

## **ADVANCE QUESTIONS TO FINLAND**

### **DENMARK**

- Finnish legislation on civilian service has been debated in Finland and internationally. The choice of civilian service should not in any way imply any penal aspects. Is the length of civilian service in Finland identical to the length of military service? To what extent is there a possibility for exemption on religious or conscientious grounds? Does the possibility of civilian service apply in time of war as well as in peace?

### **ITALY**

- We would be interested in learning from the Finnish Government about the initiatives undertaken to address racist, discriminatory and xenophobic attitudes towards both the minorities long present in Finland – particularly the Roma minority – and the more recent migrants. What have been the concrete results achieved so far? Would it be possible to identify some ‘best practices’?
- While acknowledging action taken to prevent violence against children, the Committee on the Rights of the Child recommended the strengthening of measures to prevent, combat and report on child abuse and protect every child from violence. After the adoption of the Child Welfare Act that took effect at the beginning of 2008, is Finland envisaging to adopt further specific measures to prevent the phenomenon of violence against children?

### **NETHERLANDS**

- Could the delegation elaborate on the position of ethnic minorities, such as Roma, and on the Finnish efforts to promote respect for their rights?
- What measures does the Finnish government take to ensure the position of the Sami?
- The national report openly describes the challenges of domestic violence and violence against women. The report mentions many measures that are taken to curb this problem. Does the government think these measures will result in the necessary change of mentality in society?

### **SWEDEN**

- The constitution of Finland guarantees the right to have any charges brought against oneself handled without undue delay by a court of law or other authority, as well as other aspects of a fair trial. In the past few years, the

European Court of Human Rights has ruled in individual cases that indicted persons in Finland have been subjected to excessively lengthy trial proceedings and other violations of article 6 of the European Convention on Human Rights on the right to a fair trial in its various aspects. Similar criticism has been directed at Sweden. What measures is the government of Finland taking to ensure that legal proceedings conform to its obligations with regard to the right to a fair trial in accordance with international standards?

- The Council of Europe Committee of Ministers, the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance and the Finnish Ombudsman for Minorities have reported shortcoming in the enjoyment of human rights by members of the Roma minority, including social discrimination as well as access to housing and social services. Could the government of Finland elaborate on its efforts to ensure the full enjoyment of their human rights for Roma persons?

#### **UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND**

- Could you please elaborate further on the extent to which civil society in Finland was involved in the preparation of your national report?
- Could you provide information about the treatment of conscientious objectors to military service in Finland? Does Finland offer to all who object, as an alternative, non-military national service of an equal duration to the tour length for military service?
- Could you please elaborate further on the existence and status of a National Human Rights Institution in Finland, and whether it complies fully with the Paris Principles?

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