



General Assembly

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Item 63 (a) of the provisional agenda*

Promotion and protection of the rights of children

Status of the Convention on the Rights of the Child

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The General Assembly, by its resolution 44/25, adopted the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The Convention was opened for signature in New York on 26 January 1990 and entered into force on 2 September 1990, the thirtieth day after the deposit with the Secretary-General of the twentieth instrument of ratification or accession. As at 1 July 2008, the Convention had been ratified or acceded to by 193 States.

By its resolution 54/263, the General Assembly adopted two Optional Protocols to the Convention. As at 1 July 2008, the Optional Protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict, which entered into force on 12 February 2002, had been ratified by 121 States and signed by 123 States and the Optional Protocol on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, which entered into force on 18 January 2002, had been ratified by 127 States and signed by 115 States.

* A/63/150.



I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 62/141, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit to it at its sixty-third session a report containing information on the status of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The present report is submitted in accordance with that request.

II. Status of the Convention on the Rights of the Child

2. As at 1 July 2008, the Convention on the Rights of the Child had been ratified or acceded to by 193 States and two States had signed the Convention.¹

3. As at 1 July 2008, the Optional Protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict had been ratified by 121 States and signed by 123 States and the Optional Protocol on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography had been ratified by 127 States and signed by 115 States.¹

III. Implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child

4. During the reporting period, the Committee on the Rights of the Child held its forty-sixth to forty-eighth sessions at the United Nations Office at Geneva, from 17 September to 5 October 2007, from 14 January to 1 February 2008 and from 19 May to 6 June 2008, respectively.

5. The Chairperson of the Committee will present her oral report to the General Assembly at its sixty-third session and will inform the Assembly of the Committee's request to work in two chambers beginning in October 2009. The decision of the Committee, adopted after it was informally advised of related financial implications, is annexed to the present report. The Committee will reconfirm its decision upon receipt of the full statement of programme budget implications from the Programme Planning and Budget Division of the Secretariat.

6. In conformity with rule 75 of its provisional rules of procedure, the Committee on the Rights of the Child has decided to periodically devote one day of general discussion to a specific article of the Convention or to a theme related to the rights of the child in order to enhance understanding of the content and implications of the Convention. At its forty-sixth session, the Committee devoted a day of general discussion to the subject of the allocation of resources for the rights of the child in accordance with article 4 of the Convention. Following the general discussion, the Committee adopted a set of recommendations (see CRC/C/46/3).

¹ For the list of States that have signed, ratified or acceded to the Convention and Optional Protocols, as well as the dates of their signature, ratification or accession, see www.ohchr.org.

Annex

Decision of the Committee on the Rights of the Child to request approval from the General Assembly at its sixty-third session to work in two chambers

(Adopted on 6 June 2008)

In view of the number of States parties to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which now stands at 193, and to its Optional Protocols on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography and on the involvement of children in armed conflict, which now stand at 126 and 120, respectively, and their reporting obligations, the current status of submission of reports and the projected future submission of reports, the Committee on the Rights of the Child is convinced that effective and timely implementation of its responsibilities under article 44 of the Convention and articles 8 and 12 of its Optional Protocols require that it be granted more meeting time during 2009, 2010 and 2011.

Currently, the number of reports awaiting review stands at over 80, and the average delay between submission and consideration is close to three years. The Committee has continued to keep its working methods under review and seeks to consider 10 reports at each session. The decision of the Committee, adopted at its thirty-seventh session in 2004, to work in two chambers was implemented in 2006. In the course of that year, the reports of 48 States parties were considered and the backlog of reports awaiting review was eliminated, thereby encouraging the submission of overdue reports by many States parties. In order to address the current backlog and to encourage timely reporting, so as to ensure appropriate monitoring of the Convention and its Optional Protocols, the Committee has concluded that it would require eight additional weeks of meetings of its sessions and four additional weeks of pre-session meetings, which would be convened from mid-2009 to 2011.

The Committee therefore requests the General Assembly, at its sixty-third session, to approve the present request and to provide appropriate financial support to enable the Committee to work in two chambers as of October 2009 for its fifty-third pre-session working group and as of January 2010 for its fifty-third session. The functioning of the two chamber system would be in place for four sessions until the Committee's fifty-sixth session in January 2011.

The Committee would consider the reports of States parties during its regular sessions, in two parallel chambers, each consisting of nine members of the Committee, taking due account of equitable geographical distribution, thereby increasing the number of reports of States parties to be examined from 10 to 16 per session, which, over four sessions, would result in an increase in the number of reports considered from 40 to 64 reports. The Committee would meet for 10 working days during each three-week session in parallel chambers and in parallel working groups for the duration of its one-week pre-session working groups.