



**Convention on the
Rights of the Child**

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COMMITTEE ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

Thirty-seventh session

**CONSIDERATION OF REPORTS SUBMITTED BY STATES PARTIES
UNDER ARTICLE 44 OF THE CONVENTION**

Concluding observations: Angola

1. The Committee considered the initial report of Angola (CRC/C/3/Add.66) at its 991st to 992nd meetings (see CRC/C/SR.991 and 992), held on 27 September 2004, and adopted at its 999th meeting (CRC/C/SR.999), held on 1 October 2004, the following concluding observations.

A. Introduction

2. The Committee welcomes the submission of the State party's initial report, which follows the guidelines for reporting, but regrets that it was submitted more than 10 years late. The Committee also welcomes the written replies to its list of issues (CRC/C/Q/ANG/1) and the additional information provided to it during the dialogue. It further notes with appreciation the open dialogue with the high-level delegation of the State party, which included experts from relevant State institutions.

B. Positive aspects

3. The Committee welcomes:

- (a) The Peace Accord of Luena of 2002 ending 27 years of civil war;
- (b) The efforts made by the State party to promote the reintegration of returning refugees as well as the measures taken to regularize the status of refugee children born in Angola;

(c) The commitments made to strengthen the protection of the rights of the young child by the State party in the context of the first National Forum on Early Childhood Care and Development, held in Luanda from 14 to 16 June 2004;

(d) The ratification in 2001 of the Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138) and the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182);

(e) The ratification of the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child in July 2003;

(f) The accession in July 2004 to the African Peer Review Mechanism under the African Union's New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) programme.

C. Factors and difficulties impeding the implementation of the Convention

4. The Committee notes that the many years of armed conflict, which ended in 2002, have had a very negative impact on children in Angola and on the implementation of their rights. In particular, it notes that as a consequence of the conflict more than 4 million people were internally displaced; many children were separated from their parents; schools, health services and the infrastructure of many communities were destroyed or severely damaged; and children suffered serious physical, psychological and other traumas.

D. Principal subjects of concern, suggestions and recommendations

1. General measures of implementation

Legislation and implementation

5. The Committee is concerned that the process of legislative reform to guarantee the rights of the child and to ensure that domestic legislation is in full conformity with the Convention has still not been completed. It is also concerned at the lack of timely publication of laws and rules and regulations and the delayed implementation of adopted laws, such as the Law on Juvenile Justice and related rules and regulations.

6. The Committee urges the State party to accelerate the process of revising its legislation, including the ongoing process of drafting a new constitution, to bring it into conformity with the Convention. It further recommends that the State party take the necessary measures to ensure the timely publication of laws and rules and regulations and the efficient and effective implementation of laws.

Independent monitoring structures

7. While noting the existence of a human rights office in the Ministry of Justice, a human rights commission of the National Assembly and a number of human rights commissions at the provincial level, the Committee regrets the lack of an independent national human rights institution in the State party. It notes in this regard that the Constitution allows for the establishment of such an institution.

8. **The Committee recommends that the State party establish an independent human rights institution in accordance with the Paris Principles (General Assembly resolution 48/134, annex) and the Committee's General Comment No. 2 on national human rights institutions. The Committee also recommends the establishment of a national commission or ombudsperson for children, possibly as part of a national human rights institution, with a mandate to monitor the implementation of the Convention and deal with complaints from children in a child-sensitive manner. Furthermore, the State party should ensure proper coordination between these independent monitoring bodies and existing human rights offices and commissions.**

Coordination

9. The Committee notes the existence of a number of national institutions and bodies which in various ways are involved with the coordination and/or monitoring of programmes and policies to strengthen the implementation of children's rights, such as the National Children's Institute, the National Children's Office and the Inter-Ministerial Commission for the Coordination of Early Childhood Activities. It also takes note of plans to establish a new State body, the National Children's Council, whose main function will be to help define the national strategy for children and evaluate the performance of State institutions in the implementation of policies concerning the rights of the child. The Committee is, however, concerned at the lack of a mechanism to ensure effective coordination between these institutions and bodies as well as between the national, regional and local levels.

10. **The Committee recommends that the State party create, for example, as suggested during the dialogue, by establishing a single national council, an appropriate national mechanism with a clear mandate and sufficient human and financial resources to effectively coordinate all activities undertaken by the State party for the implementation of children's rights at the national, regional and local levels. The State party is encouraged to seek technical assistance from, among others, UNICEF in this regard.**

National plan of action

11. The Committee notes the adoption of a number of specific national policies and plans of action, such as the National Policy for Orphans and Vulnerable Children, and acknowledges the need for a variety of short-term actions and programmes to address the immediate consequences of the armed conflict. It is, however, concerned at the lack of a comprehensive mid- and long-term national plan of action for all children in the State party.

12. **The Committee strongly recommends that the State party, in consultation and cooperation with relevant partners, including civil society, adopt and implement, a national plan of action for children with mid- and long-term targets, which covers all areas of the Convention and takes into account the outcome document of the 2002 special session of the General Assembly on children, "A world fit for children", and provides for adequate follow-up mechanisms. The State party is encouraged to seek international assistance from bi- and multilateral donors, including UNICEF, in this respect.**

Allocation of budgetary resources

13. The Committee welcomes the information that the scheduled budgetary allocations for education have been increased for 2004. However, it notes that the overall level of allocations to the social sector remains very low. While acknowledging the many needs of the State party in rebuilding and reconstructing its infrastructure, the Committee notes that the State party has a very considerable wealth of natural resources and expresses its concern that the State party is not meeting its obligations under article 4 of the Convention. It also notes with concern in this regard reports, including from the International Monetary Fund, indicating deficiencies in fiscal information and weak monitoring and control of public expenditure.

14. The Committee recommends that the State party continue and strengthen its efforts to increase budgetary allocations for the realization of children's rights, especially to basic services in the areas of health, education and protection (including recovery and reintegration of child victims of war), to the "maximum extent ... of available resources". In this regard, the Committee recommends that the State party increase budgetary allocations for the social sector and make sure that revenues from oil and other sources is handled in a transparent manner in order to prevent embezzlement and corruption. The State party is encouraged, in this regard, to ratify the United Nations Convention against Corruption which it signed in December 2003. Furthermore, the Committee encourages the State party to continue its efforts to reduce its external debt and to ensure that the social sector benefits from such reduction.

Data collection

15. The Committee appreciates the efforts undertaken by the State party to improve data collection. However, it expresses concern at the lack of adequately disaggregated data (by age, sex, urban and rural areas, etc.) and insufficient data in some areas covered by the Convention, including on disabled children.

16. The Committee recommends that the State party continue and strengthen its efforts, including training of relevant personnel, to develop a system for the comprehensive collection of comparative and disaggregated data on the implementation of the rights of the child. The data should cover all children below the age of 18 years and be disaggregated, inter alia, by age group, gender and groups of children in need of special protection. The State party should also develop indicators to effectively monitor and evaluate progress achieved in the implementation of the Convention and assess the impact of policies that affect children. The Committee recommends that the State party continue its cooperation with UNICEF in this regard.

Training/dissemination of the Convention

17. The Committee is concerned that awareness of the Convention among professionals working with and for children and among the general public, especially children themselves, remains low.

18. **The Committee encourages the State party:**

(a) **To strengthen and expand its ongoing programme of dissemination of information on the Convention and its implementation among children and parents, civil society, and all sectors and levels of Government;**

(b) **To develop systematic and ongoing training programmes on human rights, including children's rights, for all persons working for and with children (e.g. judges, lawyers, law enforcement officials, civil servants, local government officials, teachers, health personnel) and especially for children themselves;**

(c) **To translate the Convention into the main local languages.**

Cooperation with NGOs

19. The Committee welcomes the cooperation between State institutions and civil society institutions in the implementation of projects related to children's rights. However, it also notes the information that there is a need to further improve this cooperation.

20. **The Committee encourages the State party to strengthen its cooperation with NGOs and involve NGOs and other sectors of civil society working with and for children more systematically throughout all stages of the implementation of the Convention.**

2. General principles

Non-discrimination

21. The Committee is concerned at the discrimination faced by children with disabilities, girls, and children belonging to the San communities in the State party.

22. **The Committee recommends that the State party take the necessary legislative measures to explicitly prohibit all forms of discrimination, in accordance with article 2 of the Convention. In this regard, it encourages the State party to include "disability" as a legally unacceptable ground for discrimination in the new constitution currently under consideration. The Committee also recommends that the State party undertake the necessary actions, including awareness-raising and educational campaigns, to reduce and prevent discrimination in practice, particularly against girls.**

23. **The Committee requests that specific information be included in the next periodic report on the measures and programmes relevant to the Convention undertaken by the State party to follow up on the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action adopted at the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance, held in 2001, taking account of the Committee's General Comment No. 1 on the aims of education.**

Respect for the views of the child

24. The Committee affirms that children have the right to be heard in court proceedings and administrative procedures. However, it notes with concern that traditional norms in the State party do not encourage children to express their views in the family, in schools, in other institutions and in the community.

25. In light of article 12 of the Convention, the Committee recommends that the State party strengthen its efforts to promote, within the family, schools and other institutions, respect for the views of children, especially of girls, and facilitate children's participation in all matters affecting them. The State party should undertake national awareness-raising campaigns to change traditional adult-centred attitudes which hinder children's right to express their views freely in all matters that affect them.

3. Civil rights and freedoms

Birth registration

26. While welcoming the efforts undertaken by the State party in cooperation with civil society groups to ensure that children are registered and provided with birth certificates, including the National Campaign for Free Registration of Children, the Committee remains concerned about the unacceptably high number of unregistered children in the State party and the consequences of non-registration on children's access to education and other services.

27. In light of article 7 of the Convention, the Committee strongly recommends that the State party undertake all necessary measures (e.g. by using mobile birth registration units) to ensure that all children are registered at birth, including by providing such registration free of charge, in line with the commitments made by the Government at the National Forum on Early Childhood Care and Development in June 2004. Meanwhile, children whose births have not been registered should be allowed to access basic services, such as health and education, while waiting to be properly registered.

Freedoms of expression, thought, conscience and religion; freedom of association; protection of privacy; access to appropriate information

28. The Committee expresses its concern at reports of the lack of respect for the privacy of children in the media and at the very little information provided by the State party on the de facto implementation of articles 13 to 17 of the Convention, including, inter alia, freedom of expression in schools.

29. The Committee recommends that the State party take the necessary measures to ensure respect for the child's right to privacy, particularly by the media, and to ensure that children are allowed to express their thoughts and opinions. The State party is requested to provide information in its next report on the de facto implementation of articles 13 to 17 of the Convention.

Torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment

30. The Committee expresses its deep concern at the re-emergence of the persecution of children accused of witchcraft and the very negative consequences of such accusations, including cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment, and even murder.

31. **The Committee urges the State party to take immediate action to eliminate the mistreatment of children accused of witchcraft, including by prosecuting the perpetrators of this mistreatment and intensive education campaigns that involve local leaders.**

Corporal punishment

32. The Committee is concerned at the common use of corporal punishment in families and in schools and other institutions for children.

33. **The Committee recommends that the State party take effective measures to enforce the ban on corporal punishment in schools and other institutions; to prohibit the use of violence against children, including corporal punishment, by parents and other caregivers; and to undertake campaigns to educate families, teachers, and other professionals working with and for children on alternative ways of disciplining children.**

4. Family environment and alternative care**Children deprived of a family environment/alternative care; adoption; and periodic review of placement**

34. The Committee expresses its concern that the care of children deprived of their family in the State party is insufficient. Although children's placement in foster families is given priority, many children are placed in homes that are poorly equipped and understaffed, as there is a lack of foster care and family-based alternative care. The inadequate monitoring and follow-up of placements in institutions is also a cause of concern.

35. **The Committee recommends that the State party take effective measures to develop and promote an effective and extended system of foster care and other family-based alternative care. The State party should also take measures to ensure that the situation of children living in institutions, both public and private, is regularly monitored.**

Abuse and neglect

36. The Committee is concerned about the growing number of cases of abuse and violence against children, including sexual abuse in their homes, in schools and in other institutions.

37. **The Committee recommends that the State party strengthen current efforts to address the problem of child abuse, including by ensuring that:**

(a) **Child-sensitive mechanisms to receive and investigate complaints regarding ill-treatment and abuse are established;**

(b) Public education campaigns about the negative consequences of ill-treatment and preventive programmes, including family development programmes, promoting positive, non-violent forms of discipline are conducted;

(c) Counselling and assistance with recovery and reintegration are provided to all victims of violence;

(d) Adequate protection to child victims of abuse in their homes is provided;

(e) The national plan of action to combat sexual abuse of minors is effectively implemented.

Recovery of maintenance

38. While the Family Code obliges parents to provide for the maintenance of their children, the Committee is concerned that in practice it is difficult to recover this maintenance and often it is the parent who has custody who carries the full financial costs of bringing up the child.

39. **The Committee recommends that the State party strengthen measures to ensure that both parents contribute to the maintenance of their children.**

5. Basic health and welfare

Children with disabilities

40. The Committee welcomes the efforts to elaborate a strategy to support children with disabilities, in conjunction with UNICEF. However, the Committee regrets the lack of official data on the number of children with disabilities and the lack of care facilities for these children, especially in rural areas, and the fact that a large number of children with disabilities do not attend any form of education.

41. **In light of the Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities (General Assembly resolution 48/96, annex) and the recommendations adopted by the Committee at its day of general discussion on the rights of children with disabilities (see CRC/C/69), the Committee recommends that the State party take all necessary measures:**

(a) To address all issues of discrimination, including social discrimination, in particular against children with disabilities living in rural areas;

(b) To collect accurate statistical data on children with disabilities;

(c) To provide equal educational opportunities for children with disabilities, including by providing the necessary support and ensuring that teachers are trained to educate children with disabilities in regular schools;

(d) To ensure equal access to health services;

(e) To continue and strengthen cooperation with UNICEF.

Health and health services

42. The Committee expresses its deep concern at the alarming levels of mortality among children, with 25 per cent of children dying before they reach the age of 5. It notes that the main causes of child mortality are related to malaria, diarrhoeal diseases, acute respiratory diseases and vaccine-preventable diseases. The Committee is also concerned about the fact that a majority of children do not have access to adequate health services, the high level of malnutrition among children, the lack of access to safe drinking water and proper sanitation, and inadequate breastfeeding practices among women.

43. **The Committee urges the State party to strengthen its efforts to improve the health situation of children in the State party, including through:**

(a) **A continuation and strengthening of its efforts to ensure that all children have access to basic health-care services;**

(b) **Strengthening vaccination programmes;**

(c) **Improving the nutritional status of children;**

(d) **Active promotion of exclusive breastfeeding for six months after birth, with the addition of appropriate infant diet thereafter.**

Adolescent health

44. The Committee is concerned at the lack of adolescent health services and the large number of teenage pregnancies.

45. **The Committee recommends that the State party pay close attention to adolescent health, taking into account the Committee's General Comment No. 4 on adolescent health and development. In particular, the State party should strengthen sexual and reproductive health education for adolescents, including family planning measures, especially in schools and out-of-school programmes, with a view to reducing the incidence of teenage pregnancy, and provide pregnant teenage girls with the necessary assistance and access to health care and education. It is also recommended that a comprehensive study be undertaken to assess the scope and nature of adolescent health problems, including the prevalence and negative impact of STIs and HIV/AIDS.**

Harmful traditional practices

46. The Committee notes with concern the customary practice of early marriage.

47. **The Committee recommends that the State party ensure the effective enforcement of the minimum age for contracting marriage stipulated in the Family Code. Such measures should be accompanied by awareness-raising campaigns to prevent early marriages.**

HIV/AIDS

48. The Committee expresses its concern about the high and growing incidence of HIV/AIDS in the State party and the high number of children who are infected with HIV or have become AIDS orphans.

49. **The Committee refers the State party to its General Comment No. 3 on HIV/AIDS and the rights of the child and recommends that the State party reinforce its efforts to combat HIV/AIDS, including by:**

(a) Accelerating the adoption and implementation of a national plan of action for orphans, vulnerable children and children affected by HIV/AIDS, as envisaged in the 2004 National Forum on Early Childhood Care and Development;

(b) Continuing and strengthening measures taken under the National Programme to Combat HIV/AIDS;

(c) Developing youth-sensitive and confidential counselling, care and rehabilitation facilities that are accessible without parental consent when this is in the best interests of the child;

(d) Seeking technical cooperation from, among others, UNAIDS.

Social security and childcare services and facilities/standard of living

50. The Committee expresses its concern at the high and increasing number of children living in poverty and extreme poverty in the State party, especially in rural areas. It notes with particular concern the very poor living conditions of many internally displaced children and children living in so-called informal settlements.

51. **The Committee recommends that the State party strengthen its efforts to provide acceptable living conditions for children and their families, in particular in view of the child's right to protection, health and education. Such efforts should include target measures to improve the living conditions of those children and families most in need.**

6. Education, leisure and cultural activities

Education, including vocational training and guidance

52. The Committee notes with appreciation a number of initiatives, including the National Plan on Education for All, to rebuild the educational infrastructure and expand the educational system so as to enrol more children and improve pre-school education. The Committee notes with concern, however, the very low enrolment of children in pre-school and primary school and the even lower enrolment in secondary school, in particular of girls. It is also concerned about the marked disparities in enrolment between rural and urban areas, the high rates of non-attendance and repetition, overcrowded classrooms and teaching in two or three shifts, fees and extra payments charged in many schools, the low quality of education, the large number of untrained teachers, the insufficient in-service training and low salaries of teachers. The

Committee is also concerned about the lack of facilities for vocational training, leaving many adolescents without preparation for skilled labour. Furthermore, the Committee notes that the entire educational system is extremely underfinanced, which endangers the implementation of the above-mentioned plans to rehabilitate and expand the educational system.

53. **The Committee urges the State party to take all necessary measures:**

- (a) To increase budgetary allocations to education;**
- (b) To rehabilitate the infrastructure of the educational system in the entire country;**
- (c) To reduce shifts of classes;**
- (d) To meet the target set at the 2004 National Forum on Early Childhood Care and Development to guarantee at least 30 per cent of children access to pre-school education by 2008;**
- (e) To increase enrolment rates and reduce repetition and dropout rates and ensure that all children have effective access to primary education free of charge;**
- (f) To prevent and eliminate gender and urban-rural disparities in school attendance and completion rates;**
- (g) To undertake campaigns to instil awareness among parents of the importance of sending their children, particularly girls, to school;**
- (h) To adequately equip existing and new classrooms and schools with books and sufficient and appropriate teaching and learning materials;**
- (i) To improve teaching and learning methods focusing on a child-centred curriculum and instruction;**
- (j) To expand the facilities of vocational training at the secondary school level and for adolescents who have never attended school or dropped out before completing school;**
- (k) To ensure that recruited teachers are qualified and expand and improve both pre-service and in-service teacher training, and provide adequate salaries for teachers;**
- (l) To improve efficiency in the management of education programmes.**

Aims of education

54. The Committee notes the absence of human rights education in the school curricula in the State party.

55. **The Committee recommends that the State party adopt and implement a national plan for integrating education on human rights in general and children's rights in particular in the primary and secondary school curricula, taking into account the Committee's General Comment No. 1 on the aims of education.**

Leisure, recreation and cultural activities

56. The Committee notes with concern children's general lack of access to leisure and cultural facilities.

57. **The Committee recommends that the State party give priority to improving children's access to, and the quality of, sports facilities, cultural institutions and other leisure facilities.**

7. Special protection measures

Refugee and internally displaced children

58. The Committee notes with appreciation the many efforts undertaken by the State party to address the various problems resulting from massive internal and cross-border displacements. Despite the good results achieved in returning people to their places of origin, the Committee is concerned about the vulnerable situation of internally displaced and refugee families and children in the State party. It is also concerned that the returnees are facing many problems, particularly due to the lack of basic services, and that many children have still not been reunited with their parents.

59. **The Committee urges the State party to give priority attention to the vulnerable situation of displaced families and children and ensure that adequate support is given to the reintegration of families and children who have returned to their places of origin after the end of the armed conflict. The State party should, in this regard, ensure compliance with the Norms on the Resettlement of Displaced Populations (Decree 1/01 of 5 January 2001) which provides, inter alia, for the voluntary nature of resettlement, the security of resettlement sites, the allocation of adequate land and the provision of certain basic amenities and services, such as water, sanitation, schools and health facilities.**

Armed conflict

60. While welcoming the actions undertaken for the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of combatants, the Committee is deeply concerned that inadequate attention is given to the plight of former child soldiers, in particular girls. The Committee is also concerned about the situation of children in the enclave of Cabinda, which is still affected by violent conflict.

61. **The Committee recommends that the State party ensure that special attention is given to former child soldiers and children, in particular girls, who were domestic workers, porters, etc. All children who participated in military groups should be eligible for**

rehabilitation programmes. These programmes should include psychosocial rehabilitation and programmes for community integration. Furthermore, the State party should take all necessary measures to provide adequate protection for children in the enclave of Cabinda.

62. The Committee notes with deep concern the large number of landmines which remain spread out across the country, causing many deaths and injuries every year and posing a threat to the life, survival and development of children in the State party.

63. The Committee recommends that the State party take all necessary measures to protect children against landmines, including by continuing and strengthening its mine clearance programmes and programmes for mine awareness and physical rehabilitation of child victims.

Economic exploitation

64. While welcoming the State party's ratification of ILO Conventions Nos. 138 and 182 in 2001, the Committee is concerned that many children below the legal age for employment work in the State party, mostly in family farms and in the informal sector, and that the work of these children is not monitored, although it is known that children are vulnerable to exploitation in employment.

65. The Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) Strengthen its efforts to prevent children under the legal age for employment from working;

(b) Seek innovative strategies whereby children who have completed their primary education who choose to work can combine working with continued education;

(c) Establish an inspection system in order to ensure that work performed by children is light work and not exploitative;

(d) Develop targeted programmes to protect the rights of children separated from their parents and working in the streets;

(e) Seek technical assistance from ILO/IPEC.

Sexual exploitation and trafficking

66. The Committee is concerned about the extent of the problem of sexual exploitation of and trafficking in children in the State party and notes that internally displaced and street children are particularly vulnerable to such abuse.

67. The Committee recommends that the State party further strengthen its efforts to identify, prevent and combat trafficking in children for sexual and other exploitative purposes, including by finalizing the national plan of action in this area and providing the appropriate legal framework and sufficient human and financial resources for its implementation. The Committee also encourages the State party to define "trafficking" as a special criminal offence under the Penal Code.

Street children

68. The Committee expresses its concern at the increasing number of street children in the State party. It also notes with concern the generalized use of intoxicating substances among street children.

69. **The Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) Conduct a comprehensive study to assess the situation of street children;

(b) Take measures to prevent and reduce this phenomenon by addressing its root causes;

(c) Ensure that street children are provided with adequate nutrition, clothing, housing, health care and educational opportunities, including vocational and life-skills training, in order to support their full development;

(d) Ensure that these children are provided with recovery and reintegration services for physical, sexual and substance abuse and services for reconciliation with their families.

Administration of juvenile justice

70. The Committee welcomes the establishment of a specific juvenile justice system under the Law on Juvenile Justice of 19 April 1996. It expresses concern, however, at the failure to implement the law and the fact that the rules and regulations governing this law have still to be published.

71. **In light of articles 37, 39 and 40 and other relevant international standards, the Committee recommends that the State party ensure the full implementation of juvenile justice standards in conformity with those articles of the Convention, as well as with other United Nations standards in this field, in particular the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Administration of Juvenile Justice (the Beijing Rules) and the United Nations Guidelines for the Prevention of Juvenile Delinquency (the Riyadh Guidelines). In particular, the Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) Allocate adequate human and financial resources to ensure the implementation of the Law on Juvenile Justice throughout the State party, including the creation of juvenile courts and the official publication of rules and regulations concerning that law;

(b) Provide adequate training to those responsible for administering juvenile justice;

(c) Ensure that all offenders under the age of 18 are tried under the juvenile justice system;

(d) Consider deprivation of liberty only as a measure of last resort and for the shortest possible period of time and encourage the use of alternative measures to the deprivation of liberty;

(e) Seek assistance from, inter alia, OHCHR and UNICEF.

8. Ratification of the Optional Protocols

72. The Committee notes the information provided by the State party about the approval by Parliament of the two Optional Protocols to the Convention on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography and on the involvement of children in armed conflict in 2002. However, the Committee notes that the instruments of ratification have not yet been deposited with the Secretary-General, and urges the State party to take immediate action in this regard.

9. Follow-up and dissemination

Follow-up

73. The Committee recommends that the State party take all appropriate measures to ensure full implementation of the present recommendations, inter alia by transmitting them to the members of the Council of Ministers or the Cabinet or similar body, the Parliament, and to provincial or State governments and parliaments, when applicable, for appropriate consideration and further action.

Dissemination

74. The Committee further recommends that the initial report and written replies submitted by the State party and the related recommendations (concluding observations) it adopted be made widely available, including (but not exclusively) through the Internet, to the public at large, civil society organizations, youth groups, professional groups and children in order to generate debate and awareness of the Convention, its implementation and monitoring.

10. Next report

75. The Committee underlines the importance of a reporting practice that is in full compliance with the provisions of article 44 of the Convention. An important aspect of States parties' responsibilities to children under the Convention includes ensuring that the Committee on the Rights of the Child has regular opportunities to examine the progress made in the Convention's implementation. In this regard, regular and timely reporting by States parties is crucial. The Committee recognizes that some States parties experience difficulties in reporting in a timely and regular manner. As an exceptional measure, in order to help the State party catch up with its reporting obligations so as to be in full compliance with the Convention, the Committee invites the State party to submit its next periodic reports by 3 January 2008, due date of the fourth periodic report. This report, which will combine the second, third and fourth periodic reports, should not exceed 120 pages (see CRC/C/118), and the Committee expects the State party to report every five years thereafter, as foreseen by the Convention.