



**Convention on the Rights
of the Child**

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COMMITTEE ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

Forty-eighth session

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE FIRST PART (PUBLIC)* OF THE 1314th MEETING

Held at the Palais Wilson, Geneva,
on Monday, 19 May 2008, at 10 a.m.

Chairperson: Ms. LEE

CONTENTS

OPENING OF THE SESSION

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS

SUBMISSION OF REPORTS OF STATES PARTIES

STATEMENT BY THE DEPUTY HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

* No summary record was prepared for the second part (closed) of the meeting.

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The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

OPENING OF THE SESSION

1. The CHAIRPERSON declared open the forty-eighth session of the Committee on the Rights of the Child.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA (agenda item 1) (CRC/C/48/1)

2. The agenda was adopted.

ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS (agenda item 2)

3. The Chairperson noted that the Committee considered the reports in the order in which they had been received. However, priority was given to initial reports submitted under the Optional Protocols, and the Committee would therefore endeavour to consider the six overdue initial reports as soon as it had received them.

4. With regard to agenda item 5, the Committee and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) had held a one-day working meeting at which they had examined ways of improving their cooperation. With regard to item 6, the Committee was going to complete the updating of its guidelines with a view to incorporating the information on the Optional Protocols contained in the periodic reports submitted under the Convention. It would consider the possibility of working in two chambers in future years.

SUBMISSION OF REPORTS OF STATES PARTIES (agenda item 3)

5. Ms. ANDRIJASEVIC-BOKO (Secretary of the Committee) said that since the preceding session the Committee had received 31 reports of States parties: 16 under the Convention; seven under the Optional Protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict; and eight under the Optional Protocol on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography.

6. The Committee had now received a total of 462 reports of State parties: 364 under the Convention; 55 under the Optional Protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict; and 43 under the Optional Protocol on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography. The Committee had considered 369 reports at its previous sessions and about 80 reports were awaiting consideration. It had still not received the initial reports of Afghanistan, the Cook Islands, Nauru, Niue, Tonga, and Tuvalu.

STATEMENT BY THE DEPUTY HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

7. Ms. KANG Hyung-wha (Deputy High Commissioner for Human Rights) said that the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities had entered into force on 3 May 2008, following ratification by Ecuador. Within the next few months the Secretary-General would convene the first conference of States parties, which would elect the first 10 members of the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. That new body would certainly be able to benefit greatly from the 20 years' experience of the Committee on the Rights of the Child, especially as many of the provisions of the new Convention referred to the rights of children with disabilities and contained specific references to the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

8. The creation of the new Committee illustrated once more the need for continuing harmonization of the treaty body system. The next inter-committee meeting of treaty bodies would seek to highlight areas requiring harmonization, and there was no doubt that the Committee on the Rights of the Child would contribute actively to the discussions. It was encouraging to learn that the Committee was considering adopting specific guidelines which would supplement the guidelines on the drafting of the common core report and allow States parties to include in their periodic reports under the Convention information on the application of the Optional Protocols.

9. At its first two sessions the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review had considered the reports of 32 countries. The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights had prepared for that purpose compilations of information from United Nations bodies and other stakeholders. In 2009 the Committee on the Rights of the Child would take up the reports of a number of countries which had undergone the Universal Periodic Review (France, the Netherlands, the Republic of Korea, Romania, the United Kingdom and Tunisia). It would be useful for the Committee to reflect in that regard on the implications of the Universal Periodic Review for its own work and on how it might best use the process and results of the Review, for that issue was likely to be discussed at the inter-committee and chairpersons' meetings in June 2008.

10. The Office would continue raise awareness of the Study on Violence against Children and promote the implementation of its recommendations and their mainstreaming in the work of the treaty monitoring bodies and the special procedures. It had held briefings for special procedures experts and mandate-holders and had developed a number of tools, such as checklists, to encourage the human rights mechanisms to highlight issues related to violence against children.

11. The Office would also continue to support the implementation of the Study's recommendations in the field, in particular by helping its field offices to incorporate those recommendations in such activities as training, capacity building, and assistance with the development of national policies and plans, legal reforms and thematic reports. The Office was currently drafting a document containing guidelines on legislation prohibiting all forms of violence against children. It hoped that those guidelines would serve as a practical tool for everyone working on legal reforms, including its own field personnel. The Office was counting on the commitment of the members of the Committee, who had been instrumental in initiating and supporting numerous activities in their respective countries or regions.

12. Discussions were currently being held to identify candidates for the post of Special Representative of the Secretary-General on violence against children. The Office was ready to give its full support to the Special Representative in order to ensure that his or her work was guided by a children's rights approach. The Committee's contribution was crucial in that regard. The Office would do its utmost to facilitate coordination and cooperation between the Committee and the Special Representative.

13. The Committee on the Rights of the Child was behind the drive to create the draft United Nations guidelines on the protection and alternative care of children without parental care and had been very much involved in their drafting. The draft guidelines were now on the agenda of the eighth session of the Human Rights Council.

14. Since the Committee's preceding session two States, Albania and Greece, had become parties to the Optional Protocol on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography and one State, the People's Republic of China, had become a party to the Optional Protocol on

the involvement of children in armed conflict. That brought the total number of States parties to the Optional Protocols to 126 and 120 respectively.

15. The agenda of the Committee's forty-eighth session was a heavy one, for it had to consider 10 national reports, five submitted under the Convention and five under the two Optional Protocols. It would also be discussing the draft general comment on article 12, on child participation, and the draft general comment on the rights of indigenous children, as well as changes to its working methods and treaty body reform, not to mention numerous other issues of children's rights.

16. As usual, the Committee would be having meetings with other entities of the United Nations system and with non-governmental organizations. One particularly important meeting had already been held – with UNICEF. That had provided an excellent opportunity for the two bodies to examine how to enhance their cooperation in the field of children's rights. She was sure that that meeting had already begun to bear fruit and hoped that it would lead to strengthened dialogue and collaboration between the two main actors in that field.

17. The CHAIRPERSON said that the Committee would do its utmost to support the Office and other treaty bodies with respect to issues of the rights of persons with disabilities.

18. The Committee was constantly endeavouring to devise new and innovative working methods in order to enhance the efficiency of its work. The Committee was different from other treaty bodies, for it dealt with three international instruments and now had to monitor, unaided, 442 ratifications. The members of the Committee were certain that the Office would furnish them with the necessary support to allow them to work efficiently.

The first part (public) of the meeting rose at 10.30 a.m.

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