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ESSAY: Ignoring the Human Rights of Children: A Perspective on America's Failure to Ratify the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

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IGNORING THE HUMAN RIGHTS OF CHILDREN: A PERSPECTIVE ON AMERICA'S FAILURE TO RATIFY THE UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

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INTRODUCTION

Considering the international reputation of the United States as a vocal proponent of human rights, it is difficult to understand why the United States remains one of only six countries that have failed to ratify the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child ("CRC").[1] Upon closer examination, it becomes clear that the failure of the United States to ratify the CRC is, in fact, consistent with the disappointing history of the United States with respect to human rights treaties. Arguments first employed by opponents of human rights treaties in the 1950s continue to shape U.S. policy toward human rights treaties today and may be, in part, responsible for the failure of the United States to ratify the CRC.[2] America's commitment to protecting the human rights of children, however, compels a reevaluation of U.S. policy regarding human rights

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[1] *See infra* app. (listing the 187 countries that have ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child ("CRC")).

[2] *See* NATALIE HEVENER KAUFMAN, HUMAN RIGHTS TREATIES AND THE SENATE: A HISTORY OF OPPOSITION 149-50 (1990).

treaties and a further examination of that policy's serious implications for the CRC.

The CRC, the most comprehensive legal instrument on children's rights, was adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations on November 20, 1989.[3] Although prior human rights treaties created binding international standards, gross violations of children's human rights throughout the world demanded further clarification by means of a treaty specifically designed to protect children's rights internationally.[4] From its adoption in 1989,[5] support for the CRC was overwhelming and within a year it was adopted.[6] To date, 187 countries,[7] almost all of the nations in the world, have become parties to the convention. Only six countries have failed to ratify the CRC: Oman, Somalia, the Cook Islands, the United Arab Emirates, Switzerland and the United States.[8]

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[3] For a comprehensive analysis of the history of the CRC within the context of the United Nations lawmaking process, see LAWRENCE J. LEBLANC, THE CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD: UNITED NATIONS LAWMAKING ON HUMAN RIGHTS (1995). *See* G.A. Res. 44/25, U.N. GAOR, 44th Sess., Supp. No. 49, U.N. Doc. A/44/736 (1989).

[4] Some of these rights include a child's right to be protected from sexual and economic exploitation; from abduction, sale and trafficking; from discrimination based on gender, race, color, disability or nationality; from abuse, neglect or injury; and from torture, or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment. G.A. Res. 44/25, *supra* note 3, arts. 19, 32, 35. The CRC also recognizes the right to privacy, health care and education. Hans-Joachim Heintze, *The UN Convention and the Network of International Human Rights Protection by the UN*, *in* THE IDEOLOGIES OF CHILDREN'S RIGHTS 71, 72-73 (M. Freeman & P. Veerman eds., 1992).

[5] *See infra* app.

[6] LEBLANC, *supra* note 3, at xi. For a comprehensive overview of the CRC, see Cynthia Price Cohen, *The Developing Jurisprudence of the Rights of the Child*, 6 ST. THOMAS L. REV. 1 (1993). For a brief summary of commonly asked questions about the CRC, see CYNTHIA PRICE COHEN & SUSAN H. BITENSKY, UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD: ANSWERS TO 30 QUESTIONS (1994).

[7] *See infra* app.

[8] Two of the six countries, Switzerland and the United States, have become signatories (e.g., signed, but not ratified) to the CRC. *See infra* app.

This Essay examines the reasons why the United States remains one of only six nations that have not ratified the CRC. Part I consists of a brief overview of treaty law and the domestic effect of treaties in the United States. Part II surveys the U.S. approach to human rights treaties. The Essay concludes by directing the United States to review its policy on human rights treaties and the impact this policy will have on the human rights of children.

I. TREATIES AND THEIR DOMESTIC EFFECT IN THE UNITED STATES

Treaties are one of the primary sources of international law[9] and are binding on the countries that ratify them.[10] Given the complexity of modern treaties and the large number of countries that may be parties to them, the unanimous assent of all parties to all of provisions of a treaty is highly unlikely. As a way of promoting and facilitating the treaty-making process, international law permits nations to ratify a treaty, while maintaining specific reservations to it.[11] A reservation may be included in a treaty provided that the reservation does not defeat the "objective or purpose of the treaty."[12]

Once a treaty is ratified by a nation, the nation incurs a legal obligation to implement the treaty domestically. Thereafter, domestic implementation often depends on whether the treaty is considered self-executing. A self-executing treaty requires no implementing legislation and is enforceable in domestic courts.[13]

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[9] Statute of the International Court of Justice, June 26, 1945, art. 38, 59 Stat. 1031 (entered into force Oct. 24, 1945).

[10] Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties, opened for signature May 23, 1969, § 1, art. 14(1), 1155 U.N.T.S. 331, *reprinted in* 8 I.L.M. 679 (1969) [hereinafter Vienna Convention] (entered into force Jan. 27, 1980).

[11] *See* LEBLANC, *supra* note 3, at 51 (describing the difference between reservations and declarations in treaty interpretation). "A reservation is a statement that modifies or excludes the application of a provision of a treaty to the reserving state." LEBLANC, *supra* note 3, at 51.

[12] Vienna Convention, *supra* note 10, at § 2, art. 19(c).

[13] MALCOLM N. SHAW, INTERNATIONAL LAW 121 (3d ed. 1991).

In contrast, a non-self-executing treaty is legally enforceable in domestic courts only after legislation has been enacted.[14]

In the United States, treaties are viewed as federal law and, therefore, prevail over state law.[15] Article VI of the U.S. Constitution states that "all Treaties made, or which shall be made, under the Authority of the United States, shall be the Supreme Law of the Land . . . ."[16] While the constitution does not specifically limit the scope of the treaty-making power,[17] the Supreme Court held in *Reid v. Covert*,[18] that the constitution reigns supreme over treaties, and thus, treaties must comply with the constitution.[19]

Historically, proponents of states' rights have argued that the Tenth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution prohibits the treaty-making power from extending to subject matter traditionally controlled by the states.[20] In 1920, however, the Supreme Court in *Missouri v. Holland*,[21] held that although "the great body of private relations usually fall within the control of the State, . . . a treaty may override its power."[22] Therefore, anything governed by

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[14] *Id.*

[15] BARRY E. CARTER & PHILLIP R. TRIMBLE, INTERNATIONAL LAW 181 (2d ed. 1995).

[16] U.S. CONST. art. VI, § 2.

[17] Lawrence L. Stentzel, *Federal-State Implications of the Convention, in* CHILDREN'S RIGHTS IN AMERICA: U.N. CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD COMPARED WITH UNITED STATES LAW 61 (Cynthia Price Cohen & Howard A. Davidson eds., 1990).

[18] 354 U.S. 1 (1957).

[19] *Id.* at 17.

[20] Jeffrey L. Friesen, Note, *The Distribution of Treaty-Implementing Powers in Constitutional Federations: Thoughts on the American and Canadian Models*, 94 COLUM. L. REV. 1415, 1424-25 (1994).

[21] 252 U.S. 416 (1920).

[22] *Id.* at 434. This holding has been unpopular among proponents of states' rights. Indeed, in the early 1950s Ohio Senator John Bricker attempted unsuccessfully to pass an amendment to the constitution which would reverse the Supreme Court's holding in *Missouri v. Holland*. *See* CARTER & TRIMBLE, *supra* note 15, at 168. *See also* Ann E. Mayer, *Reflections on the Proposed United States Reservations to CEDAW: Should the Constitution be an Obstacle to Human Rights?*, 23 HASTINGS CONST. L.Q. 727, 749 (1996). *See generally* KAUFMAN, *supra* note 2 (detailing opposition that normally results in the prevention or delay of U.S. ratification of international treaties).

"treaty power is not reserved to the states by the tenth amendment."[23]

II. UNITED STATES APPROACH TO HUMAN RIGHTS TREATIES

Despite the fact that the United States is viewed as an avid proponent of human rights, a closer examination reveals that the United States has traditionally been unsupportive of human rights treaties.[24] Indeed, a variety of oppositional tactics have often been employed over the years to prevent ratification of human rights treaties.[25] Those treaties that were ratified have been encumbered with reservations and other provisions which serve to nullify treaty content and effectively void the legal obligations of the United States.[26] Consequently, the United States forfeits a prominent role in the human rights arena, which may negatively affect not only the human rights of U.S. nationals, but also the human rights of citizens of the larger global community.

The United States has been a world leader in promoting and defending human rights internationally since the end of World War II and the founding of the United Nations,[27] and "is regarded by many as the homeland of the values set forth in modern international human rights conventions."[28] Since the creation of the Bill of Rights, the United States has stood for the principle that human rights are sacred and should be guaranteed to all equally.

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[23] *See* Stentzel, *supra* note 17, at 61.

[24] Mayer, *supra* note 22, at 748-49 (discussing how opponents of human rights have appealed to parochial and ethnocentric sentiments and have persuaded Americans that international human rights pose a threat to U.S. freedoms).

[25] KAUFMAN, *supra* note 2, at 204-05 app. B (containing a typology of arguments against U.S. ratification of human rights treaties). Some of these tactics include claims that ratification would: 1) enhance Soviet/Communist influence; 2) threaten the U.S. form of government; 3) violate states' rights; 4) subject citizens to trial abroad; and 5) diminish basic rights. KAUFMAN, *supra* note 2, at 204-05 app. B.

[26] Mayer, *supra* note 22, at 754-55.

[27] M. Cherif Bassiouni, *Reflections on the Ratification of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights by the United States Senate,* 42 DEPAUL L. REV. 1169, 1169 (1993).

[28] Mayer, *supra* note 22, at 747.

America's significant influence on international norms regarding human rights cannot be denied.[29] Indeed, three major human rights conventions, The Universal Declaration of Human Rights,[30] the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights[31] and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights[32] are often referred to as the "International Bill of Rights."[33] Upon reviewing the history of U.S. ratification of human rights treaties, however, it is apparent that the United States has a deep resistance to incorporating international human rights norms into the American legal system.[34]

This resistance to incorporation is illustrated in Natalie Kaufman's comprehensive survey of the history of the Senate's treatment of human rights treaties. In her book, Kaufman sets forth the traditional arguments employed by those seeking to block ratification of human rights treaties.[35] Kaufman asserts that, beginning in the 1950s, senators opposed to human rights treaties characterized such treaties as "tools of the enemy,"[36] associating them with the "erosion of individual rights, abridgment of states' rights, expansion of the United Nations toward world government, and enhancement of Communist influence at home and abroad."[37] Kaufman argues that the rhetoric introduced in the 1950s continues to echo in the arguments of contemporary opponents and has defined the parameters of domestic debates over the past forty years.[38]

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[29] Bassiouni, *supra* note 27, at 1169.

[30] G.A. Res. 217A, U.N. GAOR, 3d Sess., Supp. No. 1, U.N. Doc. A/810 (1948).

[31] 999 U.N.T.S. 171 (entered into force Mar. 23, 1976, adopted by the United States Sept. 8, 1992).

[32] 993 U.N.T.S. 3 (entered into force Jan. 3, 1976).

[33] Bassiouni, *supra* note 27, at 1169-70.

[34] Mayer, *supra* note 22, at 748.

[35] *See* KAUFMAN, *supra* note 2, at 204-05 app. B (enumerating the various strategies the U.S. Senate has employed to reject human rights treaties).

[36] *See* KAUFMAN, *supra* note 2, at 9-10 (describing the political climate of the 1950s and the campaign by Frank Holman, a prominent conservative, to mobilize the American Bar Association's opposition to human rights treaties).

[37] KAUFMAN, *supra* note 2, at 2-3.

[38] KAUFMAN, *supra* note 2, at 193-94.

One of the most popular arguments asserted by opponents of human rights treaties is that the ratification of human rights treaties will jeopardize basic rights rooted in the U.S. Constitution and will erode the American legal system at large.[39] Ann Mayer states that "the common assumption that U.S. constitutional rights are indubitably superior has been exploited to persuade Americans that international human rights would be, at best, useless and, at worst, dangerous threats to their freedoms."[40] Thus, the argument goes, enactment of human rights treaties may not only be frivolous but may result in "diminishing" the rights of Americans.[41]

In her article entitled "Reflections on the Proposed United States Reservations to CEDAW: Should the Constitution Be an Obstacle to Human Rights?," Mayer asserts that the constitution has been "deployed as a screen to filter out the more exigent standards for human rights afforded under international law."[42] Mayer states that where there is no actual conflict between the constitution and an international norm, the constitution should not be used as a barrier because "the Constitution does not impose ceilings on rights, but only floors—minimum acceptable levels of rights protections."[43] In this sense, she argues that opponents to human rights treaties have exaggerated constitutional concerns which may result in denying Americans greater protection afforded by international standards.[44]

If such constitutional concerns are without basis, then what has motivated such fervent opposition to the ratification of human rights treaties? Some argue that the answer is American politics.[45]

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[39] *See* KAUFMAN, *supra* note 2, at 149-50 (recounting Senator Jesse Helms' opposition to the Genocide Convention on the grounds of national sovereignty).

[40] Mayer, *supra* note 22, at 748-49.

[41] Mayer, *supra* note 22, at 748-49.

[42] Mayer, *supra* note 22, at 741. To date, the United States has failed to ratify the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women ("CEDAW"). Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, opened for signature Mar. 1, 1980, 19 I.L.M. 33 (entered into force Sept. 3, 1981).

[43] Mayer, *supra* note 22, at 758.

[44] Mayer, *supra* note 22, at 757.

[45] KAUFMAN *supra* note 2, at 149; Bassiouni, *supra* note 27, at 1169; Mayer, *supra* note 22, at 753-54.

Indeed, both Kaufman and Mayer assert that the 1950s opponents sought to block human rights treaties, not because they posed a threat to constitutional rights, but because of the equality they guaranteed.[46] Racial minorities, unable to seek redress in American courts under the domestic legal regime of the 1950s, would have had a remedy based on human rights treaties had the Senate ratified the treaties as proposed.[47] Mayer asserts that similar tactics are employed today and that traditional arguments regarding "diminished rights" have been asserted, once again, in opposition to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women ("CEDAW").[48] Mayer argues that the motive for blocking CEDAW may, in fact, be resistance to "upgrading" U.S. law to provide equality for women.[49]

By characterizing political concerns as constitutional encroachments, opponents of human rights treaties have successfully "legalized" the debate, keeping the underlying political issues hidden.[50] This phenomenon is reflected in what Kaufman has referred to as the "reservations game," whereby proponents and opponents of human rights treaties negotiate over the inclusion of reservations that are often legally unnecessary.[51]

The federal reservation is a primary example of a legally unnecessary reservation that has often been attached to pacify opponents of human rights treaties.[52] As discussed above, the Supreme Court in *Holland* held that matters traditionally regulated by state law may, nonetheless, be governed by treaties without violating the Tenth Amendment.[53] Yet, despite the Supreme

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[46] KAUFMAN, *supra* note 2, at 148; Mayer, *supra* note 22, at 751-53.

[47] *See* Mayer, *supra* note 22, at 751-52 (arguing that opponents to international human rights also opposed the expansion of civil rights domestically).

[48] Mayer, *supra* note 22, at 752.

[49] Mayer, *supra* note 22, at 752.

[50] *See* KAUFMAN, *supra* note 2, at 149 (stating that "[t]he persistence of legal rhetoric and the preeminence of legal experts have masked the fundamentally political nature of the opposition arguments and effectively excluded or minimized the impact of a political response").

[51] KAUFMAN, *supra* note 2, at 149.

[52] KAUFMAN, *supra* note 2, at 149.

[53] Missouri v. Holland, 252 U.S. 416, 434 (1920).

Court's resolution of this issue, senators who support states' rights have continued to characterize the federal treaty power exercised in the ratification of human rights treaties as conflicting with the constitution and have required that federal reservations be included in human rights treaties.[54]

Additionally, the United States has qualified its obligations under human rights treaties by attaching "sweeping declarations" stating that the provisions of the treaties are non-self-executing.[55] Such declarations ensure that the treaties will not have any domestic legal effect unless implementing legislation is passed. Lawrence Stentzel asserts that "[t]he combination of a non-self-executing declaration and a federal reservation may result in a disavowal by the ratifying party of a broad spectrum of treaty obligations."[56] Kaufman asserts that the inclusion of the federal reservation and the non-self-executing declaration "reflect[s] a nationalistic sense of superiority and a refusal to consider the possibility that change may potentially bring improvement rather than deterioration."[57]

It should be noted, however, that opponents of human rights are not alone in proposing reservations and declarations. Treaty supporters, all too familiar with traditional objections to human rights treaties, have often proposed these attachments in the hope that doing so would result in ratification.[58] Kaufman argues, however, that by drafting reservations to meet "constitutional" objections, proponents have given unfounded legitimacy to opponents' arguments.[59]

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[54] *See* KAUFMAN, *supra* note 2, at 149 (explaining that any reservations proposed by the opposition are unnecessary for the protection of U.S. sovereignty due to the Supreme Court's decision in Reid v. Covert, 354 U.S. 1 (1957)).

[55] Stentzel, *supra* note 17, at 67. A declaration "is a statement of how a party interprets a treaty and its provisions." LEBLANC, *supra* note 3, at 51.

[56] Stentzel, *supra* note 17, at 79 n.48.

[57] KAUFMAN, *supra* note 2, at 172.

[58] KAUFMAN, *supra* note 2, at 149.

[59] *See* KAUFMAN, *supra* note 2, at 149 (describing reservations as "tokens of play" employed by opponents and proponents of treaty ratification).

CONCLUSION

America's enduring reluctance to support human rights treaties is likely to have a negative impact on the U.S. position in the international arena, on the human rights of individuals in the United States and on the international human rights movement. By failing to take action in support of human rights, while at the same time portraying itself as an adamant protector of human rights at home and abroad, the United States puts its reputation and position in the international arena at risk.[60] This seemingly inconsistent position may undermine U.S. criticism of other governments who commit human rights violations.[61] Furthermore, by not ratifying human rights treaties, the United States precludes itself from participating in the governing bodies created by these instruments, which not only enforce but also interpret human rights treaties, thereby establishing international human rights norms.[62] In addition, by significantly altering the substance and domestic impact of the treaties through extensive reservations and non-self-executing declarations, the United States sends a message that it is not taking human rights treaties seriously.[63] In doing so, the United States compromises its reputation and credibility as a treaty-making partner.[64]

The failure of the United States to give domestic legal effect to human rights treaties carries dire consequences for individuals at home and abroad. At home, Americans are unable to rely on treaty provisions in domestic courts and, thus, are denied the opportunity to examine domestic human rights law according to international standards.[65] Furthermore, given the current and historic presence

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[60] *See* KAUFMAN, *supra* note 2, at 198.

[61] *See* KAUFMAN, *supra* note 2, at 198 (illustrating the contradictory position the United States confronts when advocating international standards to which the United States itself is not bound).

[62] KAUFMAN, *supra* note 2, at 198.

[63] KAUFMAN, *supra* note 2, at 198.

[64] *See* Bassiouni, *supra* note 27, at 1170 (describing the higher responsibility that attaches to the United States as a country with great international influence).

[65] KAUFMAN, *supra* note 2, at 198.

of the United States in the international arena, failure of the United States to support human rights treaties is likely to hamper the larger international human rights movement. As a result, foreign nationals may not be guaranteed the same level of rights as they would otherwise secure with the support of the United States.

The failure of the United States to ratify the CRC is not surprising, given the history of U.S. treatment of human rights treaties. The White House press release announcing President Clinton's decision to sign the CRC reflects the gains that opponents of human rights treaties have secured. The press release states that when President Clinton sends the CRC to the Senate for ratification, it will contain at least two common attachments. A reservation will be included that "will protect the rights of the various States under the nation's federal system of government."[66] In addition, the press release states that "[t]he convention will not serve as a basis for litigation in domestic courts."[67] As in the past, the combination of a federal reservation and a non-self-executing declaration threaten to nullify the legal effect of the CRC in the domestic arena.[68]

As a recognized leader in the advocacy of human rights, the United States must demonstrate its commitment to the protection of the human rights of children. First, the United States must join with the other 187 countries of the world who have ratified the CRC. Its support is important to help secure fundamental rights for children throughout the world. Second, when the United States ratifies the CRC it must do so without nullifying the domestic legal effect of the CRC through ambiguous reservations and overbroad declarations. The few areas of domestic law that conflict with the CRC can be addressed with specific reservations and declarations, if necessary.[69]

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[66] Press Release from Office of the Press Secretary, White House (Feb. 10, 1995) (on file with *Journal of Law and Policy*).

[67] *Id.*

[68] Stentzel, *supra* note 17, at 79 n.48.

[69] *See* Stentzel, *supra* note 17, at 71 (advocating the use of specific reservations, declarations or understandings to deal with direct conflicts between convention provisions and domestic laws).

The past arguments of opponents of human rights treaties continue to affect U.S. response to these treaties to the detriment of beneficiaries of international human rights law, and in this case, to the detriment of children both at home and abroad. As a world leader, the United States has an obligation to the children of the world to reexamine the rationale for its disappointing treatment of human rights treaties such as the CRC. The United States, therefore, should reevaluate whether its current failure to sign the CRC comports with its traditional position of protecting fundamental human rights, especially those of children.

APPENDIX: STATUS OF THE CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD*

Adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on November 20, 1989, and opened for signature and ratification on January 26, 1990, the CRC entered into force on September 2, 1990. As of this date, the total number of States Parties to the CRC is 187. There are only six States left for universal ratification to be achieved.

*1. States Parties to the CRC by ratifications (r), accession (a), acceptance (ac) or succession (s):***

Afghanistan	3/28/1994(r)
Albania	2/27/1992(r)
Algeria	4/16/1993(r)
Andorra	1/2/1996(r)
Angola	12/5/1990(r)
Antigua & Barbuda	10/5/1993(r)
Argentina	12/4/1990(r)
Armenia	6/23/1993(a)
Australia	12/17/1990(r)
Austria	8/6/1992(r)
Azerbaijan	8/13/1992(a)
Bahamas	2/20/1991(r)
Bahrain	2/13/1992(a)
Bangladesh	8/3/1990(r)
Barbados	10/9/1990(r)
Belarus	10/1/1990(r)
Belgium	12/16/1991(r)

* Appendix courtesy of the United Nations International Children's Educational Fund ("UNICEF").

** An act by which a Government notifies the depository that it will continue to apply a treaty that had been previously applied to its territory by the State which was responsible for its international relations prior to independence.

Belize	5/2/1990(r)
Benin	8/3/1990(r)
Bhutan	8/1/1990(r)
Bolivia	6/26/1990(r)
Bosnia & Herzegovina	9/1/1993(s)
Botswana	3/14/1995(a)
Brazil	9/24/1990(r)
Brunei Darussalam	12/27/1995(a)
Bulgaria	6/3/1991(r)
Burkina Faso	8/31/1990(r)
Burundi	10/19/1990(r)
Cambodia	10/15/1992(a)
Cameroon	1/11/1993(r)
Canada	12/13/1991(r)
Cape Verde	6/4/1992(a)
Central African Republic	4/23/1992(r)
Chad	10/2/1990(r)
Chile	8/13/1990(r)
China	3/2/1992(r)
Colombia	1/28/1991(r)
Comoros	6/22/1993(r)
Congo	10/14/1993(a)
Costa Rica	8/21/1990(r)
Côte d'Ivoire	2/4/1991(r)
Croatia	10/12/1992(s)
Cuba	8/21/1991(r)
Cyprus	2/7/1991(r)
Czech Republic	2/22/1993(s)
Dem. People's Rep. of Korea	9/21/1990(r)
Denmark	7/19/1991(r)
Djibouti	12/6/1990(r)
Dominica	3/13/1991(r)
Dominican Republic	6/11/1991(r)
Ecuador	3/23/1990(r)
Egypt	7/6/1990(r)
El Salvador	7/10/1990(r)
Equatorial Guinea	6/15/1992(a)
Eritrea	8/3/1994(r)

Estonia	10/21/1991(a)
Ethiopia	5/14/1991(a)
Fiji	8/13/1993(r)
Finland	6/20/1991(r)
France	8/7/1990(r)
Gabon	2/9/1994(r)
Gambia	8/8/1990(r)
Georgia	6/2/1994(a)
Germany	3/6/1992(r)
Ghana	2/5/1990(r)
Greece	5/13/1993(r)
Grenada	11/5/1990(r)
Guatemala	6/6/1990(r)
Guinea	7/13/1990(a)
Guinea-Bissau	8/20/1990(r)
Guyana	1/14/1991(r)
Haiti	6/8/1995(r)
Holy See	4/20/1990(r)
Honduras	8/10/1990(r)
Hungary	10/7/1991(r)
Iceland	10/28/1992(r)
India	12/11/1992(a)
Indonesia	9/5/1990(r)
Iran	7/13/1994(r)
Iraq	6/15/1994(a)
Ireland	9/28/1992(r)
Israel	10/3/1991(r)
Italy	9/5/1991(r)
Jamaica	5/14/1991(r)
Japan	4/22/1991(r)
Jordan	5/24/1991(r)
Kazakhstan	8/12/1994(r)
Kenya	7/30/1990(r)
Kiribati	12/12/1995(a)
Kuwait	10/21/1991(r)
Kyrgyzstan	10/7/1994(a)
Laos	5/8/1991(a)
Latvia	4/14/1992(a)

Lebanon	5/14/1991(r)
Lesotho	3/10/1992(r)
Liberia	6/4/1993(r)
Libya	4/15/1993(a)
Liechtenstein	12/22/1995(a)
Lithuania	1/31/1992(a)
Luxembourg	3/7/1994(r)
Macedonia	12/2/1993(s)
Madagascar	3/19/1991(r)
Malawi	1/2/1991(a)
Malaysia	2/17/1995(a)
Maldives	2/11/1991(r)
Mali	9/20/1990(r)
Malta	9/30/1990(r)
Marshall Islands	10/4/1993(r)
Mauritania	5/15/1991(r)
Mauritius	7/26/1990(a)
Mexico	9/21/1990(r)
Micronesia	5/5/1993(a)
Monaco	6/21/1993(a)
Mongolia	7/5/1990(r)
Morocco	6/21/1993(r)
Mozambique	4/26/1994(r)
Myanmar	7/15/1991(a)
Namibia	9/30/1990(r)
Nauru	7/27/1994(a)
Nepal	9/14/1990(r)
Netherlands	2/6/1995(ac)
New Zealand	4/6/1993(r)
Nicaragua	10/5/1990(r)
Niger	9/30/1990(r)
Nigeria	4/19/1991(r)
Niue	12/20/995(a)
Norway	1/8/1991(r)
Pakistan	11/12/1990(r)
Palau	8/4/1995(a)
Panama	12/12/1990(r)
Papua New Guinea	3/2/1993(r)

Paraguay	9/25/1990(r)
Peru	9/4/1990(r)
Phillippines	8/21/1990(r)
Poland	6/7/1991(r)
Portugal	9/21/1990(r)
Qatar	4/3/1995(r)
Republic of Korea	11/20/1991(r)
Republic of Moldova	1/26/1993(a)
Romania	9/28/1990(r)
Russian Federation	8/16/1990(r)
Rwanda	1/24/1991(r)
St. Kitts and Nevis	27/24/1990(r)
St. Vincent & the Grenadines	10/26/1993(r)
Samoa	11/29/1994(r)
St. Lucia	6/16/1993(r)
San Marino	11/25/1991(a)
Sao Tomé and Principe	5/14/1991(a)
Saudi Arabia***	1/26/1996(a)
Senegal	7/31/1990(r)
Seychelles	9/7/1990(a)
Sierra Leone	6/18/1990(r)
Singapore	10/5/1995(a)
Slovak Republic	5/28/1993(s)
Slovenia	7/6/1992(s)
Solomon Islands	4/10/1995(a)
South Africa	6/16/1995(r)
Spain	12/6/1990(r)
Sri Lanka	7/12/1991(r)
Sudan	8/3/1990(r)
Suriname	3/1/1993(r)
Swaziland	9/7/1995(r)
Sweden	6/29/1990(r)
Syrian Arab Republic	7/15/1993(r)
Tajikistan	10/26/1993(a)
Thailand	3/27/1992(a)
Togo	8/1/1990(r)

*** Marks newcomer (s) since last up-date.

Tonga	11/6/1995(a)
Trinidad and Tobago	12/5/1991(r)
Tunisia	1/30/1992(r)
Turkey	4/4/1995(r)
Turkmenistan	9/20/1993(a)
Tuvalu	9/22/1995(a)
Uganda	8/17/1990(r)
Ukraine	8/28/1991(r)
United Kingdom	12/16/1991(r)
United Republic of Tanzania	6/10/1991(r)
Uruguay	11/20/1990(r)
Uzbekistan	6/29/1994(a)
Vanuatu	7/7/1993(r)
Venezuela	9/13/1990(r)
Vietnam	2/28/1990(r)
Yemen	5/1/1991(r)
Yugoslavia	1/3/1991(r)
Zaire	9/27/1990(r)
Zambia	12/6/1991(r)
Zimbabwe	9/11/1990(r)

2. Signatories (listed below are only States which have signed but not ratified the CRC):

United States	2/16/1995
Switzerland	5/1/1991

3. States which are neither States Parties to the CRC, nor have signed it:

Cook Islands
Oman
Somalia
United Arab Emirates

4. *Member States which are not parties to the CRC*:

Oman
Somalia
United Arab Emirates
United States of America

5. *Non-member States which are not parties to the CRC*:

Cook Islands
Switzerland