IX.

ETHIOPIA

Objection to the reservations in respect of articles VII and IX:
[ Same States as the ones listed under "Canada". ]

ISRAEL

Objection to the reservations in respect of articles VII and IX:
[ Same States as the ones listed under "Canada". ]

MONTENEGRO

Objection to the reservations made by the Government of Guatemala, in respect of articles I, II and III, as these reservations "are not in accordance with the principles contained in Article I of the Charter of the United Nations and with the aims of the Convention".

NORWAY

Objection to the reservations made by the Government of Argentina in respect of article VII.

Objection to the reservations made by the Government of Guatemala in respect of articles I, II and III.

Objection to the reservations in respect of articles VII and IX:
[ Same States as the ones listed under "Canada". ]

"A reservation by which a State Party limits its responsibilities under the Convention by invoking general principles of internal law may create doubts about the commitment of the reserving State to the object and purpose of the Convention and, moreover contribute to undermining the basis of international treaty law. Under well-established international treaty law, a state is not permitted to invoke internal law as justification for its failure to perform its treaty obligations. For this reason, the Government of Sweden objects to the aforesaid declaration made by the Government of Bangladesh.

The Government of Norway does not consider this objection to preclude the entry into force in its entirety of the Convention between the Kingdom of Norway and the People's Republic of Bangladesh, the Convention thus becomes operative between the Kingdom of Norway and the People's Republic of Bangladesh without the Republic of Bangladesh benefiting from these reservations."

PAKISTAN

Objection to the reservations made by the Government of Argentina in respect of article VII.

Objection to the reservation made by France and recorded in the procès-verbal of signature of the Convention.

Objection to the reservations made by the Government of Guatemala in respect of articles I, II and III.

Objection to the reservations in respect of articles VII and IX:
[ Same States as the ones listed under "Canada". ]

PHILIPPINES

Objection to the reservations made by the Government of Albania in respect of articles VII and IX.

Objection to the reservations made by the Government of Romania in respect of articles VII and IX.

REPUBLIC OF KOREA

Objection to the reservations made by the Government of Mongolia in respect of articles IV, paragraph 1, and V, paragraph 1.

Objection to the reservations made by the Government of Mongolia in respect of articles IV, paragraph 1, and V, paragraph 1.

SERBIA

Objection to the reservations made by the Government of Guatemala, in respect of articles I, II and III, as these reservations "are not in accordance with the principles contained in Article I of the Charter of the United Nations and with the aims of the Convention".

SLOVAKIA

SWEDEN

Objection to reservations:
[ Same objections as the ones listed under "Norway". ]

"In this context the Government of Sweden would like to recall, that under well-established international treaty law, the name assigned to a statement whereby the legal effect of certain provisions of a treaty is excluded or modified, does not determine its status as a reservation to the treaty. Thus, the Government of Sweden considers that the declarations made by the Government of Bangladesh, in the absence of further clarification, in substance constitute reservations to the Convention.

The Government of Sweden notes that the declaration relating to article III is of a general kind, stating that Bangladesh will apply the said article in consonance with the relevant provisions of its Constitution. The Government of Sweden is of the view that this declaration raises doubts as to the commitment of Bangladesh to the object and purpose of the Convention and would recall that, according to well-established international law, a reservation incompatible with the object and purpose of a treaty shall not be permitted.

It is in the common interest of States that treaties to which they have chosen to become parties are respected, as to their object and purpose, by all parties and that States are prepared to undertake any legislative changes necessary to comply with their obligations under those treaties.

For the reasons set out above the Government of Sweden objects to the aforesaid declaration made by the Government of Bangladesh to the Convention on the Political Rights of Women.

This objection does not preclude the entry into force of the Convention between Bangladesh and Sweden. The Convention will thus become operative between the two States without Bangladesh benefitting from the declaration".
Territorial Application

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Notes:


2. Signed and ratified on behalf of the Republic of China on 9 June 1953 and 21 December 1953, respectively. See note concerning signatures, ratifications, accessions, etc., on behalf of China (note 1 under “China” in the “Historical Information” section in the front matter of this volume).

In communications addressed to the Secretary-General with reference to the above-mentioned signature and/or ratification, the Permanent Missions to the United Nations of Czechoslovakia, Denmark, India, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and Yugoslavia stated that, since their Governments did not recognize the Nationalist Chinese authorities as the Government of China, they could not regard the said signature or ratification as valid. The Permanent Missions of Czechoslovakia and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics further stated that the sole authorities entitled to act for China and the Chinese people in the United Nations and in international relations, and to sign, ratify, accede or denounce treaties, conventions and agreements on behalf of China, were the Government of the People’s Republic of China and its duly appointed representatives.

In a note addressed to the Secretary-General, the Permanent Mission of China to the United Nations stated that the Government of the Republic of China was the only legal Government which represented China and the Chinese people in international relations and that, therefore, the allegations made in the above-mentioned communiqués as to the lack of validity of the signature or ratification in question had no legal foundation whatever.

3. On 10 June 1997, the Governments of China and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland notified the Secretary-General of the following:

China:

[ Same notification as the one made under note 6 in chapter IV.3. ]

United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland:

[ Same notification as the one made under note 5 in chapter IV.1. ]

In addition, the notification made by the Government of China contained the following declaration:

The signature and ratification by the Taiwan authorities in the name of China respectively on 9 June 1953 and 21 December 1953 of the [said Convention] are all illegal and therefore null and void.

4. The former Yugoslavia had signed and ratified the Convention on 31 March 1953 and 23 June 1954, respectively. The former Yugoslavia had also made the following objection:

Objection to the reservations made by the Government of Guatemala, in respect of articles I, II and III, as these reservations "are not in accordance with the principles contained in Article I of the Charter of the United Nations and with the aims of the Convention".

See also note 1 under “Bosnia and Herzegovina”, “Croatia”, “former Yugoslavia”, “Slovenia”, “The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia” and “Yugoslavia” in the “Historical Information” section in the front matter of this volume.

5. Czechoslovakia had signed and ratified the Convention on 31 March 1953 and 6 April 1995, respectively, with reservations, one of which regarding article IX of the Convention, had been withdrawn on 26 April 1991. For the text of the said reservations, see United Nations, Treaty Series, vol. 193, p. 157. Subsequently, on 10 June 1974, the Government of Czechoslovakia formulated an objection to the reservation made by Spain. For the text of the objection, see United Nations, Treaty Series, vol. 940, p. 340. See also note 1 under “Czech Republic” and note 1 under “Slovakia” in the “Historical Information” section in the front matter of this volume.

6. On 14 September 2015, the Government of Ecuador notified the Secretary-General that it had decided to withdraw its reservation made upon signature and confirmed upon ratification, that read as follows:

"The Government of Ecuador signs this Convention subject to a reservation with respect to the last phrase in article I, 'without any discrimination', since article 22 of the Political Constitution
of the Republic specifies that "a vote in popular elections is obligatory for a man and optional for a woman".

7 The German Democratic Republic had acceded to the Convention with reservations and a declaration on 27 March 1973. For the text of the reservations and declaration, see United Nations, Treaty Series, vol. 861, p. 203. See note 2 under “Germany” in the “Historical Information” section in the front matter of this volume.

8 See note 1 under “Germany” regarding Berlin (West) in the “Historical Information” section in the front matter of this volume.

9 See note 1 under "Montenegro" in the "Historical Information" section in the front matter of this volume.

10 In a communication received on 10 May 1982, the Government of Solomon Islands declared that Solomon Islands maintains the reservations entered by the United Kingdom save in so far as the same cannot apply to Solomon Islands.

11 The formality was effected by Democratic Yemen. See also note 1 under "Yemen" in the “Historical Information” section in the front matter of this volume.

12 On 11 September 2000, the Government of Austria notified the Secretary-General that it had decided to withdraw its reservation to article III made upon ratification. For the text of the reservation, see United Nations, Treaty Series, vol. 669, p. 312.

13 In this regard, the Secretary-General received the following communications on the dates indicated hereinafter:

Germany (17 December 1999):

"The Government of the Federal Republic of Germany notes that the declaration with regard to article III of the Convention, application of that article “in consonance with the relevant provisions of the Constitution of Bangladesh”, constitutes a reservation of a general nature in respect of a provision of the Convention which may be contrary to the Constitution of Bangladesh.

The Government of the Federal Republic of Germany is of the view that this general reservation raises doubts as to the full commitment of Bangladesh to the object and purpose of the Convention. It is in the common interest of States that treaties to which they have chosen to become Parties are respected, as to their object and purpose, by all Parties and that States are prepared to undertake any legislative changes necessary to comply with their obligations under these treaties.

The Government of the Federal Republic of Germany therefore objects to the reservation made by the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh to the Convention on the Political Rights of Women. This objection does not preclude the entry into force of the Convention between the Federal Republic of Germany and the People's Republic of Bangladesh".

Netherlands (20 December 1999):

"The Government of the Kingdom of the Netherlands has examined the declarations made by the Government of Bangladesh at the time of its accession to the Convention on the political rights of women and considers the declaration concerning Article III a reservation.

The Government of the Kingdom of the Netherlands considers that such a reservation, which seeks to limit the responsibilities of the reserving State under the Convention by invoking national law, may raise doubts as to the commitment of this State to the object and purpose of the Convention and, moreover, contributed to determining the basis of international treaty law.

It is in the common interest of States that treaties to which they have chosen to become parties should be respected, as to object and purpose, by all parties.

The Government of the Kingdom of the Netherlands therefore objects to the aforementioned reservation made by the Government of Bangladesh.

This objection shall not preclude the entry into force of the Convention between the Kingdom of the Netherlands and Bangladesh".

14 In communications received on 8 March 1989, 19 and 20 April 1989, respectively, the Governments of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic and the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic notified the Secretary-General that they had decided to withdraw the reservation relating to article IX. For the text of the reservations, see United Nations, Treaty Series, vol. 193, pp. 170, 154 and 169, respectively.

15 By notifications received by the Secretary-General on 19 June 1978 and on 14 September 1998, respectively, the Government of Belgium withdrew reservations No. 2 and No. 1 relating to article III of the Convention. For the text of the reservations, see United Nations, Treaty Series, vol. 496, p. 353.

16 On 24 June 1992, the Government of Bulgaria notified the Secretary-General its decision to withdraw the reservation to article IX made upon accession. For the text of the reservation, see United Nations, Treaty Series, vol. 193, p. 136.

17 In a communication received on 26 November 1960, the Government of France gave notice of the withdrawal of the reservation made in the procès-verbal of signature of the Convention. For the text of the reservation, see United Nations, Treaty Series, vol. 193, p. 159.

18 In a communication received on 12 July 2007, the Government of Guatemala notified the Secretary-General that it had decided to withdraw the reservations made upon ratification. The text of the reservations reads as follows: 1. To articles I, II and III shall apply only to female citizens of Guatemala in accordance with the provisions of article 16, paragraph 2 of the Constitution of the Republic. 2. In order to satisfy constitutional requirements, article IX shall be interpreted subject to the provisions of article 149, paragraph 3 (b) of the Constitution of the Republic.

19 In a communication received on 8 December 1989, the Government of Hungary notified the Secretary-General that it had decided to withdraw its reservation with respect to article IX

20 In a communication received on 19 July 1990, the Government of Mongolia notified the Secretary-General of its decision to withdraw the reservations to articles VI and IX made upon accession. For the text of the reservations, see United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 543, p. 362.

21 On 17 December 1985, the Secretary-General received from the Government of the Kingdom of the Netherlands a notification of withdrawal of its reservation (the reservation concerned the succession to the Crown) relating to article III of the Convention made upon ratification. For the text of the said reservation, see United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 790, p. 130.

22 On 16 October 1997, the Government of Poland notified the Secretary-General that it had decided to withdraw its reservation with regard to article 9 of the Convention made upon ratification. For the text of the reservation see United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 196, p. 365.

23 On 2 April 1997, the Government of Romania informed the Secretary-General that it had decided to withdraw its reservation with regard to article IX. For the text of the reservation, see United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 196, p. 363.

24 The Secretary-General received the following communications from the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland on the dates indicated hereinafter:

(12 February 1968):

Withdrawal of the reservation contained in sub-paragraph (e), in respect of the Bahamas, as formulated upon accession.

(15 October 1974):

Withdrawal of the reservation contained in sub-paragraph (f) (employment of married women in Her Majesty's Diplomatic Service and in the Civil Service) in respect of the territories where the reservation was still applicable, that is to say: Northern Ireland, Antigua, Hong Kong and St. Lucia. The same reservation had been withdrawn in respect of St. Vincent by a notification received on 24 November 1967.

On that same date, withdrawal of the reservation contained in sub-paragraph (e) in respect of the Seychelles, to which the said reservation applied originally.

(4 January 1995):

Withdrawal of the reservations contained in sub-paragraph (e) in respect of the Isle of Man and Montserrat; in sub-paragraph (g) in respect of Gibraltar; and sub-paragraph (h) in respect of Bailiff in Guernsey.

25 See note 1 under “Netherlands” regarding Aruba/Netherlands Antilles in the “Historical Information” section in the front matter of this volume.

26 For the reservations to article III of the Convention in its application to certain territories, and for the reservations regarding the application of the Convention to the Colony of Aden and to Rhodesia, see "United Kingdom" under "Declarations and Reservations".