

For participants only

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COMMITTEE ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD  
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IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION OF THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

List of issues to be taken up in connection with  
the consideration of the initial report of Sierra Leone  
(CRC/C/3/Add.43)

General measures of implementation  
(arts. 4, 42 and 44)

1. Please indicate the status of the Convention vis-a-vis national law. Please also indicate if the Convention can be invoked in courts and, if so, provide, some examples.
2. With regard to information provided in paragraph 21 of the report, please further indicate the current status of the draft Comprehensive Bill on the Rights and Welfare of the Sierra Leonean Child.
3. With regard to information provided in paragraph 22 of the report, please provide more detailed information on existing or foreseen mechanisms to coordinate the activities between all Ministries involved in children's issues as well as between the local and central authorities. Please also provide information regarding the efficiency of the existing coordination system described in paragraph 22 of the report.
4. Please provide information whether indicators have been developed and disaggregated data collected concerning the status of all children, including the most vulnerable groups. What difficulties were encountered in the collection and use of these data and indicators for the design of policies and programmes for the effective implementation of the Convention?
5. Please provide further details on existing or foreseen mechanisms, both at central and local levels, for the monitoring of the implementation of the Convention. What consideration has been given by the State party to the establishment of an Ombudsperson for children's rights or similar independent monitoring body?
6. With regard to information provided in paragraph 20 of the report, please provide additional information on the National Council for Children, especially with regard to its budget, staffing, institutional links, and effectiveness. Please furthermore indicate the current status of the draft National Plan of Action (NPA) (para. 19).

7. Please provide information on the ways in which the present institutional arrangements relate to non-governmental organizations in the country.

8. Please indicate what further measures have been taken, or are planned, to train professional groups such as: judges, lawyers, law enforcement officials, army officials, civil servants including at the local level, personnel working in institutions and other places of detention for children, health personnel and social workers, about the Convention on the Rights of the Child. In addition, please indicate what measures have been taken to raise the awareness of Government officials, legislators, non-governmental organizations and the mass media, as well as the public at large including children themselves.

9. What proportion of the national budget is devoted to social expenditure, i.e. health and education, for children at central, regional and local levels? With regard to information provided in paragraph 7 of the report, please provide additional information on the implementation of article 4 of the Convention in regard to the allocation ~~A~~to the maximum extent of (...) available resources@for the rights of the child.

10. Please provide more details about the process of preparing the report, including the extent to which the non-governmental organizations were involved.

11. With regard to information provided in paragraph 24 of the report, please indicate further measures foreseen or undertaken by the authorities to disseminate the Convention to adults and children alike.

Definition of the Child  
(Article 1)

12. With regard to information provided in paragraph 26 of the report, please explain what criteria are used to define that a child ~~A~~appear[s] to be under the age of 12 years@

13. With regard to information provided in paragraph 27 of the report, please explain what criteria are used to define that ~~A~~a person [is] under the apparent age of seventeen and a half years@ Please furthermore specify the minimum age, if any, of voluntary enlistment with consent of parents, legal guardians or District Commissioners.

14. With regard to information provided in paragraph 28 of the report, please indicate the measures taken or foreseen to specifically define a minimum legal age for conscription into the armed forces in the national legislation.

15. With regard to information provided in paragraph 29 of the report regarding minimum age of marriage, please explain the compatibility between the customary law and the provisions and principles of the Convention. What measures are taken or foreseen by the authorities to harmonize national legislation with regard to the minimum age of marriage ?

16. With regard to information provided in paragraph 31 of the report, please indicate if the existing legislation for the protection against sexual abuse also protects boys. What efforts have been taken or foreseen by the authorities to harmonize national legislation in this area ?

17. With regard to information provided in paragraph 33 of the report, please specify whether the State Party has envisaged to raise the age of criminal responsibility.

#### General principles

(Arts. 2, 3, 6 and 12 of the Convention)

18. Please indicate to what extent the provisions of article 2 of the Convention are covered in national legislation with regard to all possible grounds for discrimination spelled out in that article.

19. Please indicate whether any recent measures have been taken to prevent and combat discrimination against the girl child, children living in remote areas as well as children belonging to ethnic minorities.

20. In light of article 2 of the Convention, please explain what measures the State party has taken or is foreseeing to prevent children with disabilities from being victims of any form of discrimination.

21. Please provide further information on the ways the principle of the Best interests of the child (art. 3) is reflected in legislation, or actions undertaken by social welfare institutions, courts of law and administrative authorities. Please also provide some examples of implementation of this principle by courts and/or administrative bodies.

22. With regard to information provided in paragraph 42 of the report, please provide additional information on the measures undertaken by the authorities to implement concretely the principle of the Respect for the views of the child (art. 12). What measures have been taken to further sensitize parents, professional groups and public opinion to the need to encourage children's participatory rights?

#### Civil rights and freedoms

(Arts. 7-8, 13-17 and 37(a))

23. Please indicate the measures undertaken or foreseen by the authorities to ensure systematic birth registration for all children as provided in article 7 of the Convention.

24. With regard to information provided in paragraphs 43 and 44 of the report, please further indicate existing legal provisions that guarantee the right of the child to a nationality and to preserve his/her identity as defined in articles 7 and 8 of the Convention.

25. Please explain what recent measures have been taken by the State Party to ensure that children are protected from any kind of harmful information, including violence and pornography.

26. Please provide information on the occurrence of ill-treatment of children. Have specific programmes for the prevention of ill-treatment of children, and for the treatment, psychological recovery and social reintegration of abused children been developed at the central and local levels? What resources have been allocated to such purpose? What specific legal provisions exist to protect children from being ill-treated in their homes, schools and other institutions? Are there complaints procedures which can be used by children themselves against such abuses? Have any

cases of ill-treatment of children been submitted to the national courts?

27. Have any cases been reported of children who have been the victims of torture or other cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment? If so, please provide information on such cases. Please further indicate the measures taken and resources committed for implementing the provisions of articles 37 (a) and 39 of the Convention.

28. Please indicate if corporal punishment is prohibited by law in schools, other institutions as well as in the family environment.

Family environment and alternative care

(Arts. 5, 18 para. 1 and 2, 9, 10, 27 para. 4, 20, 21, 11, 19, 39 and 25)

29. Please indicate to what extent the State Party takes responsibility for parental education in the performance of child-rearing responsibilities and if there are other family counseling services. Please furthermore indicate the steps taken by the authorities to encourage the participation of fathers in upbringing children.

30. With regard to information provided in paragraph 55 of the report, please indicate the measures taken to ensure that children separated by parents as a consequence of armed conflict be reunified with their families.

31. With regard to information provided in paragraph 56 of the report, please explain in details the compatibility between the 1989 Adoption Act and the provisions and principles of the Convention, especially its article 21. Furthermore, please also indicate if the State party is considering the ratification of the 1993 Hague Convention on Protection of Children and Cooperation in Respect of Intercountry Adoption.

32. With regard to information provided in paragraph 58 of the report, please provide information on measures taken or planned to provide human and financial resources to prevent and combat child abuse and neglect. Is international cooperation needed in this area ?

33. Please indicate if any comprehensive study has been undertaken on the occurrence of sexual abuse within and outside the family. Additionally, please indicate measures taken or foreseen, such as information campaigns, for the prevention of sexual abuse against children and the treatment and rehabilitation of victims.

Basic Health and Welfare

(Arts. 6 para. 2, 23, 24, 26 and 18 para. 3 and 27 paras. 1-3 of the Convention)

34. With regard to information provided in paragraph 73 of the report, please indicate the measures the State party is taking or planning to reduce the negative impact of the armed conflict on the delivery of health services in areas affected by the conflict.

35. With regard to information provided in paragraphs 65 to 67

of the report, please further indicate the measures taken or foreseen to prevent and combat malnutrition as well as iodine and vitamin A deficiency.

36. Please provide comprehensive information on the situation of children affected by or infected by HIV/AIDS and the measures taken to provide assistance to them. Please also indicate measures, such as information campaigns, taken by the authorities to prevent this pandemic among the youth.

37. Please provide information on legal and other measures taken by the State party to prevent and combat traditional practices prejudicial to the health of children, in particular female genital mutilation.

38. With regard to information provided in paragraph 60 of the report, please indicate the measures taken or foreseen to prevent and combat the high infant, child and maternal mortality rates.

39. With regard to information provided in paragraphs 69 of the report, please indicate the achievements and limits achieved under the National Health Action Plan (NHAP).

40. With regard to information provided in paragraphs 72 of the report, please indicate the measures taken by the authorities to ensure that privately run day-care centers and crèches are fully following the guidelines set by the Government.

41. Please indicate measures taken by the authorities to guarantee the fullest possible social integration, inclusion and individual development for children with disabilities, in the light of article 23 of the Convention

Education, leisure and cultural activities  
(Art. 28, 29 and 31)

42. Please indicate the measures taken or foreseen by the State party to develop a clear and comprehensive education policy. Are the authorities envisaging to include pre-school services in a near future in their formal educational system ?

43. Please indicate, taking into account the alarming conditions described in paragraph 85 of the report, the measures taken or foreseen to ensure fully the right of the child to compulsory primary education available free to all, as defined in article 28.1(a) of the Convention. Please furthermore indicate the measures taken or foreseen to improve access to education to girls (para. 80).

44. Please explain if the school curricula have been reviewed since the ratification of the Convention by Sierra Leone. Please also specify if measures have been taken by the authorities to include human rights education, especially on the rights of the child, with special emphasis on education for peace and tolerance, in the school curricula.

45. Please specify if measures have been taken or are foreseen

to train school managers and teachers on the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

46. Please indicate the measures taken or foreseen by the authorities to prevent children, especially girls, from dropping out of school and offer them alternative forms of education.

47. Please indicate whether children may be taught in minority languages.

Special protection measures  
(Arts. 22, 30, 32-40)

48. To what extent is the Government's policy towards refugee and displaced children consistent with the principles of non-discrimination, the best interests of the child, the right to life, survival and development and respect for the views of the child (paras. 85 and 87)?

49. With regard to information provided in paragraph 86 of the report, please provide up-dated information on the demobilization of child soldiers by the authorities and also assess the success and limits of such programmes.

50. Please provide further information, in the light of articles 37, 40 and 39 of the Convention (see paras. 89 to 93), in particular on:

- a) the use of arrest, detention or imprisonment of a child as a measure of last resort and for the shortest period of time;
- b) the possibility to have a prompt access to legal and other appropriate assistance, as well as for challenging the legality of the deprivation of liberty before a court or other competent, independent and impartial authority, and of having a prompt decision thereon;
- c) the right of the child alleged as, accused of or recognized as having infringed the penal law to be treated in a manner consistent with the child's sense of dignity and worth, which reinforces the child's respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms of others and which takes into account the child's age and the desirability of promoting the child's reintegration and the child's assuming a constructive role in society;
- d) alternative measures to institutional care made available to deal with such children in a manner appropriate to their well-being;
- e) the establishment of laws and procedures specifically applicable to children alleged as, accused of or recognized as having infringed the penal law, in the light of article 40, para. 3 of the Convention:

- f) measures to ensure that every child concerned is duly informed about such guarantees.
- g) the prohibition of life imprisonment of persons below the age of eighteen years without possibility of release; and
- h) the prohibition of capital punishment of persons below the age of eighteen years.

51. With regard to the situation of children in prison, please provide additional information, in particular, on the following issues:

- the measures taken to ensure the separation of detained children from adults;
- the type of institutions that exist for the custody of young law offenders and what specific rules there are for their treatment;
- the opportunities for the contact with families;
- the way the conditions in such institutions are monitored;
- the guarantees to ensure the periodic review of placement;
- the complaint procedures in cases of ill-treatment;
- the education, health and social services facilities in these institutions.

52. Please explain how the authorities ensure that the legislation relating to minimum age for employment and the prohibition of harmful work is being applied in practice. Please also provide additional information on the existing or foreseen mechanisms to supervise compliance with the Employers and Employed Act and the existing penalties in case of violation of the law. Furthermore, please also indicate if the State party is considering the ratification of the ILO Convention No 138 concerning the minimum age for work.

53. Please provide additional information on new emerging health-related problems such as substance abuse, in particular drug and alcohol consumption. What measures and programmes have been adopted to prevent and combat these phenomena?

54. Please indicate the measures undertaken or foreseen to rehabilitate children affected by the armed conflict, in the light of article 39 of the Convention.

55. Please provide further information on measures recently undertaken to combat sexual abuse and sexual exploitation of children, including prostitution, pornography. Furthermore, please indicate whether the State party is taking into account

the recommendations formulated in the Agenda for Action adopted at the Stockholm World Congress against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children.