



# General Assembly

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## Third Committee

### Summary record of the 13th meeting

Held at Headquarters, New York, on Tuesday, 10 October 2017, at 3 p.m.

*Chair:* Mr. Gunnarsson (Chair) . . . . . (Iceland)  
*later:* Mr. Idris (Vice-Chair) . . . . . (Eritrea)  
*later:* Mr. Gunnarsson (Chair) . . . . . (Iceland)

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*The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.*

**Agenda item 68: Promotion and protection of the rights of children** (*continued*)

- (a) **Promotion and protection of the rights of children** (*continued*) (A/72/164, A/72/218, A/72/275, A/72/276, A/72/356 and A/72/361–S/2017/821)
- (b) **Follow-up to the outcome of the special session on children** (*continued*) (A/72/208)

1. **Mr. Arriola Ramírez** (Paraguay) said that, to help children realize their rights, his Government was working to break the intergenerational circle of poverty. Of the almost 40 per cent of the population aged 18 or less, the most vulnerable groups were rural children, indigenous children, institutionalized children and adolescent criminal offenders. Under its comprehensive national policy on children and adolescents, his Government was implementing programmes to eradicate child labour and protect the rights of street children. It had a national early childhood development plan as well as a school meals programme. In addition, it had recently adopted a law prohibiting corporal punishment of children, together with a policy on adolescents in the criminal justice system. Noting Paraguay's endorsement of the Safe Schools Declaration, he said that in 2017 Paraguay had ratified the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on a communications procedure and had endorsed a regional strategic framework for the prevention and reduction of unintended adolescent pregnancy.

2. **Ms. Salazar** (Peru) said that, in implementing Peru's 2012–2020 National Plan of Action for Children and Adolescents, her Government attached priority to reducing child mortality, improving the quality of health services and education and expanding access to clean drinking water. It had achieved a significant decline in childhood anaemia and was implementing a national strategy for the prevention and eradication of child labour. Corporal punishment of children and all forms of domestic violence were prohibited under Peruvian law, and a free, confidential reporting mechanism had been developed to address violence in schools. Peru was committed to strengthening the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of national policies for children and adolescents in every sector.

3. **Mr. Schettino** (Italy) said that the promotion and protection of children should be at the core of development action. Italy therefore strongly supported

and contributed to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the many United Nations programmes with an impact on children, such as the programme on female genital mutilation.

4. Migrant children were entitled to all of the rights enshrined in the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and the States should protect those rights in their migration laws and their migration response, with particular attention to unaccompanied and separated children. In that connection, Italy was committed to negotiating a global compact on refugees and a global compact for a safe, orderly and regular migration for adoption in 2018. The management of migrant flows should be the shared responsibility of all States.

5. During its term on the Security Council, Italy had been acting as a voice for children in the Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict and in every country situation and negotiation. His delegation was one of several organizing an "Arria-formula" meeting of the Security Council where Member States would have an opportunity to confirm their commitment to preventing attacks on schools.

6. **Mr. Carabalí Baquero** (Colombia) said that achieving the ambitious Sustainable Development Goals would require innovative strategies, as well as greater investment in children and adolescents. Accordingly, over the past four years, his Government had devoted more resources to education than any other sector. It had instituted free primary and secondary education and had committed to building 30,000 classrooms in order to eliminate night school shifts. It was also implementing a comprehensive early childhood development strategy.

7. Colombia welcomed the UNICEF Strategic Plan, 2018–2021, as well as its continuing promotion of gender equality through its Gender Action Plan and its efforts to mainstream gender equality in all of its activities. With the support of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, his Government would continue to work hard to bring about the cultural and social changes required for lasting peace. It was determined to prevent the use of children in armed conflict and to protect them from violence, with special attention to indigenous and afro-descendant children as well as children in marginalized areas.

8. **Mr. García Moritán** (Argentina) said that his Government was actively working to implement the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which all Member States should ratify. The Convention and his

country's comprehensive law on the protection of children and adolescents established a model for action based on absolute respect for children's rights. Argentina remained a firm supporter of efforts to prevent and combat all violence and discrimination against children as well as practices harmful to children and emphasized the need for special attention to vulnerable populations exposed to distinct forms of violence and harassment.

9. A long-time advocate of prohibiting the use of children in armed conflict, Argentina had ratified the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict in 2002 and the International Labour Organization (ILO) Convention concerning the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour in 2007, and it had also endorsed the Principles and Guidelines on Children Associated with Armed Forces or Armed Groups and the Paris Commitments to protect children from unlawful recruitment or use by armed forces or armed groups. Furthermore, together with Norway, it had spearheaded the adoption of the Safe Schools Declaration. In November, it would be hosting the fourth Global Conference on the Sustained Eradication of Child Labour.

10. **Mr. Barros Melet** (Chile) said that his Government's National Policy for Children and Adolescents 2015–2025 followed on past policies designed to move the country gradually towards full implementation of the Convention. To enhance the policy's effectiveness, it was being coordinated across sectors by the National Children's Council. His Government was also working to consolidate gains in early childhood development, education, adolescent criminal justice and public investment in children while finalizing the 2016–2025 plan of action on children and adolescents. In grappling with poverty, which affected children disproportionately, it would continue carefully tracking the children's budget with a view to refining social policies to benefit the most vulnerable.

11. Through a programme to elicit children's opinions, more than 2 million Chilean children had expressed their views on the Sustainable Development Goals in 2017.

12. **Ms. Marali** (Brunei Darussalam) said that her Government accorded the utmost importance to the well-being of children, who constituted one third of the country's population. Brunei Darussalam had acceded to the Convention, which it had domesticated, as well as to its three Optional Protocols. With respect to children's health, it had maintained high annual immunization coverage for 20 years, and its under-5 mortality rate was

8.8 per 1,000 live births, thanks in part to readily accessible free health care services. A new assistance scheme giving the mothers of newborns free diapers and free breast pumps should also contribute to the health and welfare of very young children.

13. Under the Compulsory Education Act, primary education was free, and poor children were entitled to benefits for attending school. As a result, the country had a literacy rate of close to 97 per cent. To help to protect children from violence, her Government carried out awareness campaigns promoting the understanding of children's basic rights. It also emphasized the institution of the family and its role in providing a safe and loving environment for children.

14. Brunei Darussalam actively participated in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children, and it looked forward to continuing to work with UNICEF, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and other international organizations.

15. **Mr. Rabah** (Iraq) said that children under 18 represented more than half of the Iraqi population and were among his Government's top priorities. Iraq had a national policy on the protection of children, including children in the liberated and displacement areas. It also had a programme for the psychological and social rehabilitation of those children, many of whom had been severely traumatized. Despite the financial pressures of fighting terrorism and Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), his Government continued to allocate funds for children, and it was working to raise international awareness of the plight of children in Iraq and generate support for their rehabilitation. It had determined the nationalities of the foreign children in the liberated areas and was endeavouring to provide medical and psychological care while arranging for their repatriation. Iraq now faced the daunting task of reversing ISIL indoctrination and providing a safe environment and suitable educational infrastructure in the liberated areas. His delegation appealed to the international community and the United Nations system for additional cooperation and support.

16. *Mr. Idris (Eritrea), Vice-Chair, took the Chair.*

17. **Mr. de Souza Monteiro** (Brazil) said that his Government was partnering with business and civil society to promote the well-being of children and worked closely with civil society to develop, implement and monitor the relevant policies. Brazil's legal framework for child protection included laws protecting child victims and witnesses of violence; banning corporal punishment and other cruel or degrading

treatment of children; punishing trafficking in persons; protecting migrant children and criminalizing the sexual exploitation of children and adolescents. Brazil also had a national programme to combat sexual violence against children and adolescents.

18. In 2016, the Federal Government had launched an early childhood development programme aimed at stopping the vicious cycle of malnutrition and poverty. It was also working to reduce girls' burden of unpaid domestic and care work. During policy planning, it was careful to elicit and consider the perspectives of children, especially vulnerable ones such as girls and indigenous children.

19. In closing, he encouraged all Member States to accede to the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on a communications procedure, which Brazil had recently ratified.

20. **Ms. Rodríguez Camejo** (Cuba) said that, unfortunately, progress on protecting children's rights had been unequal because of the North-South wealth divide. The ills besetting children could not be overcome in the absence of a just and equitable international order that eradicated poverty and hunger, valued people over capital and preserved the environment. As matters stood, prospects were dim for meeting even the neonatal health and under-5 mortality targets of the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030.

21. Following the revolution in 1959, long before ratifying the Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1991, Cuba had begun implementing policies and programmes for children and adolescents. Cuba devoted more than half of its national budget to health, education and social welfare, and health care and education were free. All children were comprehensively vaccinated, and priority was given to the early detection of congenital disease. Cuba had an infant mortality rate of 4.3 per 1,000 live births and had been the first country validated by the World Health Organization as having eliminated mother-to-child transmission of HIV/AIDS and syphilis. For Cuban children, hunger, illiteracy, ill health and discrimination were memories of the past, despite the United States embargo that had lasted over a half century.

22. **Mr. Joshi** (India) said that making the basic amenities, health care, nutrition and quality education available to all children was an enormous undertaking in India, which had the world's largest child population. Its Constitution guaranteed children's fundamental rights, including the right to elementary education. In the area of health, India had a universal vaccination programme and a programme to prevent parent-to-child transmission of HIV/AIDS, and it operated more than

1.3 million local centres providing nutrition, health and immunizations services to some 100 million children aged 0 to 6 years. It had also launched a national adolescent health programme and an initiative to raise awareness of girls' rights. In 2017, to accommodate the needs of families, his Government had amended the child labour law to allow children to work in family businesses during non-school hours and adolescents to be employed in non-hazardous occupations. It was currently reviewing its policies and laws in view of emerging online threats to children.

23. **Ms. Dileym** (Saudi Arabia) said that her country viewed the rights of children as particularly important and had adopted legislation domesticating and implementing the related conventions. Its strategy for the protection of children aimed to strengthen institutional capacities in line with its Vision 2030 for sustainable development. Saudi children were entitled to free health care, and girls and boys had free and equal access to education at all levels, with scholarships available for university students. Thanks to wider awareness and strict enforcement of laws, violence against children had declined, and a reporting centre had been established to help to combat domestic violence.

24. Saudi Arabia respected the rights of all children without regard to gender or ethnicity. It placed priority on the establishment of schools and educational programmes for girls and gave young women scholarships to attend universities around the world.

25. At the international level, the King Salman Centre for Relief and Humanitarian Aid had agreed to provide significant funding to combat cholera in Yemen and was implementing projects for children in Yemen, including freeing and rehabilitating children conscripted by the militias. Furthermore, Syrian and Yemeni children residing in Saudi Arabia were entitled to free education and health care. Her delegation once again denounced Israel's violence against Palestinian children, as well as the Syrian regime's violence against Syrian children. It would continue to cooperate with the United Nations, the international community and all relevant stakeholders in the area of children's rights.

26. **Ms. Aga** (Kenya) said that Kenya was still struggling to end violence against children, particularly girls. To assist its efforts, it was harnessing the power of information and communications technology through, for example, the recently developed Child Protection Management System, which would allow it to collect and analyse comprehensive data on violence against children, including sexual violence against girls. The prevalence of female genital mutilation had declined from 27 per cent in 2009 to 21 per cent in 2014.

27. Thanks to the introduction of free primary and secondary education, school meals, bursary schemes and cash transfers to orphans and vulnerable children, Kenya had boosted school enrolment significantly, and it had also achieved gender parity in primary schools, as well as near parity at the secondary level. It was committed to providing quality antenatal, postnatal and paediatric health care and had succeeded in reducing infant and child mortality through comprehensive immunization. Nevertheless, under-5 mortality remained unacceptably high. With respect to child labour, it was working to enforce the labour law, to implement a plan of action for eliminating the worst forms of child labour and to raise public awareness of at-risk children. However, despite the Government's efforts, much of the population continued to live in poverty, which fuelled child labour and exploitation.

28. Partnerships with the private sector, development partners, United Nations agencies, multilateral organizations and civil society were crucial for the protection of human rights. Kenya was host to a large number of refugees, whose education, health care and security represented a substantial burden.

29. **Ms. Oehri** (Liechtenstein) said that 385 million children lived in extreme poverty, and millions more suffered discrimination and exclusion. Furthermore, nearly 50 million were on the move owing to conflict, natural disaster and epidemics. In view of the overall erosion of respect for international humanitarian law, the Security Council monitoring and reporting mechanism was more relevant than ever. Reiterating Liechtenstein's support for the mandate of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, she said that any interference with that mandate seriously threatened the integrity of the Security Council mechanism.

30. Refugee children missed years of school, and many experienced profound physical and emotional trauma. Unaccompanied minors were particularly susceptible to discrimination and exploitation, including child trafficking. With a view to ending impunity for human trafficking, she urged all Member States to ratify the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime.

31. **Mr. Qassem Agha** (Syrian Arab Republic) said that for the past six and a half years, his country had been confronting a ferocious campaign by armed terrorist groups that were seeking to destroy the very social fabric of Syria and the intellectual and moral compass of an entire Syrian generation. Those terrorists

had deprived Syrian children of their education and driven them to the high seas in search of refuge. Some children had fallen into the clutches of Turkish human trafficking gangs and had drowned in the Mediterranean, while others faced exclusion and humiliation in destination countries that still claimed to be paragons of human rights and social justice. Armed terrorist groups, which were supported by States in the Arab world, the region and beyond, continued to perpetrate the most brutal crimes against Syrian children, while also indoctrinating them with violent extremist ideas in order to create a new generation that glorified violence and terrorism.

32. The Syrian Arab Republic had sent hundreds of letters to the Security Council detailing how those terrorist groups continued, with the silent complicity of the international community, to abduct children and train and brainwash them in military camps before forcing them to carry arms and witness and even participate in heinous crimes, including beheadings and the stoning of women. In July 2015, a letter had been sent to the President of the Security Council regarding a video recording released by Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) showing a mass execution of Syrian army soldiers that had been carried out by children who were no older than 14 years of age. The entire world was also aware of the beheading in 2016 of the Palestinian refugee child Abdullah Isa in Handarat refugee camp near Aleppo by the so-called Nur al-Din al-Zanki terrorist group, which was under the control of the Turkish intelligence services. Children were also the victims of forced marriages, and child rapes and the trafficking in children's organs also took place in the refugee camps. Making the situation even worse, the coercive unilateral economic measures imposed on Syria continued to inflict horrendous suffering on Syrian children, while the brutal Israeli entity continued to impose its school curriculums on children in the occupied Syrian Golan and Arab Palestine.

33. Despite the many challenges it faced, the Syrian Government was exerting every effort to protect children. It had provided school books and other school supplies to more than three million Syrian children and, in coordination with UNICEF, had successfully vaccinated more than five million children against polio and measles. The Syrian Government was also striving to address the needs of children in areas controlled by ISIL and the Nusrah Front, had enabled students living there to sit their final high-school examinations, and continued to pay the salaries of teachers in those areas. The Syrian Government had also drawn up plans for the rehabilitation of children who had been forcibly recruited by terrorist groups.

34. **Mr. Gertze** (Namibia) said that, as a country with a young population, Namibia placed the welfare of its children at the centre of national policy. Under the Education for All Act (2002–2015), primary school enrolment had risen to more than 98 per cent, with a 95 per cent retention rate to the end, and gender parity had been achieved at every level. More recently, the introduction of free primary and secondary education had provided an additional boost. The School Feeding Programme, implemented with the assistance of United Nations agencies, international and bilateral partners and private companies, was not only an efficient safety net but also contributed to enrolment, attendance and retention while guaranteeing a stable market for local farmers.

35. As the Special Advocate for Young Women and Adolescent Girls of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, Namibia's first lady had come to realize that young people wanted to talk about all of the issues affecting them, not just HIV. It was important to encourage genuine dialogue, especially within the family.

36. **Ms. Salim** (Afghanistan) said that, during 40 years of conflict, Afghan children had suffered violence, death and loss. Nevertheless, in the past 16 years, Afghanistan had seen meaningful gains in school enrolment, and 40 per cent of the pupils were girls. To protect the rights of children, her Government had recently revised the Penal Code and had also adopted a child protection law criminalizing and punishing the sexual exploitation of boys for *bacha bazi*. It had also introduced a national action plan on child marriage and would be raising the age of marriage to 18 years. Thanks to investigatory action and a 2016 law banning the recruitment of child soldiers into Afghan military forces, underage recruitment had stopped, 289 child recruitment attempts had been thwarted, and 35 underaged children had been reunited with their families. In addition, the Government had established 21 child protection units that worked with national and local police to prevent the recruitment of children.

37. **Ms. Nguyen Lien Huong** (Viet Nam) said that her delegation wished to reiterate the paramount importance of education. As the second country to ratify the Convention on the Rights of the Child, Viet Nam had consistently promoted and protected the rights of children. For example, the revised child law in effect since June 2017 set out specific provisions safeguarding children's right to privacy and their rights to be protected from sexual abuse, labour exploitation, trafficking, violence, neglect and abandonment. It also defined the enforcement responsibilities of agencies, organisations and local government. Noting that Viet Nam and UNICEF had recently adopted a programme of

cooperation for 2017–2021, she said that her Government highly valued the long-standing cooperation of UNICEF and other United Nations agencies.

38. **Mr. Locsin** (Philippines) said that Philippine law prohibited attacks, threats, torture and recruitment or use of children in armed conflict. His Government took appropriate steps to reunite families separated by conflict, and the military had issued a circular establishing procedures and guidelines for reporting and responding to violations of children's rights by State and non-State actors.

39. Almost 2,000 protection desks had been established in police stations nationwide to address violence against women and children, including the cruellest form, sexual exploitation. Close cooperation between Philippine and foreign law enforcement has resulted in the arrest and conviction of foreigners involved in online child abuse and child sex tourism, and in 2016 the Bureau of Immigration had denied entry to more than a hundred registered sex offenders. Victims received counselling, shelter, skills training and law enforcement protection. His Government remained committed to the safety of children and would continue to cooperate with all stakeholders to prevent and punish the sexual exploitation of children.

40. **Ms. Razzouk** (United States of America) said that children continued to bear the brunt of the world's human rights challenges. North Korean children starved, while Syrian children suffered physically and psychologically in a country considered one of the most dangerous places in the world to be a child. More than 26,000 Syrian children had been killed since the start of the conflict, and over 40 per cent of the survivors were out of school. In 2016, children in 14 conflict situations worldwide had suffered human rights violations, including trafficking, rape, torture and forced marriage.

41. More must be done to ensure that all girls and all boys received a quality education, including in conflict situations; accordingly, the United States emphasized access to quality education in its humanitarian response. Furthermore, for the safety of the world's children, bullying, including cyberbullying, should be the subject of substantive global discussions.

42. **Ms. Sandoval** (Nicaragua) said that her Government had translated the Convention into a constellation of social initiatives, including an early childhood development programme, a school nutrition programme, a birth registration programme and campaigns against school bullying. Because the well-being of the family was paramount to that of children, it had also established family counselling offices and

promulgated a stronger family code. Nicaragua's accomplishments had been recognized by various United Nations entities, including the Food and Agriculture Organization, ILO and UNICEF.

43. **Ms. Haile** (Eritrea) said that the protection and promotion of children's welfare remained at the centre of her Government's political, economic, social and cultural policy. It operated programmes for orphans, street children, families of martyrs and families affected by HIV/AIDS, and it had instituted various mechanisms to promote community-based alternative care for orphans, including cash support and income-generating schemes. It was also working with multiple stakeholders to provide free orthopaedic and school materials to children with disabilities.

44. Eritrea had published a new civil code clearly establishing the principle of the best interest of the child, as well as a new penal code under which minors were no longer subject to the same penalties as adults. It was also implementing numerous measures relating to children in conflict with the law.

45. Although, like many poor countries, Eritrea had been unable to achieve the education-related Millennium Development Goals, it had made substantial progress. Elementary school enrolment stood at almost 82 per cent, and the literacy rate had risen from 30 per cent at the time of independence in 1993 to almost 70 per cent.

46. Eritrea's health care policy focused on the needs of its overwhelmingly rural population and of vulnerable groups such as women and children. Between 1990 and 2015, infant mortality had dropped from 93 per 1,000 live births to 34, and under-5 mortality, from 151 to 47. For a number of years, immunization coverage had exceeded 90 per cent.

47. **Ms. Picco** (Monaco) said that her country was integrating refugee children into its school system in the context of a bilateral agreement with France. The World Association of Children's Friends (AMADE), a Monegasque non-governmental organization had recently launched an initiative in cooperation with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to build private intimate hygiene areas for adolescent girls and women in displaced persons and refugee camps. A social reintegration programme for demobilized child soldiers had also been launched.

48. Monaco had ratified not only the Convention and its three Optional Protocols, but also the Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse. Its

commitment to children's rights was reflected in its laws, which punished crimes against children more severely than others. Child victims of abuse received short- or long-term shelter in the national children's home, and mother-and-child apartments were available to minors with children, women victims of violence and women requiring educational support for their children. In June 2018, Monaco would host a third high-level colloquium on children's rights.

49. To combat school bullying, including bullying via social media, the rules spelled out the rights and obligations of pupils with respect to abstention from violence. Schools also emphasized children's rights on Universal Children's Day. In November 2016, the Government had required schools to observe the national anti-bullying day, and it was also helping to fund a Union for the Mediterranean project promoting citizen education in school to prevent gender-based violence.

50. **Ms. Shiloh** (Israel) said that equal access to education was the right of every Israeli child, regardless of faith or ethnicity, and school attendance was mandatory and free from ages 3 to 18. Because one purpose of education was to instil good moral values, Israel used education to encourage tolerance and co-existence amongst its diverse population. One example of that approach was the Eastern Mediterranean International School, located in Israel, which hosted students from Israel, the West Bank, Gaza, Afghanistan, Turkey, Brazil and the United States, among other countries. Its mission was to make education a force for peace and sustainability in the Middle East by fostering intercultural understanding and dialogue. Education provided children with options, empowerment and the ability to become agents of change.

51. *Mr. Gunnarsson (Iceland), Chair, resumed the Chair.*

52. **Ms. Stener** (Norway) said that, in view of the tremendous importance of education for individual development and economic growth, Norway had doubled its development assistance to education in the past four years. Violence against children constituted a significant public health problem, even in Norway. To combat it, the Government had adopted a national plan that addressed prevention and detection, offered timely treatment and strengthened coordination and collaboration among the relevant public entities. It had also recently launched a wide range of measures aimed at ending bullying in schools. Her delegation strongly condemned the abhorrent violations of children's rights committed by terrorist groups and urged Member States to take all necessary actions to prevent them.

53. **Ms. Kalamwina** (Zambia) said that Zambia had instituted various administrative and legislative measures to build a comprehensive framework for children's rights, including the Education Act, which, *inter alia*, provided for free and compulsory basic education and prohibited educational institutions from discriminating against children. Her Government was in the process of repealing a number of discriminatory, outdated statutes that would be replaced by a children's code domesticating the Convention and other international children's rights treaties. In 2015, it had revised the national child policy to make it more responsive to the needs of children and integrate the principle of best interests, which it also applied in the assessment of asylum-seeking, refugee and migrant children. Noting Zambia's continued investment in improving children's access to health services, she expressed concern about growing antimicrobial resistance and called for investment in developing country capacity as well as research to develop new medicines and diagnostic tools. With the support of cooperating partners, Zambia was implementing programmes such as a cash transfer scheme for the many households headed by children. It had also taken steps to address violence against children and child-harmful practices, including a nationwide campaign to end child marriage that enlisted the support of traditional leaders.

54. **Mr. Nowak** (Independent expert for the Global Study on Children Deprived of Liberty) said that, despite the appeal of the Committee on the Rights of the Child, the urging of the General Assembly and his own fundraising efforts, only a little over 10 per cent of the \$4.7 million budgeted for the study had been donated to date. An expert meeting had been held to define the methodology and develop a questionnaire, but translation and distribution of the questionnaire had been placed on hold owing to the lack of funding. He had subsequently launched a major fundraising campaign with the active support of the more than one hundred non-governmental organizations. He had good reason to believe that the campaign would be successful, but if sufficient funds did not materialize by year-end, he might be forced to abandon the study.

55. Should he resign, he would do so with deep regret, because as a former Special Rapporteur on torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, he was acutely aware of children's heightened vulnerability, especially when deprived of liberty. Far too many children were held in prisons, detention centres, orphanages, children's homes and other closed institutions. However, there was no reliable data on their numbers, the reasons for depriving them of

liberty or alternative measures taken to reduce their numbers.

56. During his six years as Special Rapporteur, the most heart-breaking missions and investigations had involved children: a three-year-old orphan institutionalized in the same building as street children, disabled children and juvenile delinquents; children as young as 11 held with a hundred adults in the "torture room" of a large police station; 7- or 8-year-old children incarcerated in small cells for criminal offences; children kept for months or even years in overcrowded, unsanitary pre-trial detention facilities; and, in rich countries, entire refugee or migrant families detained in dirty, overcrowded cells.

57. The Global Study was a collective effort to bridge the data gap on children deprived of liberty, raise awareness of the risks for children and society as a whole, collect best alternative practices, and develop evidence-based recommendations, policy proposals and strategies for change. He was deeply convinced that, as the joint effort of many different stakeholders, the study would have a positive impact on the number and situation of children deprived of liberty. He therefore appealed to all States to make voluntary contributions to save it. Furthermore, since almost a year had been lost, he requested the General Assembly to extend the deadline by a year and to postpone the interim report to 2018.

58. **Mr. Gilmour** (Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights) said that even Member States that were not frequent donors should consider contributing.

59. **Mr. Glossner** (Germany) asked the independent expert to discuss his cooperation thus far with Member States and other stakeholders and wondered what steps could be taken to ensure quality data.

60. **Mr. O'Brien** (Observer for the European Union) said that the new European Union Guidelines for the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of the Child addressed the issue of children deprived of liberty and the need for alternatives to detention, especially in the case of long sentences. Furthermore, the European Commission had recently stressed that administrative detention should be used only as a last resort, for the shortest possible time and never in prison accommodation. In November, the eleventh European Forum on the rights of the child would focus on children deprived of their liberty and alternatives to detention.

61. **Ms. Kirianoff Crimmins** (Switzerland), speaking also on behalf of Austria, said that their delegations were encouraged by the support received from civil society and would like to see the United Nations Task Force on the Global Study on Children Deprived of Liberty step



up its efforts. Without data on the numbers and circumstances of children deprived of liberty, it was impossible to take informed policy decisions or coordinate actions to address a fundamental threat to children's rights. Thus it was a matter of great concern that such an important study should be threatened by lack of funding. Austria and Switzerland had already pledged their financial support and urged all United Nations Member States and agencies to consider doing the same.

62. She asked the Independent Expert to elaborate on the relevance and potential impact of the study. She would also like to know if he had a strategy for scaling down the study if necessary and what minimum amount was needed to commence substantive work.

63. **Ms. Moutchou** (Morocco) said that the international community should reflect on alternate, non-judicial measures for addressing juvenile delinquency and should also be guided by standards such as the United Nations Rules for the Protection of Juveniles Deprived of their Liberty and the United Nations Guidelines for the Prevention of Juvenile Delinquency. She would appreciate the Independent Expert's thoughts on best practices for protecting the rights of children in conflict with the law and for addressing misconceptions about them. She asked what steps could be taken to encourage Member States to contribute to the study, as well as to ensure the collection of quality data.

64. **Mr. Nowak** (Independent expert for the Global Study on Children Deprived of Liberty) said that, without sufficient financial resources, the Global Study could not go forward. He could not contract with the secretariat of UNHCR, commission academic studies or organize expert meetings if he did not have the means to pay. Funds must be raised, perhaps with the help of a fundraising organization.

65. At least \$1 million was needed by the end of 2017 in order to commence substantive work. A smaller budget would mean scaling back the number of regional and thematic consultations and perhaps even the scope of the study, which currently focused on juvenile justice administration, children living with their parents in prison, detention of migrant and refugee children, detention of children associated with armed forces or groups and detention of children accused of terrorism and other security crimes. On the positive side, starting with only two or three focus areas would make it easier for States to provide data and also easier to analyse the data promptly.

66. While academic institutions needed to charge, many non-governmental organizations were volunteering their

services, and a number of United Nations agencies would also provide data. UNICEF, UNHCR and the field offices of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime would assist States in the collection of data as necessary.

67. He was happy that the European Union was organizing the forum on the rights of the child with a specific focus on children deprived of liberty, but he would be much happier if it would also contribute financially. As for the study's potential, given the tremendous impact of the previous global studies — the Machel report on the impact of armed conflict on children (A/51/306) and the Pinheiro report on violence against children (A/61/299) — he was convinced that it would be a major force for change. Because deprivation of liberty was a structural form of violence against children, it was central to the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 16.

68. **Ms. Khalvandi** (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that, if unchecked and unremedied, the extensive violations of children's rights as a direct or indirect result of armed conflict would breed further extremism and violence. In that connection, the United Nations must use its leverage to shed further light on those violations.

69. In her country, the National Body for the Convention on the Rights of the Child had adopted a comprehensive plan that ensured an integrated framework by providing for continuous monitoring of child-related policies across the three branches of government. To assist marginalized children, support measures were being provided for out-of-school children, and even undocumented refugee children could attend school. To protect the rights of children in conflict with the law, a branch of the Supreme Court was dedicated to juvenile appeals, and there were plans to establish a network of child-friendly lawyers. During the thirty-fourth session of the Human Rights Council, a high-level Iranian delegation had met with the Special Rapporteur on the sale and sexual exploitation of children, and her Government had also begun drafting the preliminary report on implementation of the Optional Protocol on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography.

70. **Mr. Visonnavong** (Lao People's Democratic Republic) said that his Government had made considerable progress on strengthening the legal framework with respect to juvenile justice and violence against women and children. It was also implementing a 2010–2020 strategic framework for children's justice, aimed at improving the delivery of justice and harmonizing the juvenile justice system with international standards. By increasing its health and

education budgets, it had been able to carry out nationwide vaccination campaigns, launch a nutrition strategy and expand its free school lunch programme in the poorest rural and remote areas.

71. In December 2016, it had submitted its combined third through sixth periodic report under the Convention, which reflected its concerted efforts to implement previous recommendations.

72. There were still challenges to be overcome, particularly in rural and remote areas, where poverty levels remained high and health care services were limited. His Government would do its utmost to promote and protect the rights of all of the country's children, and it was grateful to the development partners, international organizations and United Nations development agencies for their continuing invaluable assistance.

73. **Ms. Dagher** (Lebanon) said that children's lives and futures were at greater risk than at any time in recent history. However, Lebanon remained committed to creating the best possible environment for children. With 1.2 million Syrian refugees, it hosted more refugees in proportion to its population than any other country in the world. To provide an education for the almost 420,000 child refugees, it had built more than 300 schools since 2011, increasing the number of refugee children in school sevenfold. It provided basic health care to all children through a national network of primary health care centres and had achieved a 90 per cent vaccination rate as of 2016. Furthermore, there were plans to fund free hospitalization for mental health patients, and mental health centres were already being set up. Lastly, a number of child-related committees had been established, including a committee for the eradication of child labour, which had developed an action plan with an annex specifically devoted to refugee children.

74. **Mr. Ri Song Chol** (Democratic People's Republic of Korea), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that, contrary to the assertion of the United States delegation, his country's children had enough to eat. They also enjoyed good education and good health. As the American people themselves knew, children in the United States suffered from poverty, violence, rape, drug addiction, human trafficking and other evils. The United States military drove tanks over girls and bombarded women and children. He strongly urged the United States to cease its human rights campaign against sovereign States and focus instead on its own children.

*The meeting rose at 6 p.m.*