



PRESS RELEASE

Human Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Migrants, Women and Children dominate this year's Treaty Event

Forty-two Member States took actions in the area of international law of the environment, trade, human rights and disarmament

(1 October 2008, New York) The 2008 Treaty Event concluded today with 42 Member States having taken 81 treaty actions. Six States participated at the level of Head of State and 21 at the level of Minister for Foreign Affairs. There were a total of 32 signatures and 49 ratifications, accessions, consents to be bound and other actions.

Highlights of the 2008 Treaty Event include:

In the area of human rights...

The **Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities** received the most attention at this year's event, with six signatures and three ratifications (Austria, New Zealand and Uganda), bringing the total number of States Parties to 40. The Optional Protocol to the same Convention received seven signatures and two ratifications (Austria and Uganda). The Convention and its Optional Protocol both entered into force in May this year.

The **Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance** received five signatures (Bulgaria, Greece, Iceland, Lao PDR and Tanzania) and one ratification (France), giving it a total of five States Parties (others are Albania, Argentina, Honduras and Mexico) towards the 20 needed to enter into force.

The **International Covenants on Civil and Political** and on **Economic, Social and Cultural Rights** received an additional signatory - Comoros - taking the number of signatories to 71 and 68, respectively. The number of States Parties to the Covenants is 162 and 159 respectively.

The **Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights**, concerning abolition of the death penalty, received one ratification (Chile), taking the total number of State Parties to 68.

The **Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women** received one accession and one ratification (Tunisia and Switzerland) and two signatures, taking the total number of States Parties to 92. The Optional Protocol entered into force in 2000 and provides for communications by individuals or groups regarding violations of the Convention to be received by the monitoring Committee and permits the Committee to conduct inquiries into grave or systematic violations.

The **Convention on the Rights of Migrant Workers** received two ratifications (Jamaica and Paraguay) and one signature, taking the number of State Parties to 39. The

Convention entered into force in 2003 and creates international standards for the protection of the human rights of migrant workers and their families.

The **Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture**, which entered into force in 2006, received one signature (Congo).

The two **Optional Protocols to the Convention on the Rights of the Child**, relating to the involvement of children in armed conflict and the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography; received one signature and one ratification each (Russia ratified the former and Monaco ratified the latter). Both Optional Protocols entered into force in 2002.

In the area of the environment, sustainable development, water and sanitation...

The **International Tropical Timber Agreement**, 2006, which has not yet entered into force, received four signatures and one ratification (Australia) bringing the total number of States Parties to 12.

Liberia joined the **Law of the Sea Convention**, bringing the total number of State Parties to the Convention to 157. Liberia and Guyana also became Parties to the Convention's **Implementation Agreement**.

In the area of disarmament and penal matters...

Jamaica made several actions in this area including acceding to the **Conventional Weapons Convention** and all its Protocols and Amendments. Belarus also became the 48th State Party to Protocol V of the Convention, concerning explosive remnants of war.

The **Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty** received one signature (Timor-Leste) and one ratification (Burundi) taking the total number of States Parties to 145. The Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), which opened for signature in 1996, is intended to prohibit all nuclear weapon test explosions. The CTBT has achieved near universal adherence, however, Article XIV of the Treaty requires ratification by 44 named states, before the Treaty can enter into force. Of these 44 States, three - India, Pakistan, and North Korea - have not signed the Treaty. A further six States - China, Egypt, Indonesia, Iran, Israel, and the United States - have signed but not ratified the Treaty.

Three ratifications to the **UN Convention Against Corruption** (Belgium, Malaysia and Tunisia) were received, bringing the total number of States Parties to 126.

Other treaties that received ratifications during this year's Treaty Event included the International Conventions for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism and the Suppression of Financing of Terrorism; and the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its Protocols among others.

In addition, the Convention on the Safety of United Nations and Associated Personnel and its Optional Protocol received one accession and ratification, respectively. And Lao PDR and Guyana each deposited instruments to become party to treaties relevant to landlocked and transit developing countries.

Since the first Treaty Event was held in 2000, a total of 1442 treaty actions have taken place during these events. Treaty actions include, for example, signatures, ratifications, approvals, acceptances, accessions and consents to be bound.

For further information on the 2008 Treaty Event including all photos of treaty actions, visit the new UN Treaty Collection website at <http://treaties.un.org>