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VII. Day of general discussion

37. On 19 September 2008, the Committee held its annual day of general discussion entitled “The right to education in situations of emergency”.

A. Background

38. The annual days of general discussion of the Committee on the Rights of the Child seek to foster a deeper understanding of the contents and implications of the Convention as they relate to specific articles or topics. On 19 September 2008, during its forty-ninth session, the Committee devoted its day of general discussion to “The right of the child to education in emergency situations” (Convention, arts. 28 and 29).

39. For the purpose of the day of general discussion, “emergency situations” are defined as all situations in which anthropogenic or natural disasters destroy, within a short period of time, the usual conditions of life, care and education facilities for children and therefore disrupt, deny, hinder progress or delay the realisation of the right to education. Such situations can be caused by, inter alia, armed conflicts — both international, including military occupation, and non international —, post-conflict situations, and all types of natural disaster.

40. The right to education is set out in the Convention on the Rights of the Child, as well as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. The right to education in a situation of armed conflict is further protected under international humanitarian law by the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War and Additional Protocols I and II to the Geneva Conventions, while the elementary education of refugees is protected by the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, 1951.

41. The achievement of universal primary education and the promotion of gender equality were adopted as Millennium Development Goals by the General Assembly on 6 September 2001. Additionally, States declared in the “A world fit for children” outcome document of the General Assembly’s Special Session on Children in 2002, and reiterated in the mid-term review of 2007, that by 2015 all children would have access to and complete primary education that was free, compulsory and of good quality.

42. The purpose of the 2008 day of general discussion is to provide States and other actors with more comprehensive guidance as to their obligations to promote and protect the right to education, as outlined in articles 28 and 29.

43. On 19 September 2008, over 100 participants (consisting of States parties, international organizations and non-governmental organizations, as well as individuals) attended the meeting and more than 20 contributions were submitted prior to the event. An exhibit of children’s drawings was set up by Save the Children for this occasion presenting views of children whose lives are affected by emergency situations from many parts of the world.

B. Summary

44. Ms. Lee, Chairperson of the Committee, opened the day of general discussion with a short introduction of the topic, outlining the programme for the day. The participants held a minute of silence to commemorate the deaths of four International Rescue Committee (IRC) staff killed in Afghanistan in August 2008: Jackie Kirk; Shirley Case; Nicole Dial and Mohammad Aimal.

45. Ms. Lee's opening remarks were followed by an introductory statement by Cream Wright, Chief of the Education Section at UNICEF Headquarters. Mr. Wright highlighted the progress that had been achieved by the international community in identifying clear standards to meet the expectations of core commitments for children and in delivering them through coordinated support for children in emergency situations. He noted that the practical benefits of addressing education as a fundamental right have been proven. In arguing for the need for not only restoring normality but also improving when reconstructing education systems, he also highlighted the need for adequate and timely funding, noting that donors were quick to provide funding for emergencies but not necessarily for education in emergency situations. For many, education as a priority in emergency relief was still an outstanding issue, as the practical benefits of addressing education immediately at the outset of the emergency are still not sufficiently understood. Mr. Wright then elaborated on what he described as the three "P's" – predicting emergencies, preparing for emergencies and preventing emergencies, and said it was necessary to have tools to carry out those actions. Mr. Wright then highlighted the need for child-friendly schools, stressing the right of the child to a high-quality learning process. Mr. Wright concluded by recommending that the Committee on the Rights of the Child consider drafting a general comment on this issue in order to make States aware of the need to invest in a more proactive manner in addressing the rights of children in emergency situations. He added that UNICEF was prepared to provide technical assistance for such a general comment.

46. Following the introductory statement of Mr. Wright, the floor was given to Tove Wang, Chair, Rewrite the Future campaign of Save the Children, a member organization of the Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE).¹ Ms. Wang stated that children affected by natural disasters, conflicts or other emergencies were the hardest to reach children in terms of providing access to quality education and were in greater danger of experiencing discrimination – the numbers of children affected by conflict who were still out of school was almost static. She added that, despite the fact that the Human Rights Council has reaffirmed the right to education of every child, including those in any kind of emergency, 37 million school-age children live in countries affected by long-term humanitarian crises and, each year, three-quarters of a million more children had their education disrupted or miss out entirely on education owing to humanitarian disasters. She also argued that high-quality education could increase a child's future potential to become an active member of their society — economically, socially and politically — and could promote stability and tolerance and contribute to building democracy and peace. Ms. Wang stressed that it was crucial to provide education from the

¹ INEE is an open, global network of representatives from non-governmental organizations, United Nations agencies, donor agencies, governments, teachers, researchers and individuals from affected populations working together to ensure all people the right to quality and safe education in emergencies and post-crisis recovery.

outset of every humanitarian response. She highlighted that the obligation to ensure children's right to education did not end with individual States, but should also be addressed, when needed, within the framework of international cooperation – yet donors had neglected the right of the child to education in emergency situations, failing to provide the external funding. Ms. Wang stressed that crucial steps could be taken to prepare should a disaster occur. In this regard, she referred to the INEE Minimum Standards for Education in Emergencies, Chronic Crises and Early Reconstruction (hereafter “INEE Minimum Standards”), which build on the Millennium Development Goals, and to the fact that in November 2006, education was included in the international humanitarian response system through the formation of the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Education Cluster,² designed to enhance coordination, improve accountability and quality and bring effective education to children in disaster situations. Ms. Wang stressed the need to work together and to utilize existing expertise and structures, including the INEE and the Education Cluster in order to ensure the right of children to education in emergency situations. Finally, Ms Wang recommended that today's discussion should be followed up by the Committee by issuing a general comment on this issue.

47. The final speaker of the opening segment was Vernor Munoz, Special Rapporteur on the right to education and keynote speaker for the day. Among other things, Mr. Munoz stated that the consequences of armed conflict and natural disasters had become increasingly visible and there was a possibility of such events occurring in every region of the world; invariably, the civilian population was the most affected by armed conflict and natural disasters. In recent years, programmatic principles and funding for education had been cut. Physical, cognitive and social and emotional security combined with education was necessary. Armed conflict and political violence had been the main cause of more than 4 million boys and girls living with disabilities, as well as lack of services and minimal support. Some 90 percent of persons affected by natural disasters lived in developing countries that had less ability to deal with natural disasters. Education opportunities, even in times of peace, were frequently unequal and discriminatory, and such inequalities and discrimination were exacerbated in times of emergency situations. Mr. Munoz highlighted the fact that the Rome Statute provides that attacks on buildings intended for educational purposes were a war crime. He also noted that the World Conference on Education for All had shifted the language on education in emergency situations, so that the educational needs of boys and girls affected by emergency situations was not to be left to a development agenda, but had to be placed on the human rights agenda. He also urged donors to acknowledge the right to education and to allocate more resources to fragile States. He further urged States to identify emergency education plans and to create a study programme that was adaptable and non-discriminatory as a response to the needs of boys and girls in emergency situations.

48. The participants then divided into two working groups which proceeded to discuss the following themes: “the continuation and/or reconstruction of the educational system” (the first working group) and “content and quality of

² The IASC Education Cluster was established at the end of 2006 and co-led by UNICEF and the Save the Children Alliance with the participation of an Advisory Group (UNESCO, the World Food Programme, UNHCR, International Rescue Committee, Christian Children's Fund and INEE).

education provided for children in emergency situations” (the second working group).

1. Continuation and/or reconstruction of the educational system

49. The first working group focused upon the implementation of article 28 concerning access to education in the context of emergencies, with a particular focus on education as a right and how this was fulfilled. The working group discussed how to prioritize education as an emergency measure which had to be understood as an essential protection tool and which must be included in the humanitarian response from the very beginning of the emergency through to the development phase, allowing for the continuation of children’s education and building their future capacities.

50. The first working group was facilitated by Dainius Puras, a member of the Committee on the Rights of the Child. Mr. Puras was also joined by Cream Wright (UNICEF) and Alison Anderson (Director of INEE) as resource persons. Agnes Aidoo, Vice-Chairperson of the Committee of the Rights of the Child, and Maria Herczog, member of the Committee on the Rights of the Child, served as rapporteurs for the first working group.

51. Ms. Anderson gave a short presentation to the participants of the working group on the continuation and/or reconstruction of the educational system, posing the question: “why should access to education during an emergency be an urgent issue?” Ms Anderson argued that on average, displaced children spend eight years in displacement and therefore their education could not “wait” until they returned home or were locally integrated. She also highlighted the idea of access to safe, high-quality education as protection and an investment for a better future. Ms. Anderson noted that education was critical for all children, but especially urgent for children affected by emergencies. In emergency situations, education provides physical, psychosocial and cognitive protection, which could be both life-sustaining and life-saving, and that education in emergencies offered an opportunity to build back better and work with government and communities for social transformation by creating programmes which allowed excluded groups, like young children, girls, adolescents and disabled children, to attend school, improving access and quality of education. Ms. Anderson ended her presentation with a recommendation to the Committee to consider issuing a general comment on education in emergencies following the day of general discussion and that the Committee, the Special Rapporteur on the right to education, States parties, NGOs and United Nations agencies have a joint follow-up meeting on the issue annually to assess the impact of their recommendations and to follow-up on them.

52. The discussion in the working group which followed highlighted that education was crucial, but often overlooked. Development partners were also not thinking of education in emergency situations; they applied a priority or hierarchy of rights, dealing with education at a later stage. The discussions also highlighted the need to respect children’s rights in responding to emergency situations. Education was also protection for the well-being and security of children in conflict situations. The hierarchy with respect to development partners in addressing the right of children to education, which was ranked lower than other priorities, had to be changed. The Education for All – Fast Track Initiative³ (a partnership of developing countries and donors to help low-

³ <http://www.fasttrackinitiative.org/library/FrameworkNOV04.pdf>.

income countries achieve the Millennium Development Goal of universal primary education by 2015) would support all countries in the transition and an emergency fund had been created to support emergency disaster relief targeted for education. It was also stressed that early childhood development was often overlooked in emergency situations, which needed to be addressed, that international cooperation and coordination was essential and that a culture of rights needed to be supported.

2. Content and quality of education provided for children in emergency situations

53. The second working group focused on the implementation of article 29 concerning the content of education, considering the particular educational rights and needs of children in emergency situations, including the role of education as a life-saving measure.

54. The second working group was facilitated by Brent Parfitt, a member of the Committee on the Rights of the Child. Mr. Parfitt was joined by Christopher Talbot, Chief, a.i, of the Section for Education in Post-Conflict and Post-Disaster Situations, UNESCO, and Susan Nicolai, Senior Education Adviser and Deputy Coordinator for the IASC Education Cluster. Lothar Krappmann, Rapporteur of the Committee on the Rights of the Child, and Awich Pollar, a member of the Committee on the Rights of the Child, served as rapporteurs for the second working group.

55. In her presentation to the working group, Ms. Nicolai noted that implementation of rights, not a lack of rights was the problem. Families have little incentive to insist that their child attend school unless the education was of good quality and relevant. Ms Nicolai stated that while legal frameworks emphasized that it was the primary obligation of Governments to ensure education, they were often unable to do so because of lack of capacity, language differences, gender disparity and corruption. She argued that there was a need to call for an increase in long-term aid for education in emergencies and also to focus the education response on quality of education, not just building schools. The obligation to ensure that schools were inclusive and had non-biased curricula, should be upheld collectively and all actors in this field should aspire to meet the INEE Minimum Standards. Finally, Ms. Nicolai argued that in order to prevent conflict, build peace and avoid the dangers inherent in abuse of educational systems, peace agreements needed to have a reference to education and there must be a harmonized approach thereto; security and safety of schools, school children and education workers was part of quality education.

56. Following Ms. Nicolai's representation, Mr. Talbot took the floor. He highlighted the fact that "emergency" covers a large range of situations, not just the high-media phase, and that one also needed to look at long-term responses covering the transition and recovery phases and post-disaster reconstruction as well. Mr. Talbot stated that if learning content was not relevant and useful, the right to education was not being fulfilled. Mr. Talbot stated that the INEE Minimum Standards should be the starting point to putting into practice the right to education. Mr. Talbot also noted that conflict often brought attention to learning content and processes of reform of learning content were often launched on a small scale. In efforts to realize the right to education, attention should be given to support Governments, ministries and agencies to support an inclusive curricula revision process. Such processes must be the result of national and local reflection. On another note, Mr. Talbot

stated that there was a growing desire to see a strengthening of monitoring mechanisms of compliance to already existing norms of international law that made it a crime to attack schools, teachers and other humanitarian workers.

57. In the discussion that followed, participants touched on the need to address the often neglected article 31 of the Convention, which recognized the child's right to leisure and play, because play could be very important in emergency situations and could help the child recover from emotional trauma. In order for education to be of quality, it needed to take into account the child's point of view as to what was considered quality education; education should be participatory and inclusive, flexible and adaptable. The need to include life skills in school curricula was also raised, as was the need to address psychosocial issues, and the Working Group Chairperson, Mr. Parfitt, responded positively thereto, pointing out that the Committee already made reference to mental health in its concluding observations. It was also noted by some participants that the right to education also included early childhood education, vocational training and tertiary learning and that there needs to be a balanced investment across the whole span of education in order to ensure quality and resources to education at all levels. Another important issue addressed was the need for valid, verifiable certification for schooling. It was pointed out that in some cases certain certificates were not recognized without a bribe and that led to petty corruption. A number of other issues were raised by participants including, the need to ensure schools as "zones of peace", the special educational needs of adolescents, peace agreements as an opportunity to advance education, education in the mother tongue of children and the inclusion of comparative religion taught by intercultural/interreligious teams in school curricula.

58. When the meeting reconvened in plenary, the four rapporteurs of the working groups, Ms. Aidoo and Ms. Herczog (first working group) and Mr. Krappmann and Mr. Pollar (second working group) summarized the main points raised during the discussion in the two groups.

59. Finally, Moushira Khattab, Rapporteur for the day of general discussion, made concluding comments in which she focused on the issues that had come out of the day's discussions, both in plenary as well as in the two working groups. She noted that under the Convention on the Rights of the Child the right to education was considered a fundamental right without discrimination of any kind and remarked that the idea had been the guiding principle of the day's discussion. Ms. Khattab identified five key messages from the discussion: that quality education was a human right that children did not forfeit when in an emergency situation; that it was a relief measure; that it must form an integral part of every humanitarian response; that it must be provided from the outset of relief measures; and that minimum standards must be respected. She noted that education should be a priority humanitarian response, because it was also a protection tool, key for the physical, psychological and cognitive development of the child.

60. In brief closing remarks, Ms. Lee stated that the day's discussion had highlighted a number of issues, including the fact that the right to education was a human right and was indivisible from other rights, and that an education component should be included in all emergency response strategies. She also noted that it had become clear that there was a need to take preventive action in order to ensure the right to education in emergency situations as much as possible. Ms Lee further stated that the Committee took note of the recommendations from various speakers for it to draft a general comment on

issues related to implementation of articles 28 and 29 of the Convention in emergency situations, and that it would give serious consideration to these proposals.

C. Recommendations⁴

61. The Committee recalls that education is an inalienable right that is inextricably linked to other fundamental rights and must be guaranteed to all children both in and outside of emergency situations. The Committee recalls that for the purpose of this day of general discussion, “emergency situations” are defined as all situations in which anthropogenic or natural disasters destroy, within a short period of time, the usual conditions of life, care and education facilities for children. Children affected by emergencies are among those most vulnerable and marginalized in the world, and constitute one of the largest groups of out-of-school children. For education for all to become a reality, the right of children to education in emergencies needs to be respected, protected and fulfilled.

62. Furthermore, the Committee highlights that the second Millennium Development Goal of a full course of primary schooling for every child will not be reached if the right to education of children in emergencies is not effectively ensured and implemented.

63. The Committee concurs with the underlying principle of the 2008 day of general discussion which upheld the right to education as a priority and an integral component of humanitarian relief response in emergency situations.

64. States parties which have ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child have taken upon themselves obligations to implement child rights within their jurisdiction as well as to contribute to global implementation of these rights. The Committee recalls that the purpose of the 2008 day of general discussion is to provide States and other actors with more comprehensive guidance as to their obligations to promote and protect the right to education as outlined in articles 28 and 29. Therefore, the following recommendations are addressed not only to States parties but also to other relevant actors including non-State actors who may have de facto control over areas in which the inalienable rights of the child, including his/her right to education, must be respected, protected and fulfilled.

65. The Committee notes with appreciation the valuable initiatives and programmes implemented on the ground for children in emergencies by many organizations, particularly those under the umbrella of the Interagency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE), including UNICEF, UNESCO, the International Rescue Committee (IRC), the International Committee of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, Save the Children and World Vision, among others.

1. Core obligations

66. The Committee underscores that the implementation of the right of the child to education in emergency situations must meet the requirements set out in articles 28 and 29 of the Convention without limitation.

⁴ These recommendations are based on the input to and discussions that took place during the day of general discussion on “The right of the child to education in emergency situations” on 19 September 2008 and are not claimed to be exhaustive.

67. The Committee considers that in situations of emergency, the child's need to enjoy his/her right to education is reinforced by the fact that it is a protection measure, as well as a relief measure and a life-saving measure that provides physical, psychosocial and cognitive protection. Education mitigates the psychosocial impact of conflicts and disasters by giving a sense of normalcy, stability, structure and hope for the future. The Committee therefore calls upon States parties to honour their obligation to fully ensure the right to education for every child within their jurisdiction, without any discrimination, throughout all stages of emergency situations, including the emergency preparedness phase and the reconstruction and the post emergency phases. The Committee also calls upon States parties, donors and relief agencies to include education as an integral component of the humanitarian relief response from the outset.

68. In its general comment No. 5 of 2003 on the general measures of implementation for the Convention (arts. 4, 42 and 44, para. 6, of the Convention), the Committee outlined States parties' obligations to develop general measures of implementation, including in relation to the progressive realization of economic, social and cultural rights enshrined in the Convention and international cooperation. In the recommendations from the 2007 day of general discussion on "Resources for the Rights of the Child – Responsibility of States", the Committee recommended that progressive realization be understood as imposing an immediate obligation for States parties to the Convention to undertake targeted measures to move as expeditiously and effectively as possible towards the full realization of economic, social and cultural rights of children. The Committee also considered that States parties are under the obligation to meet at least the core minimum content of economic, social and cultural rights, which includes basic education.

69. The Committee reiterates that the responsibility to fulfil the right to education in emergency situations does not rest upon individual States alone. When a State lacks the capacity and/or requisite resources, the international community including other States, donor organizations and United Nations agencies should ensure that the right to education is universally fulfilled in accordance with article 4, paragraph 2, of the Convention.

70. The Committee calls upon States parties, the donor community and humanitarian agencies, when undertaking efforts to ensure the right to education in an emergency situation, to apply a rights-based approach, taking into account the four general principles of the Convention: the right to non-discrimination (art. 2); best interests of the child (art. 3); the right to life, survival and development (art. 6); and the right to be heard (art. 12).

2. The obligation of States to ensure the right of the child to access to education in emergency situations: continuation/reconstruction of the educational system (art. 28)

Emergency preparedness

71. The Committee, while recalling article 4 of the Convention stipulating that States parties shall undertake all appropriate legislative, administrative, and other measures for the implementation of the rights recognized in the Convention, calls upon States parties to strengthen national systems of education, the legal framework for protection, and health and basic social services to increase their ability to withstand emergencies.

72. The Committee urges all States parties, in particular those that are prone to natural disasters or in areas likely to be affected by armed conflict, to prepare a

plan of action for the provision of the right to education in emergency situations. This should include the appointment of a focal point within the Ministry of Education in charge of coordination between governmental bodies, civil society, humanitarian relief agencies and donors; the allocation of adequate sustained resources to ensure the fulfilment of the right to education should an emergency occur; adaptation of curricula; the training of teachers to enable them to cope with emergencies; and the identification and training of volunteers.

During the emergency

73. With reference to the obligation under international law for States to protect civil institutions, including schools, the Committee urges States parties to fulfil their obligation inherent therein to ensure schools as zones of peace and places where intellectual curiosity and respect for universal human rights is fostered; and to ensure that schools are protected from military attacks or seizure by militants or use as centres for recruitment. The Committee urges States parties to criminalize attacks on schools as war crimes in accordance with article 8, paragraph 2 (b) (ix), of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court and to prevent and combat impunity.

74. The Committee recommends that States parties ensure that education is truly inclusive with easy access of marginalized children including: children with disabilities; children affected by HIV/AIDS, refugee and asylum-seeking children; internally displaced children; and very young children through early childhood development and education programmes. Secondary education, both general and vocational, should also be available for children beyond primary education.

75. The Committee, recognizing that gender equality is particularly challenged by the complex gender dynamics of emergencies, humanitarian assistance and early recovery which may compound vulnerability and marginalization, urges States parties to implement gender-equitable policy and programme interventions, including special measures, in order to ensure that all boys and girls affected by emergency situations have equal access to safe, quality and relevant education.

76. The Committee invites States parties, relief agencies and the donor community to draw on the resources of INEE, most notably the INEE Minimum Standards for Education in Emergencies, Chronic Crises and Early Reconstruction (INEE Minimum Standards) which offer a harmonized framework of principles and paths of action to all actors who may be involved in the provision of education during emergencies, for them to coordinate their educational activities and to promote the acceptance of responsibilities.⁵ The Committee also urges States parties, relief agencies and the donor community to support the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC)⁶ and to draw on its resources as well as those of the IASC Education Cluster and the Transition Fund of the Education for All – Fast Track Initiative to build the capacities of

⁵ See the report of the Special Rapporteur on the right to education, A/HRC/8/10, para. 66.

⁶ The Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) for humanitarian assistance appointed individual agencies to lead the clusters. Their task is to clarify the roles, responsibilities and accountability of United Nations and non-United Nations partners responding to specific emergencies and to streamline communication with the host government (see http://www.unicef.org/girlseducation/index_44882.html).

local humanitarian and civil society organizations. The Committee also reiterates the recommendation of the Special Rapporteur on the right to education that the Education Cluster become the appropriate mechanism for determining educational needs in emergency situations and responding to them in a coordinated manner.⁷

Reconstruction and post emergency

77. The Committee calls upon States parties and other relevant actors to include education in peace and ceasefire agreements and to ensure smooth transition to regular schools by honouring certification that respects the INEE Minimum Standards and accreditation and official recognition of education received during emergencies.

78. The Committee calls upon hosting States to respect the right of the refugee and asylum-seeking child to learn in his/her own language and to learn about his/her own culture. The Committee further stresses that, in situations of internal displacement, the language of displaced children must be taken into account if it is different from that of the local population.

79. Relief and reconstruction agencies and donors are urged to take into account the educational situation in and surrounding the emergency area and to extend assistance in this regard to the local population when necessary with a view to preventing social tensions.

3. The obligation to ensure quality education as a right in emergency situations: content (art. 29)

80. The Committee highlights the importance of quality education which increases social cohesion and supports conflict resolution and peacebuilding. Quality education can also mitigate State fragility and can help to achieve social, economic and political stability of societies. Quality education can save lives by protecting against exploitation and harm, including abduction, recruitment of children into armed forces and/or groups and sexual and gender-based violence. By disseminating life-saving information on such issues as hygiene, landmine safety and HIV/AIDS prevention, good-quality education also provides the knowledge and skills to survive in emergencies.

81. The Committee recalls general comment No. 1 which states that the quality, content and values of education described in the Convention are relevant to children living in zones of peace, “but they are even more important for those living in situations of conflict or emergency”. The Committee underscores that the quality of education should be guided by article 29, paragraph 1, of the Convention and must meet the agreed INEE Minimum Standards for education in emergencies in order to serve as a protection and a life-saving measure.

82. In emergency situations, high-quality education should reflect the specific living conditions of the child and should be child-centred, rights-based, protective, adaptable, inclusive and participatory.

83. Education must not incite hatred; it must instil respect for the rights of others and tolerance, and it must protect the child against prejudice and indoctrination by any political or religious group. Education must cater for the psychological or mental state of the child; assist the child to cope with the

⁷ See the report of the Special Rapporteur on the right to education, A/HRC/8/10, para. 84.

emergency; danger; threat or manipulation. Education should be sensitive to the culture, language and traditions of the child.

84. Non-formal or informal education for children who drop out of school, including through local community participation, must be supported and encouraged. The Committee recommends that such education be adapted to the needs of children with a view to encouraging those who are no longer in the formal educational system to re-enrol.

85. The Committee recalls that teachers are critical in ensuring that children receive a quality education. In order to meet minimum standards, teachers must be appropriately trained and monitored, and must receive necessary materials, support and supervision. In this regard, strategies for ensuring that teachers are appropriately compensated are vital, particularly in situations where the responsible public authority is unable to effectively coordinate and monitor employment of teachers. Teacher training should be an ongoing process to improve their skills and instil confidence in their role in keeping children in school and protecting them from further trauma during emergency situations.

4. Child participation

86. The Committee recommends that States parties and other international partners support child participation so that children can voice their views with regard to what they learn (the content) and how they learn (rights-based and child-centred active learning) and are empowered by the relevant content of education and the active learning process. The Committee further recommends giving the child the opportunity to be heard in order to keep him/her from dropping out of school. The Committee associates itself with the opinion expressed by a child that a good school is a school where children get respect, activity, cooperation, and relations with peers, teachers and parents.

87. The Committee further recommends that children, along with their parents, be encouraged and enabled to participate in analyzing their situation and future prospects.

88. The Committee encourages the establishment and active involvement of parent-teacher associations, community educational committees and similar community initiatives.

5. International assistance and funding

89. States parties, United Nations agencies, donors and relief agencies are called upon to ensure the right of the child to education in emergency situations by adopting education as a relief measure and prioritizing it as a main area of basic relief assistance. The Committee reiterates the critical importance of including education in every humanitarian relief response from the outset.

90. The Committee once again urges States parties, United Nations agencies, donors and relief agencies to ensure that INEE Minimum Standards are applied at all stages of humanitarian relief response in order to ensure the right of children to education in emergencies. The Committee also reiterates the importance of support to IASC.

91. The Committee underscores the importance of allocating adequate human and financial resources including through international cooperation in order to fully realize the right of the child to education in emergency situations. It therefore calls upon States parties, United Nations agencies, donors and relief agencies to provide adequate sustained funding and assist States in raising and

appropriately allocating funds to ensure the right of the child to education in emergency situations.

6. Monitoring

92. At the national level, all States parties should continually monitor the implementation of their commitments as outlined in this document. At the international level, States should include, when reporting to the Committee on the implementation of the Convention, as set out in article 44 of the Convention, progress achieved towards the implementation of these recommendations.

93. States parties and international partners are also encouraged by the Committee to share and disseminate lessons learned about minimizing the negative impact of emergency situations on children's right to education, with a view to achieving better preparedness and avoiding the recurrence of violation of the right to education in emergency situations.

94. The Committee will consider recommending the inclusion of information with regard to the implementation of the INEE Minimum Standards in State party reports on the implementation of the Convention and the Optional Protocols where relevant.