

TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS AND SEXUAL EXPLOITATION - SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

II. GENERAL COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- CEDAW General Recommendation 24 (Twentieth session, 1999): Article 2: Women and Health, A/54/38/Rev.1 part I (1999) 3 at para. 18.

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18. The issues of HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted disease are central to the rights of women and adolescent girls to sexual health. Adolescent girls and women in many countries lack adequate access to information and services necessary to ensure sexual health. As a consequence of unequal power relations based on gender, women and adolescent girls are often unable to refuse sex or insist on safe and responsible sex practices. Harmful traditional practices, such as female genital mutilation, polygamy, as well as marital rape, may also expose girls and women to the risk of contracting HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases. Women in prostitution are also particularly vulnerable to these diseases. States parties should ensure, without prejudice and discrimination, the right to sexual health information, education and services for all women and girls, including those who have been trafficked, including those who have been trafficked, even if they are not legally resident in the country. In particular, States parties should ensure the rights of female and male adolescents to sexual and reproductive health education by properly trained personnel in specially designed programmes that respect their rights to privacy and confidentiality.

- CRC General Comment 2 (Thirty-first session, 2002): The Role of Independent National Human Rights Institutions in the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of the Child, A/59/41 (2004) 82 at paras. 22 and 29.

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22. NHRIs [national human rights institutions] should also cooperate with the special procedures of the Commission on Human Rights, including country and thematic mechanisms, in particular the Special Rapporteur on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict.

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29. Children's human rights issues are not constrained by national borders and it has become increasingly necessary to devise appropriate regional and international responses to a variety of child rights issues (including, but not limited to, the trafficking of women and children, child pornography, child soldiers, child labour, child abuse, refugee and migrant children, etc.). International and regional mechanisms and exchanges are encouraged, as they provide

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NHRIs with an opportunity to learn from each other's experience, collectively strengthen each other's positions and contribute to resolving human rights problems affecting both countries and regions.

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- CRC General Comment 4 (Thirty-third session, 2003): Adolescent Health and Development in the Context of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, A/59/41 (2004) 102 at paras. 4 and 37.

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4. The Committee understands the concepts of "health and development" more broadly than being strictly limited to the provisions defined in articles 6 (right to life, survival and development) and 24 (right to health) of the Convention. One of the aims of this general comment is precisely to identify the main human rights that need to be promoted and protected in order to ensure that adolescents do enjoy the highest attainable standard of health, develop in a well-balanced manner, and are adequately prepared to enter adulthood and assume a constructive role in their communities and in society at large. This general comment should be read in conjunction with the Convention and its two Optional Protocols on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, and on the involvement of children in armed conflict, as well as other relevant international human rights norms and standards.^{1/}

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37. Adolescents who are sexually exploited, including in prostitution and pornography, are exposed to significant health risks, including STDs, HIV/AIDS, unwanted pregnancies, unsafe abortions, violence and psychological distress. They have the right to physical and psychological recovery and social reintegration in an environment that fosters health, self-respect and dignity (art. 39). It is the obligation of States parties to enact and enforce laws to prohibit all forms of sexual exploitation and related trafficking; to collaborate with other States parties to eliminate intercountry trafficking; and to provide appropriate health and counselling services to adolescents who have been sexually exploited, making sure that they are treated as victims and not as offenders.

Notes

^{1/} These include the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families and the

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Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women.

- CERD General Recommendation XXIX (Sixty-first session, 2002): On Article 1, Paragraph 1, of the Convention (Descent), A/57/18 (2002) 111 at para. k. For text of General Recommendation, see **EQUALITY AND DISCRIMINATION - RACIAL DISCRIMINATION**.
- ICCPR General Comment 17 (Thirty-fifth session, 1989): Article 24: Rights of the Child, A/44/40 (1989) 173 at para. 3. For text of General Comment, see **CHILDREN'S RIGHTS - GENERAL**.
- ICCPR General Comment 28 (Sixty-eighth session, 2000): Article 3: Equality of Rights Between Men and Women, A/55/40 vol. I (2000) 133 at paras. 12 and 22. For text of General Comment, see **EQUALITY AND DISCRIMINATION - GENDER DISCRIMINATION - General**.
- CEDAW General Recommendation 19 (Eleventh session, 1992): Violence Against Women, A/47/38 (1992) 5 at paras. 12-16, 21 and 24(g) and (h). For text of General Recommendation, see **EQUALITY AND DISCRIMINATION - GENDER DISCRIMINATION - Violence Against Women**.
- CRC General Comment 3 (Thirty-second session, 2003): HIV/AIDS and the Rights of the Child, A/59/41 (2004) 89 at paras. 6, 19, 30 and 36-38. For text of General Comment, see **CHILDREN'S RIGHTS - GENERAL**.
- CRC General Comment 6 (Thirty-ninth session, 2005): Treatment of Unaccompanied and Separated Children Outside their Country of Origin, A/61/41 (2005) 15 at paras. 3, 23, 24, 28, 50, 51, 59, 62 and 74. For text of General Comment, see **CHILDREN'S RIGHTS - GENERAL**.