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Agenda item 64

Promotion and protection of the rights of children

Report of the Third Committee

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I. Introduction

1. At its 3rd plenary meeting, on 16 September 2022, the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the General Committee, decided to include in the agenda of its seventy-seventh session the item entitled:

“Promotion and protection of the rights of children:

“(a) Promotion and protection of the rights of children;

“(b) Follow-up to the outcome of the special session on children”

and to allocate it to the Third Committee.

2. The Committee considered the item jointly with its sub-items and heard introductory statements and held interactive dialogues and a general discussion at its 11th to 15th meetings, on 7, 10 and 11 October 2022, and considered proposals and took action on the item at its 50th and 51st meetings, on 15 November. An account of the Committee’s consideration of the item is contained in the relevant summary records.¹

3. For its consideration of the item, the Committee had before it the following documents:

(a) Report of the Committee on the Rights of the Child on its eighty-fifth to eighty-ninth sessions ([A/77/41](#));

(b) Report of the Secretary-General on the issue of child, early and forced marriage ([A/77/282](#));

(c) Report of the Secretary-General on the follow-up to the outcome of the special session of the General Assembly on children ([A/77/309-E/2023/5](#));

¹ [A/C.3/77/SR.11](#), [A/C.3/77/SR.12](#), [A/C.3/77/SR.13](#), [A/C.3/77/SR.14](#), [A/C.3/77/SR.15](#), [A/C.3/77/SR.50](#) and [A/C.3/77/SR.51](#).



(d) Report of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict ([A/77/143](#));

(e) Annual report of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children ([A/77/221](#));

(f) Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Special Rapporteur on the sale and sexual exploitation of children, including child prostitution, child pornography and other child sexual abuse material ([A/77/140](#)).

4. At the 11th meeting, on 7 October, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict made an introductory statement and responded to questions posed and comments made by the representatives of Luxembourg, Pakistan, Malta, Switzerland, Saudi Arabia, Belgium, Liechtenstein, Türkiye, the European Union, Norway, the United States of America, Slovenia, Germany, Georgia, the Russian Federation, Estonia (also on behalf of the Nordic and Baltic countries), the Syrian Arab Republic, Poland, Ukraine, France, Qatar, Mexico, Romania, India, the Philippines, Côte d'Ivoire, Lebanon, Azerbaijan, Argentina, Albania, the Dominican Republic and Andorra, as well as by the observer for the State of Palestine.

5. At the same meeting, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children made an introductory statement and responded to questions posed and comments made by the representatives of Morocco, Luxembourg, Mexico, Spain, Portugal, Lebanon, the European Union, Malta, the Philippines, Ireland, Romania, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, Belgium, Colombia, Afghanistan, Malaysia, Slovenia, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the Russian Federation, the Niger, Cyprus, the Syrian Arab Republic and Ukraine.

6. Also at the same meeting, the Director of the Programme Group of the United Nations Children's Fund made an introductory statement and responded to questions posed and comments made by the representatives of the European Union, Malaysia, Ukraine and the Syrian Arab Republic.

7. At the 12th meeting, on 7 October, the Chair of the Committee on the Rights of the Child made an introductory statement and responded to questions posed and comments made by the representatives of Spain, Malaysia, the European Union, El Salvador, Chile, the Dominican Republic, Luxembourg, Japan, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Norway, Indonesia, Mexico, the Russian Federation, Qatar, Uruguay and the Syrian Arab Republic.

8. At the same meeting, the Special Rapporteur on the sale and sexual exploitation of children, including child prostitution, child pornography and other sexual abuse material made an introductory statement and responded to questions posed and comments made by the representatives of Mexico, the European Union, Israel, the United States of America, the Dominican Republic, Australia, Malta, Canada, the United Republic of Tanzania, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the Gambia, the Russian Federation, Malaysia and the Syrian Arab Republic, as well as by the observer for the Sovereign Order of Malta.

9. At the 46th meeting, on 10 November, the representative of the United States of America made a statement with regard to the draft resolutions before the Committee.²

10. At the 50th meeting, the representative of Guatemala made a statement with regard to draft resolutions under agenda items 26 and 64 (a).³

² See [A/C.3/77/SR.46](#).

³ See [A/C.3/77/SR.50](#).

II. Consideration of proposals

A. Draft resolution [A/C.3/77/L.17/Rev.1](#)

11. At its 50th meeting, on 15 November 2022, the Committee had before it a revised draft resolution entitled “Protecting children from bullying” ([A/C.3/77/L.17/Rev.1](#)), submitted by Argentina, Armenia, Austria, Belgium, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Cabo Verde, the Central African Republic, Colombia, Costa Rica, Côte d’Ivoire, Croatia, Czechia, Denmark, Ecuador, Equatorial Guinea, Estonia, Finland, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Honduras, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Mexico, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, Montenegro, the Netherlands, Nicaragua, Peru, Portugal, the Republic of Moldova, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of). Subsequently, Albania, Andorra, Antigua and Barbuda, Australia, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belize, Brazil, Canada, Chile, the Congo, Cyprus, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, France, Guatemala, Hungary, Israel, Japan, Kazakhstan, Latvia, Lebanon, Morocco, Nepal, New Zealand, North Macedonia, Norway, Palau, Panama, Paraguay, the Philippines, Poland, the Republic of Korea, San Marino, Serbia, Seychelles, Sri Lanka, Switzerland, Tajikistan, Thailand, Togo, Türkiye, Ukraine, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and Uruguay joined in sponsoring the draft resolution.

12. At the same meeting, Angola, Bahamas, Burkina Faso and Kiribati joined in sponsoring the draft resolution.

13. Also at the same meeting, the representative of Mexico made a statement.

14. Also at the 50th meeting, the Committee adopted draft resolution [A/C.3/77/L.17/Rev.1](#) (see para. 23, draft resolution I).

15. Before the adoption of the draft resolution, the representative of Senegal made a statement. After the adoption of the draft resolution, the representatives of Libya, Israel, Nigeria, Yemen, Iraq, Indonesia, Algeria, the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Gambia and Mali, as well as the observer for the Holy See, made statements.

B. Draft resolution [A/C.3/77/L.19/Rev.1](#)

16. At its 51st meeting, on 15 November, the Committee had before it a revised draft resolution entitled “Child, early and forced marriage” ([A/C.3/77/L.19/Rev.1](#)), submitted by Albania, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, Canada, the Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Côte d’Ivoire, Croatia, Czechia, Denmark, Ecuador, Equatorial Guinea, Estonia, Fiji, Finland, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Honduras, Iceland, Israel, Italy, Jordan, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liechtenstein, Malawi, Malta, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, the Netherlands, New Zealand, North Macedonia, Norway, Peru, Portugal, the Republic of Moldova, Romania, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Tunisia, Türkiye, Uganda, Ukraine, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United Republic of Tanzania, the United States of America, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) and Zambia. Subsequently, Afghanistan, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Belgium, Belize, Burundi, the Comoros, the Congo, Cyprus, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Dominican Republic, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, France, Greece, Guinea-Bissau, Haiti, Hungary, Ireland, Kazakhstan, Latvia, Liberia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Mauritius, Mexico, Nepal, Palau, Panama,

Paraguay, the Philippines, Poland, the Republic of Korea, San Marino, Serbia, Seychelles, Slovakia, South Africa, South Sudan, Sri Lanka, Tajikistan, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Togo, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Viet Nam and Zimbabwe joined in sponsoring the draft resolution.

17. At the same meeting, Algeria, Bhutan and Kiribati joined in sponsoring the draft resolution.

18. Also at the same meeting, the Secretary of the Committee read out a statement of the programme budget implications of draft resolution [A/C.3/77/L.19/Rev.1](#).

19. Also at the 51st meeting, the representative of Zambia made a statement.

20. At the same meeting, the representative of Japan made a statement, in the course of which the delegation withdrew its sponsorship of draft resolution [A/C.3/77/L.19/Rev.1](#).

21. Also at the same meeting, the Committee adopted draft resolution [A/C.3/77/L.19/Rev.1](#) (see para. 23, draft resolution II).

22. Before the adoption of the draft resolution, the representatives of Japan, the United States of America and El Salvador made statements. After the adoption of the draft resolution, the representatives of Canada, Libya, Argentina, Iraq, New Zealand (also on behalf of Australia, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland), Uruguay, Egypt, Algeria, Nicaragua, Indonesia, Saudi Arabia (also on behalf of the Gulf Cooperation Council), the Islamic Republic of Iran, Yemen, Malaysia, Czechia (also on behalf of the European Union), Senegal, the Russian Federation, Mali, the Syrian Arab Republic, Jordan and Nigeria, as well as the observer for the Holy See, made statements.

III. Recommendations of the Third Committee

23. The Third Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolutions:

Draft resolution I **Protecting children from bullying**

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions [69/158](#) of 18 December 2014, [71/176](#) of 19 December 2016, [73/154](#) of 17 December 2018 and [75/166](#) of 16 December 2020 on protecting children from bullying, all its previous resolutions on the rights of the child and the resolutions adopted by the Human Rights Council that are relevant to the protection of children from bullying, including resolution [51/10](#) of 6 October 2022,¹

Reaffirming the Convention on the Rights of the Child,² and emphasizing that it constitutes the standard in the promotion and protection of the rights of the child and that States parties to the Convention shall undertake all appropriate legislative, administrative and other measures for the implementation of the rights recognized therein,

Recalling the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training,³ the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization Declaration of Principles on Tolerance,⁴ the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization Convention against Discrimination in Education⁵ and International Telecommunication Union resolution 67 on the role of the telecommunication development sector in child online protection,

Welcoming the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in its entirety,⁶ including the Goals and targets aimed at ending abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children, building and upgrading education facilities that are child-, disability- and gender-responsive, and providing safe, non-violent, inclusive and effective learning environments for all children, and underscoring the importance of its implementation for ensuring the enjoyment of the rights of the child,

Recalling the observance of the International Day against Violence and Bullying at School, including Cyberbullying, on the first Thursday of November every year,

Taking note of the reports of the Secretary-General,⁷ as well as of the conclusions and recommendations contained therein,

Recognizing the importance of international, regional and bilateral multi-stakeholder partnerships and initiatives to advance the effective protection and promotion of the rights of the child and the elimination of violence against children, including all forms of bullying, and in this regard noting with appreciation the efforts of, inter alia, the Global Partnership to End Violence against Children and the WeProtect Global Alliance,

¹ *Official Records of the General Assembly, Seventy-seventh Session, Supplement No. 53A (A/77/53/Add.1)*, chap. III, sect. A.

² United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1577, No. 27531.

³ Resolution [66/137](#), annex.

⁴ See [A/51/201](#), annex, appendix I.

⁵ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 429, No. 6193.

⁶ Resolution [70/1](#).

⁷ [A/71/213](#) and [A/73/265](#).

Welcoming the development of national and subnational action plans and awareness-raising campaigns and the enactment of legislation by several Member States to prevent and respond to school violence and bullying, including cyberbullying,

Recognizing that bullying, including cyberbullying, can take both direct and indirect forms, from acts of physical, verbal, sexual and relational violence or aggression to social exclusion, including from peer to peer, as well as from acts of discrimination, which can inflict physical, psychological and social harm, and that, although rates differ from country to country, bullying, online or in person, has a negative impact on the fulfilment of the rights of the child and is among children's main concerns, affecting a high percentage of children and compromising their health, emotional well-being and academic work, and acknowledging the need to prevent and eliminate bullying among children,

Recognizing also that the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic has been one of the greatest global challenges in the history of the United Nations, and noting with deep concern its disproportionately heavy impact, inter alia, on children, and its impact on health and the loss of life, mental health and well-being, as well as the negative impact on global humanitarian needs and the enjoyment of human rights and across all spheres of society, including on livelihoods, food security and nutrition, and education, the exacerbation of poverty and hunger, disruption to economies, trade, societies and environments, and the exacerbation of economic and social inequalities within and among countries, which is reversing hard-won development gains and hampering progress towards achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and all its Goals and targets,

Recognizing further that the use of technology, specifically digital platforms, can mitigate the loss of education and learning opportunities caused by, inter alia, school closures, while expressing concern that the poorest and most vulnerable children, including children with disabilities and Indigenous children, are least likely to live in a suitable home-learning environment with an adequate Internet connection and learning support,

Recognizing that, while digital and new technologies offer many positive opportunities for children, they also present new risks and threats that should be addressed, including cyberbullying and child exploitation and abuse,

Deeply concerned that increased unsupervised use of digital technologies by parents or legal guardians, inter alia during the COVID-19 pandemic, has exacerbated children's exposure to the risk of all forms of violence and harassment, including in digital contexts, inter alia peer-to-peer sexual harassment and cyberbullying, child sexual exploitation and abuse, child grooming, trafficking in persons, hate speech, stigmatization, racism, xenophobia and multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination,

Recognizing also the need to foster a policy of zero tolerance for all forms of violence against children in the digital environment, in a manner consistent with the obligations of Member States, under international human rights law,

Recognizing further the importance of protecting children from online risks and harm, including from cyberbullying, through the development of their digital literacy and skills, as well as those of their parents or legal guardians, including by empowering children to report and seek help in responding to online threats in adequate ways, as well as raising their awareness of the risks of the misuse of information and communications technologies,

Recognizing the importance of generating appropriate statistical information and data on bullying, including, whenever possible, cyberbullying, disaggregated by

income, sex, age, race, ethnicity, migration status, disability and geographic location and other characteristics relevant in national contexts,

Recognizing also that children exercising their right to education, including through the use of information and communications technologies, should not have their safety affected and should be protected from any violation or abuse of their right to privacy, and in this regard emphasizing that efforts to expand connectivity and digital learning and bridging the digital divide, including the gender digital divide, should give special regard to the protection of children,

Concerned about the occurrence of bullying in all parts of the world and the fact that children who are victimized by such practices may be at heightened risk of compromising their health, emotional well-being and academic work and of a wide range of physical and/or mental health conditions, as well as potential long-term effects on the individual's ability to realize his or her own potential,

Concerned also that bullying, including cyberbullying, is associated with long-lasting consequences that continue on into adulthood,

Deeply concerned at the different forms of bullying, including the use, threats associated with the use, sharing or dissemination of personal sexually explicit content, such as photographs or videos, whether real or simulated content, including peer pressure to create or disseminate such content, as well as the short- and long-term repercussions for the victim as a result of such actions,

Noting with concern that children who are marginalized or in vulnerable situations, who face stigmatization, discrimination or exclusion, are disproportionately affected by bullying, both online and offline,

Recognizing that bullying often includes a gender dimension and can be associated with sexual and gender-based violence, stereotyping and negative social norms that affect all boys and girls,

Noting the risks associated with the use of information and communications technologies and applications, including increased vulnerability to bullying, while stressing that they can create new ways to enhance education and, inter alia, foster learning and teaching on the rights of the child and can be useful tools to promote children's protection, including with appropriate guidance from parents and legal guardians, with the best interests of the child as a primary consideration,

Noting also the role that information and communications technologies play in reducing the risk of sexual exploitation and abuse, including by empowering children to report such abuses,

Noting further the work of the Committee on the Rights of the Child on the issue of the protection of children from bullying, including cyberbullying,

Taking note of the Guidelines on Child Online Protection launched by the International Telecommunication Union in 2020, which provide guidance to relevant stakeholders, including children, parents and educators, the private sector and policymakers, on the development of a safe and empowering online environment for children and young people, including with regard to the prevention of and protection from cyberbullying,

Recalling the obligations of States parties to the Convention on the Rights of the Child to ensure that parents or, as the case may be, legal guardians have the primary responsibility for the upbringing and development of the child, as well as to take all appropriate legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse,

while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s) or any other person who has the care of the child, and recognizing that the child, for the full and harmonious development of his or her personality, should grow up in a family environment, in an atmosphere of happiness, love and understanding,

Acknowledging the distinct and important roles that parents, legal guardians, schools, civil society, sports and cultural associations, youth organizations, communities, private actors and business enterprises, State institutions and traditional and non-traditional media each play in securing children's protection from the risks associated with bullying, including cyberbullying, and in preventing all forms of violence, including by promoting children's online safety,

Recognizing that early childhood is a critical stage for cognitive, emotional and behavioural development and that the parent-child relationship is a significant factor in predicting, preventing and eliminating all forms of violence and harassment, including bullying behaviour in adolescents, as well as the existing evidence of a link between domestic violence and bullying in educational settings,

Emphasizing that evidence-based initiatives to strengthen children's life skills and respect for human rights, tolerance, concern for others and the responsibility to foster safety, as well as whole-school and whole-community programmes that fully respect all human rights and help to prevent and address bullying, constitute best practices that should be developed, strengthened and shared through international cooperation,

Acknowledging that children are uniquely placed to inform effective solutions and responses to bullying, including cyberbullying, and underlining that children's participation and their contributions, including their views and recommendations, therefore need to be at the centre of efforts to prevent and address bullying and that their effective and meaningful participation is critical to clearly understand and effectively address bullying and its impacts,

1. *Takes note* of the annual report of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children⁸ and the annual report of the Special Rapporteur of the Human Rights Council on the sale and sexual exploitation of children, including child prostitution, child pornography and other child sexual abuse material;⁹

2. *Affirms* that human rights and fundamental freedoms must be protected, online and offline, with special regard for the rights of the child;

3. *Calls upon* Member States:

(a) To continue to take all appropriate measures to prevent and protect children, including in and out of school, both in person and in digital contexts, from all forms of violence, such as bullying, including cyberbullying, by promptly responding to such acts, and to provide appropriate support to children affected by and involved in bullying;

(b) To continue to promote and invest in education, including as a long-term and lifelong process by which everyone learns tolerance and respect for the dignity of others and the means and methods of ensuring such respect in all societies;

(c) To invest in digital literacy and regulations that ensure children's privacy, data protection and safety online and to protect children from online child sexual exploitation and abuse, as well as other online harms;

⁸ A/77/221.

⁹ A/77/140.

(d) To address, through necessary measures, the wider economic and social inequalities that may contribute to bullying, including cyberbullying, including poverty, gender norms and stereotypes, taking into account that risk factors are mixed and vary depending on country and context;

(e) To develop and implement, as appropriate, measures and restorative practices to repair harm, restore relationships, avoid recidivism, promote the accountability of perpetrators and change aggressive behaviour;

(f) To generate and analyse statistical information and data disaggregated by sex, age, race, ethnicity, migration status, disability and geographic location and other characteristics relevant in national contexts, and to provide information on disability, with regard to the problem of bullying, including cyberbullying, as a basis on which to elaborate effective public policies;

(g) To adopt and strengthen, as appropriate, clear and comprehensive measures, including, where relevant, legislation to prevent and protect children from bullying, including cyberbullying and the dissemination of personal sexually explicit content, and provide for safe and child-sensitive counselling and reporting procedures and safeguards for the rights of affected children;

(h) To ensure that child protection, including social protection and gender-sensitive mental health services, is recognized as essential and that it continues to be provided and be accessible and available to all children at all times, including during lockdowns, quarantines and other types of confinement and public health measures;

(i) To strengthen the capacities of schools and the skills of educators and professionals working with children in early detection and response to prevent and respond to bullying, including cyberbullying, in particular initiatives to mobilize support to prevent and address this phenomenon, and to ensure that children are informed of any existing public policies to secure their protection;

(j) To continue to raise public awareness, involving family members, parents, legal guardians, caregivers, young people, schools, formal and non-formal and in-person and digital education settings, communities, community leaders, the media, sports organizations, athletes and coaches, as well as civil society organizations, including youth organizations, with the participation of children, regarding the protection of children from bullying;

(k) To develop accessible parenting and other skills programmes for parents, legal guardians, caregivers and family members, together with social protection interventions that help to tackle gender stereotypes and negative social norms that contribute to violence against children and bullying, and that help to promote a nurturing family environment, reduce the risk of social exclusion and deprivation and reduce children's potential exposure to violence at home that might be caused by, inter alia, school closures, confinement, movement restrictions, disruption of the provision of child protection services, or added family stress related to job loss and isolation;

(l) To involve and provide children with the opportunity to participate effectively in the development of initiatives to prevent and address bullying, including available support services and safe, accessible, age- and child-sensitive, confidential and independent counselling and reporting mechanisms, to guide them in promoting inclusive and responsible digital behaviour and to inform them of available mental and physical health-care services and procedures in place to support them, where they exist, and encourages Member States to make such support services available, as much as possible;

(m) To pay particular attention to children in vulnerable situations, including through efforts to promote mutual respect and tolerance for diversity in order to combat stigmatization, racism, xenophobia, hate speech, discrimination or exclusion;

(n) To continue to share national experiences and best practices for preventing and tackling bullying, including cyberbullying;

4. *Encourages* Member States to continue to share with the Secretary-General, through existing processes and mechanisms, information about any initiatives undertaken at the national or subnational level to prevent and address bullying, including cyberbullying, to promote peaceful social interaction with a view to assessing progress, and to make use of the results achieved;

5. *Encourages* Member States that have not yet done so to adopt appropriate measures, such as plans of action on the prevention of and response to bullying, including cyberbullying, to implement them effectively and to assess progress in children's protection, drawing on the experience of Member States, the United Nations, regional organizations, academia and civil society actors;

6. *Urges* Member States to ensure that all schools are free from violence, such as bullying, including cyberbullying, and peer-to-peer sexual harassment in digital contexts, and that they address all forms of violence against children, with particular attention given to girls;

7. *Calls upon* Member States, with assistance from relevant intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, to support victims and survivors of bullying with access to evidence-based, quality programmes, care and counselling for their physical, psychological and social recovery, as well as psychological care and trauma counselling, rehabilitation and social reintegration;

8. *Recognizes* that the responsibility to respect the rights of the child also applies to private actors and business enterprises, and in particular encourages private actors in the technology sector who provide or operate services across domestic jurisdictions to adhere to the highest available international standards and best practices for safety, privacy and security by design, taking into account the particular needs of children and youth, and to continue to take part in international multi-stakeholder efforts to raise awareness and empower children about online risks and to prevent and counter cyberbullying;

9. *Welcomes* the continued collaboration of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children with human rights bodies and mechanisms, within their respective mandates, including the special procedure mandate holders of the Human Rights Council, in order to support efforts to prevent and address all forms of violence against children in all settings, such as bullying, including cyberbullying;

10. *Invites* the Secretary-General to facilitate further international efforts, in collaboration with Member States, to continue to raise awareness of the impact of bullying, including cyberbullying, on the basis of evidence, including through existing initiatives of United Nations specialized agencies, funds and programmes;

11. *Invites* the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children to include information relevant to her mandate on the progress achieved in the protection of children from bullying, including cyberbullying, in her report to the General Assembly at its seventy-eighth and seventy-ninth sessions and to the Human Rights Council;

12. *Decides* to continue its consideration of the question under the item entitled "Promotion and protection of the rights of children".

Draft resolution II

Child, early and forced marriage

The General Assembly,

Reaffirming its resolutions [69/156](#) of 18 December 2014, [71/175](#) of 19 December 2016, [73/153](#) of 17 December 2018 and [75/167](#) of 16 December 2020 on child, early and forced marriage,

Recalling its resolutions [76/146](#) of 16 December 2021 on the girl child and [75/161](#) of 23 December 2020 on the intensification of efforts to prevent and eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls, as well as Human Rights Council resolution [48/6](#) of 8 October 2021, entitled “Child, early and forced marriage in times of crisis, including the COVID-19 pandemic”,¹ and all other previous resolutions relating to child, early and forced marriage,

Guided by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,² as well as the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights³ and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,⁴ the Convention on the Rights of the Child,⁵ the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women⁶ and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities,⁷ together with the relevant Optional Protocols thereto,⁸ as well as other relevant human rights instruments, and recalling the Convention on Consent to Marriage, Minimum Age for Marriage and Registration of Marriages,⁹

Reaffirming the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action,¹⁰ as well as the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development,¹¹ the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action¹² and the outcome documents of their review conferences,

Taking note of the relevant agreed conclusions of the Commission on the Status of Women,

Reaffirming the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,¹³ noting the integrated nature of the 2030 Agenda and the range of Goals and targets relevant to eliminating child, early and forced marriage, including target 5.3, and its pledge to leave no one behind, and recommitting to endeavouring to reach the furthest behind first and to achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls, as well as their attainment and full enjoyment of all human rights, which are essential to achieving sustained, inclusive and equitable economic growth and sustainable development,

¹ See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Seventy-sixth Session, Supplement No. 53A (A/76/53/Add.1)*, chap. IV, sect. A.

² Resolution [217 A \(III\)](#).

³ See resolution [2200 A \(XXI\)](#), annex.

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1577, No. 27531.

⁶ *Ibid.*, vol. 1249, No. 20378.

⁷ *Ibid.*, vol. 2515, No. 44910.

⁸ *Ibid.*, vols. 2171, 2173 and 2983, No. 27531; *ibid.*, vol. 2131, No. 20378; and *ibid.*, vol. 2518, No. 44910.

⁹ *Ibid.*, vol. 521, No. 7525.

¹⁰ [A/CONF.157/24 \(Part I\)](#), chap. III.

¹¹ *Report of the International Conference on Population and Development, Cairo, 5–13 September 1994* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.95.XIII.18), chap. I, resolution 1, annex.

¹² *Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4–15 September 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.13), chap. I, resolution 1, annexes I and II.

¹³ Resolution [70/1](#).

Taking note with appreciation of the ongoing United Nations Population Fund and United Nations Children's Fund Global Programme to End Child Marriage, as well as international, regional, national and subnational instruments, mechanisms and initiatives to prevent and eliminate child, early and forced marriage, including the African Union Campaign to End Child Marriage, the Regional Action Plan to End Child Marriage in South Asia, the Joint Inter-Agency Programme to End Child Marriage and Early Unions in Latin America and the Caribbean and the Southern African Development Community Model Law on Eradicating Child Marriage and Protecting Children Already in Marriage, and further encouraging coordinated and comprehensive approaches to action at all levels and across sectors,

Recognizing that child, early and forced marriage is a harmful practice that violates, abuses or impairs human rights and is linked to and perpetuates other harmful practices and human rights violations and that such violations have a disproportionately negative impact on women and girls, particularly those living in vulnerable situations and hard-to reach areas, putting them, inter alia, at heightened risk of sexual and gender-based violence, threatening girls' education and future economic opportunities as well as their physical and mental health, and underscoring the human rights obligations and commitments of States to respect, promote and protect the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all women and girls and to prevent and eliminate the practice of child, early and forced marriage,

Reaffirming that marriage shall be entered into only with the free and full consent of the intending spouses;

Recognizing that social protection, access to quality education in a safe environment, a strong social work system, meaningful participation and inclusion in decision-making, quality health-care services, nutrition, full access to clean water, including safe drinking water, sanitation and hygiene, including menstrual health and hygiene and affordable menstrual products, skills development and the combating of all forms of discrimination and violence against girls, among other things, are all necessary for the empowerment of the girl child,

Expressing concern that despite the recent progress made globally towards ending child, early and forced marriage, including a decrease of 15 per cent in the proportion of girls who were married before the age of 18 in the past decade, progress has been uneven across regions, both between and within countries, and that existing data show that, at the current pace of progress, target 5.3 of the Sustainable Development Goals, which involves ending the practice by 2030, will not be met in any region of the world,

Noting with concern that the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic has undermined the hard-won gains achieved on ending harmful practices, including child, early and forced marriage, and continues to compromise the ability of Member States to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, including target 5.3, by 2030,

Noting that the current pace of change is not sufficient to eliminate child, early and forced marriage by 2030, where, in addition to the 12 million child, early and forced marriages that occur every year, the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic are projected to result in more than 13 million additional cases of child, early and forced marriage that otherwise would have been averted by 2030, with girls from poor households, rural and remote areas, those living in humanitarian situations and those who have dropped out of formal education particularly at risk,

Recognizing that global health threats, climate change, biodiversity loss, environmental degradation, more frequent and intense natural disasters, armed conflicts, violent extremism as and when conducive to terrorism, and related humanitarian emergencies and the forced displacement of people have particularly

negative impacts on women and girls, including those with disabilities, while recognizing also that poverty, including the feminization of poverty, insecurity, early and unintended pregnancy and lack of access to quality education are also among the root causes of child, early and forced marriage,

Recognizing also that, in some contexts, the practice of child, early and forced marriage may include arrangements that are not formalized, registered or recognized by a religious or State authority, that such arrangements should be addressed in policies and programmes on child, early and forced marriage and that the gathering of information on these arrangements will help to develop responses for affected girls and women,

Noting with concern that deep-rooted gender discrimination, inequalities and stereotypes, harmful practices, perceptions and customs, patriarchal attitudes and structures and discriminatory social norms that consider women and girls to be inferior to men and boys are not only obstacles to the full enjoyment of human rights and the empowerment of all women and girls, but are also among the root causes of child, early and forced marriage, and that the persistence of child, early and forced marriage places children, in particular girls, at greater risk of being exposed to and encountering various forms of discrimination and violence throughout their lives,

Noting with concern also that child, early and forced marriage remains common in rural areas and among the poorest communities and has increased among the poorest communities over the past decade, and acknowledging the correlation between child, early and forced marriage and economic insecurity, poverty and lack of income opportunities and that the immediate alleviation and eradication of extreme poverty must remain a high priority for the international community,

Recognizing that child, early and forced marriage is underrecognized and underreported and often coincides with impunity and lack of accountability, particularly at the community level, and that the persistence of child, early and forced marriage places women and girls at greater risk of being exposed to and encountering various forms of discrimination and violence throughout their lives, including marital rape and sexual, physical and psychological violence, and reinforces the lower status of girls and adolescent girls in society,

Recognizing also that child, early and forced marriage is a major impediment to the achievement of the economic empowerment of women and their social and economic development, including through the disproportionate share of unpaid care and domestic work shouldered by girls and women, thereby hampering the ability of women to enter, advance and remain in the labour market, and that this harmful practice can impede economic independence and impose direct and indirect short- and long-term costs on society, and recognizing further that the economic autonomy of women can expand their options for leaving abusive and violent relationships,

Recognizing further that child, early and forced marriage undermines women's and girls' autonomy and decision-making in all aspects of their lives and that the empowerment of and investment in all women and girls, as well as the strengthening of their voice, agency, leadership and full and meaningful participation in all decisions that affect them, are key factors in breaking the cycle of gender inequality and multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination, violence and poverty and are critical, inter alia, for sustainable development, peace, security, democracy and inclusive economic growth,

Bearing in mind the crucial importance of civil registration and vital statistics, including births, deaths and marriages, for the realization of the human rights of individuals, especially girls,

Recognizing that men and boys, who also benefit from gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls, should play a role as strategic partners and allies of women and girls, including by supporting women and girls at risk, and that their meaningful engagement can contribute to eliminating discriminatory social norms that perpetuate gender-based violence, as well as harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage, ending this practice and achieving gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls and the full enjoyment of all their human rights,

Recognizing also that families, communities and religious, traditional and community leaders have an essential role to play in eliminating negative social norms and harmful traditional or customary practices and confronting gender inequality, and recognizing further that empowering girls, including already married girls, requires their active and meaningful participation in decision-making processes in all matters affecting them and as agents of change in their own lives and communities, including through women's organizations and girls-led organizations, with the active support and engagement of their parents, legal guardians, families and care providers, boys and men, as well as the wider community,

Recognizing further the need to support girls and women who were subjected to child, early and forced marriage, as well as their children, and underscoring the importance of removing structural barriers that prevent their access to services that respond to their specific needs,

Expressing deep concern that child, early and forced marriage disproportionately affects girls who have had minimal, disrupted or no access to formal and informal education and is itself a significant obstacle to educational opportunities and the development of employable and life skills for girls and young women, in particular girls who are forced to drop out of school owing to pregnancy, marriage, childbirth and/or childcare and other unpaid care and domestic work responsibilities, as well as stigma relating to menstruation, gender stereotypes and negative social norms that confine married women and girls to the home, and that educational possibilities and opportunities are directly related to the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls and the full enjoyment of all their human rights, women's employment and economic opportunities and their full, effective, equal and meaningful participation in economic, social and cultural development, governance and decision-making,

Acknowledging that, during the COVID-19 pandemic, girls, particularly adolescents, including those who are among the poorest, those living in rural and remote areas and those in vulnerable situations, are at particular risk of dropping out and not returning to school even as education facilities reopen, thereby increasing their vulnerability to poverty, child, early and forced marriage, all forms of violence, including sexual violence, and early pregnancy,

Noting with concern that, owing to school closures, the COVID-19 pandemic has exposed the digital divides, both between and within countries, including the gender digital divide and vast disparities in the availability of learning materials, including access to the Internet and communication devices, particularly for rural and remote communities, while recognizing that with the increased reliance on virtual learning, many schools, especially in developing countries, lack adequate technology and equipment to provide online teaching, which leads to limited access or lack of access to quality education for many children, particularly girls, further increasing their vulnerability to child, early and forced marriage,

Recognizing that although digital technologies can offer increasing opportunities and benefits, the increased reliance on virtual learning and the challenges faced by children in accessing the Internet and digital devices, including

lack of equipment and digital literacy skills, can limit access to quality education and increase inequalities between and within countries, with internally displaced children, refugees, migrants, those living in humanitarian situations as well as those with disabilities and those living in rural and remote areas and from the poorest households being the most affected,

Noting with concern that, despite gains in providing access to education, girls are still more likely than boys to remain excluded from primary and secondary education, and recognizing that the attendance of girls at school can be affected by negative perceptions of menstruation and lack of means to maintain safe personal hygiene, such as water, sanitation and hygiene facilities in schools that meet the needs of girls,

Recognizing that child, early and forced marriage remains a serious threat to multiple aspects of the physical and psychological health of women and girls, including but not limited to their sexual and reproductive health, significantly increasing the risk of early, frequent and unintended pregnancy, maternal and newborn mortality and morbidity, obstetric fistula and sexually transmitted infections, including HIV and AIDS, as well as increasing vulnerability to all forms of violence,

Recognizing also that the incidence and risk of child, early and forced marriage are highly exacerbated during humanitarian emergencies, situations of forced displacement, armed conflict, public health emergencies and natural disasters because of various factors, including insecurity, increased risks of sexual and gender-based violence, the misconception of providing protection through marriage, gender inequality, lack of access to continuous, inclusive and equitable quality education, the stigmatization of pregnancy outside marriage, the absence of family planning services, disruption in social networks and routines, increased poverty and the absence of livelihood opportunities, and that this requires increased attention, appropriate protection measures and coordinated action by relevant stakeholders, with the full and meaningful participation of the women and girls affected, from the early stages of humanitarian emergencies, and recognizing further the importance of addressing the increased vulnerability of women and girls to sexual and gender-based violence and exploitation in those situations,

Recognizing further that preventing and ending child, early and forced marriage and supporting married girls and women affected by this harmful practice require appropriate gender-responsive and age-sensitive protection, prevention and response measures, as well as coordinated action by relevant stakeholders, and that existing gaps in the collection and use of reliable data and evidence remain a major challenge for programming and informing appropriate measures and actions,

Recognizing that research initiatives and data collection at the global, regional, national and subnational levels provide critical information on child, early and forced marriage and how trends related to child, early and forced marriage change over time,

1. *Takes note with appreciation* of the report of the Secretary-General;¹⁴
2. *Reaffirms* the commitment at the very heart of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development to leave no one behind and commit to taking more tangible steps to support people in vulnerable situations and to reach the furthest behind first, and emphasizes the commitment to get back onto a track of accelerated progress towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, including target 5.3, noting that gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls and their full enjoyment of their human rights, will make a crucial contribution to progress across all the Goals and targets, while reiterating that States will not be able to achieve the

¹⁴ [A/77/282](#).

ambitious Goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda without a revitalized and enhanced Global Partnership and comparably ambitious means of implementation;

3. *Calls upon* States, with the participation of relevant stakeholders, including women and girls, men and boys, parents and other family members, teachers, religious, traditional and community leaders, civil society, organizations led by girls, women's organizations, youth and human rights groups, the media and the private sector, to develop and implement holistic, comprehensive and coordinated age- and gender-responsive, victim-centred and multisectoral responses and strategies that respect human rights to prevent and eliminate child, early and forced marriage, to support girls and women who are affected or at risk, who have fled such a marriage or whose marriage has dissolved, and widowed girls or women who were married as girls, including through the strengthening of child protection systems, social work programmes, protection mechanisms such as safe shelters, mental health and psychosocial support services, empowerment and livelihood support, community sensitization, family reunification, access to justice and the sharing of best practices across borders;

4. *Also calls upon* States to develop and implement measures at all levels to end child, early and forced marriage, including national and subnational action plans where appropriate, and to make adequate resources, including financing, available across relevant sectors, including health, nutrition, sanitation, shelter, protection, governance and education;

5. *Urges* States to enact, enforce and uphold laws and policies aimed at preventing and ending child, early and forced marriage, protecting those at risk and addressing the needs of those affected, and work towards the coherence of these laws and policies at the local level, to ensure that marriage is entered into only with the informed, free and full consent of the intending spouses;

6. *Calls upon* States to enact, enforce and uphold laws concerning a minimum age of marriage, to monitor their application and to progressively amend laws with lower minimum ages of marriage and/or ages of majority to 18 and engage all relevant authorities to ensure that these laws are well known;

7. *Urges* States to repeal or amend laws and remove any provisions that enable perpetrators of rape, sexual exploitation and abuse or abduction to escape prosecution and punishment by marrying their victims and that may enable, justify, or lead to child, early and forced marriage, and to engage traditional and religious leaders, among others, to eliminate traditional practices that resolve sexual violence incidents through marriage;

8. *Calls upon* States to strengthen their efforts to ensure the timely registration of births and marriages, especially for individuals living in rural and remote areas, including by identifying and removing all physical, administrative, procedural and any other barriers that impede access to registration and by providing, where lacking, mechanisms for the registration of customary and religious marriages, as well as working to ensure that the registration of births and marriages remains accessible in emergencies or is re-established as quickly as possible when affected;

9. *Also calls upon* States to promote the full and meaningful participation of and active consultation with children and adolescents, including those who are hardest to reach and already married girls, on all issues affecting them and to raise awareness about their rights, including the negative impact of child, early and forced marriage, through safe spaces, forums and support networks, including in digital spaces, that provide accessible information, life skills, inclusive and equitable quality education, and leadership skills training and opportunities, including catch-up and literacy education, and lifelong learning opportunities, remote learning opportunities and

childcare, as needed, to be empowered, to express themselves, to participate meaningfully in all decisions that affect them and to become agents of change within their communities;

10. *Further calls upon* States to promote awareness-raising about the harmful effects of child, early and forced marriage on the individual and wider society and the benefits of ending this harmful practice, including through open dialogue with all stakeholders, including girls and boys, women and men, religious, traditional and community leaders, parents, legal guardians and other family members, to work with local communities to combat negative social norms and gender stereotypes that condone child, early and forced marriage, to empower parents and communities to abandon the practice and to empower all women and girls to make informed decisions about their lives;

11. *Recognizes* that the child, for the full and harmonious development of his or her personality, should grow up in a family environment and in an atmosphere of happiness, love and understanding and that parents or, as the case may be, legal guardians have the primary responsibility for the upbringing and development of the child, acknowledging the need to support their capacity to prevent and eliminate child, early and forced marriage, and reaffirming that the best interests of the child will be their basic concern;

12. *Urges* Governments, while addressing child, early and forced marriage, to confront family poverty and social exclusion through investing in family-oriented policies addressing the multidimensional aspects of poverty, focusing on education, health, employment, social security, livelihoods and social cohesion, paying special attention to gender-sensitive social protection measures, child allowances for parents and pension benefits for older persons and protecting, supporting and empowering children, including girls, in child-headed households;

13. *Also urges* Governments, with the collaboration of relevant stakeholders, to tackle poverty, including the feminization of poverty, lack of economic opportunities for women throughout their life course and other entrenched economic incentives that act as drivers of child, early and forced marriage, including by ensuring the rights of all women and girls to inheritance and property, without discrimination of any kind, including in relation to marital status, their equal access with men and boys to social protection, childcare services and direct financial services, to support the right of girls to receive and continue their education, including through their continued enrolment in school during pregnancy and re-enrolment in school after childbirth, to develop livelihood opportunities through access to inclusive and equitable quality education, including technical and vocational education, and training and life skills education, including entrepreneurship and financial and digital literacy, and to promote freedom of movement, women's equal access to full and productive employment and decent work, including waged and salaried work, as well as equal political participation and rights to inherit and own land;

14. *Urges* Member States to ensure access to services and education for women who were married in childhood and for girls who are married, are pregnant or are mothers;

15. *Encourages* States to respect, protect, promote and fulfil the human rights of already married girls and women affected by this harmful practice, to promote equality in all aspects of marriage and its dissolution and to address their specific needs, such as through targeted and tailored programmes, including social work programmes, that provide social services to protect them from sexual and gender-based violence, increase their decision-making power, make it easier for them to seek formal employment, increase their economic independence and financial literacy, access quality education, skills development programmes and lifelong learning

opportunities, ensure their equal access to health-care services and information and decrease their social isolation, including by establishing or strengthening childcare services and working with communities to change discriminatory social norms;

16. *Calls upon* States to promote and protect the right of women and girls to equal access to education through enhanced emphasis on free and quality primary and secondary education, including catch-up and literacy education for those who have not received formal education, have left school early or were forced to leave school, including because of marriage, pregnancy, childbirth and/or childcare responsibilities, which empowers young women and girls to make informed decisions about their lives, employment, economic opportunities and health, including through scientifically accurate and age-appropriate comprehensive education that is relevant to cultural contexts, that provides adolescent girls and boys and young women and men, in and out of school, consistent with their evolving capacities, and with appropriate direction and guidance from parents and legal guardians, with the best interests of the child as their basic concern, information on sexual and reproductive health and HIV prevention, gender equality and the empowerment of women, human rights, physical, psychological and pubertal development and power in relationships between women and men, to enable them to build self-esteem and foster informed decision-making, communication and risk reduction skills and to develop respectful relationships, in full partnership with young persons, parents, legal guardians, caregivers, educators and health-care providers, in order to contribute to ending child, early and forced marriage;

17. *Recognizes* that education is one of the most effective ways to prevent and eliminate child, early and forced marriage and to help married women and girls to make informed decisions about their lives, and urges States to remove barriers to education, including by investing in quality primary and secondary education for every child in a safe environment, through adequate financing, ensuring that married girls and boys, pregnant girls and women and young parents continue to have access to schooling, improving access to quality formal education and skills development, especially for those living in remote or insecure areas, improving the safety of girls at and on the way to and from school, providing safe and adequate sanitation, including for menstrual hygiene management, adopting and implementing laws and policies to prohibit, prevent and address violence and to hold perpetrators accountable, strengthening and intensifying their efforts to implement effective violence prevention and response activities in schools and communities, engaging men and boys, community leaders and parents, educating children from a young age regarding their human rights and the importance of treating all people with dignity and respect and designing educational programmes and teaching materials that support respectful relationships, non-violent behaviours, gender equality and empowerment of women and girls;

18. *Encourages* States to mitigate the impact of past and present school closures, particularly for those learners who are among the poorest and in vulnerable situations, especially girls, and to continue to strengthen the protection of schools,, making them free from all forms of violence, bearing in mind that special measures to ensure equal access contribute to achieving equal opportunity and combating exclusion by eliminating social, economic and gender disparities in education and ensuring school attendance, in particular for girls, children with disabilities, pregnant adolescent girls, children living in poverty, Indigenous children, children of African descent, children living with HIV/AIDS, persons belonging to national, ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities, migrant children, children living in rural or remote areas and children in vulnerable situations;

19. *Calls on* States to pursue efforts and ensure greater connectivity to bridge the digital divides in access to the Internet, both between and within countries, and

the gender digital divide in school and learning opportunities, with greater accessibility for the most affected girls and women, such as those who live in rural and remote areas or refugee camps or those who come from lower-income households and girls with disabilities, and address all forms of violence and discrimination against all women and girls in digital contexts;

20. *Calls upon* Member States, in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic and other health-related global challenges, building on previous experience, to ensure that school closures are a last resort and are proportionate to wider public health restrictions and that girls are protected and supported in returning to school once it is deemed safe to do so, and in this regard calls upon Member States and other relevant stakeholders to take the appropriate measures in order to ensure proper training of teachers and other educational professionals and the availability of and access to learning materials and remote learning platforms during the pandemic, and to bridge the digital divide, including barriers such as poor access to connectivity, lack of affordability of connection and devices, digital illiteracy, limited digital skills, absence of locally relevant digital content, and gender stereotypes and negative social norms, in order to provide distance learning opportunities, inter alia, Internet, television and radio teaching alternatives, especially in developing countries;

21. *Encourages* States to adopt, as appropriate, and implement inclusive policies and programmes to promote technical and vocational training and skills development and lifelong learning opportunities, including in science, technology, engineering and mathematics and in information and communications technology, as well as higher educational opportunities for women and girls, including those at risk of or affected by child, early and forced marriage, so as to enable them to gain the knowledge, attitudes and skills that they need to fulfil their full potential;

22. *Urges* States to address the root causes of gender inequality, including gender stereotypes and negative social norms, attitudes and behaviours, the socioeconomic drivers of violence and unequal power relations in which women and girls are viewed as subordinate to men and boys, which perpetuate child, early and forced marriage, by developing and implementing, inter alia, robust and comprehensive interventions addressing the gender inequality and social norms that underlie the practice and awareness-raising programmes that provide accurate information about the negative impact of child, early and forced marriage on women and girls and society at large, including through social media, the Internet and community communication and dissemination tools;

23. *Urges* Governments to promote, respect and protect the right to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health through the development and enforcement of policies and legal frameworks and the strengthening of health systems, including health information systems, that make universally accessible and available quality, gender-responsive, adolescent-friendly health services, sexual and reproductive health-care services, information and commodities, HIV and AIDS prevention, testing, treatment and care, mental health services and nutrition interventions and prevention, treatment of and care for obstetric fistula and other obstetric complications by providing the continuum of services, including family planning, prenatal and postnatal care, skilled birth attendance, emergency obstetric care and post-partum care;

24. *Also urges* Governments to promote and protect the human rights of all women and girls, including the right of women, and those girls who have been subjected to child, early and forced marriage, to have control over and decide freely and responsibly on matters related to their sexuality, including sexual and reproductive health, free of coercion, discrimination and violence, and to adopt and accelerate the implementation of laws, policies and programmes that protect and

enable the enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms, including reproductive rights, in accordance with the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome documents of their review conferences;

25. *Urges* States to formulate or review, as needed, appropriate policies, programmes or strategies in order to prevent and eliminate child, early and forced marriage, and address multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination and violence, including domestic violence, which may occur against women and girls subjected to child, early and forced marriage, as well as strengthen child protection systems and social work programmes through gender-responsive and age-sensitive policies and provide targets and timetables for implementation, while paying special attention to girls with disabilities, Indigenous girls and girls in vulnerable situations, including girls facing social and economic exclusion, and those living in rural and remote areas;

26. *Also urges* States to uphold the human rights of all women and girls with disabilities, and recognizes that disability can increase the risk of child, early and forced marriage, and the importance of ensuring that services and programmes designed to prevent and eliminate child, early and forced marriage are inclusive of, accessible to and proactively engage with women and girls with disabilities;

27. *Further urges* States to ensure access to justice and accountability mechanisms and remedies for the effective implementation and enforcement of laws aimed at preventing and eliminating child, early and forced marriage, including by working towards the elimination of loopholes in customary laws, where they exist, and by informing women, girls and boys about their rights under relevant laws, including in marriage and at its dissolution, improving legal infrastructure, removing all barriers to access to legal counselling, assistance and remedies, training law enforcement officers, the judiciary and professionals working with women and children and ensuring oversight of the handling of cases of child, early and forced marriage;

28. *Calls upon* States, with the collaboration of relevant stakeholders, to ensure that COVID-19 response measures and future emergency response and recovery plans are comprehensive, participatory, age- and gender-sensitive and adequately funded, promote inclusive, gender-equal and sustainable economies and societies, and eliminate inequality and exclusion and poverty, which are among the root causes of child, early and forced marriage;

29. *Also calls upon* States to mitigate the impact of emergencies and improve on response measures by strengthening the capacity of civil society organizations and other relevant stakeholders working at the local and national levels, which are often best placed to reach communities, to continue their essential work with girls, families and local communities to prevent and respond to child, early and forced marriage, particularly those working with communities in vulnerable situations;

30. *Further calls upon* States to monitor the effects of the COVID-19 crisis on the prevalence of child, early and forced marriage in relation to changes in gender roles, including in domestic work, non-return to school, hindered access to services, rates of early, frequent and unintended pregnancy and the economic situation of families;

31. *Calls upon* States to recognize, reduce and redistribute women's and girls' disproportionate share of unpaid care and domestic work, including by making efforts to change gender roles in domestic work and care responsibilities, and tackle the feminization of poverty, which has been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, and to address all forms of discrimination and gender inequality, including gender stereotypes and negative social norms, attitudes and behaviours and unequal power

relations in which women and girls are viewed as subordinate to men and boys, that are at the root of these imbalances;

32. *Also calls upon* States to develop and implement, in consultation with and with the full, effective, equal and meaningful participation of women and, as appropriate, girls, and integrate into humanitarian responses, from the early stages of humanitarian emergencies, measures to address the increased vulnerability of women and girls, particularly adolescent girls, to child, early and forced marriage, and to protect women and girls from sexual and gender-based violence and exploitation during humanitarian emergencies, situations of forced displacement, armed conflict, natural disasters and public health emergencies, including by ensuring their access to such services as health, education and child protection, as well as strengthening follow-up and interventions to prevent and eliminate child, early and forced marriage in humanitarian settings, as well as to address the needs of those affected and to ensure that the provision of essential services during emergencies respects the rights of girls and women and is addressed in national response plans, including life skills education, gender-sensitive mental health and psychosocial support services, as well as health and information services, including sexual and reproductive health-care services;

33. *Urges* States to recognize and promote awareness of the disproportionate and distinct effects of climate change, environmental degradation and disasters on women and girls, in particular those with disabilities and those facing violence, discrimination and displacement, harmful practices, including child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation, and insecurity of land tenure, income and food, and ensure that policies and programmes reflect these impacts, and take targeted action to strengthen the resilience and adaptive capacities of all women and girls, including in cities and tropical, arctic, coastal, mountainous, rural and remote areas;

34. *Calls upon* States to take a comprehensive, rights-based, age- and gender-responsive, survivor-centred and multisectoral approach that takes into account linkages with other harmful practices in the prevention of and response to child, early and forced marriage in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic and other multidimensional challenges such as humanitarian situations, climate change and natural disasters, and to pay particular attention to the specific needs of all women and girls, in particular those in vulnerable situations and those experiencing various forms of violence, discrimination, stigmatization, exclusion and inequalities, including in humanitarian situations, in terms of, inter alia, access to essential services such as safe spaces and shelters, access to social work services and family reunification, as well as access to other social protection services, health-care services, safe and affordable drinking water and adequate and equitable sanitation and hygiene for all, including menstrual hygiene, as well as access to education, including early childhood education and lifelong learning, and to timely registration of births and marriages;

35. *Also calls upon* States to pay particular attention to the specific needs of children, especially adolescent girls, who are more likely to be subjected to child, early and forced marriage, in the response to the COVID-19 pandemic at all levels, and promoting their effective and meaningful participation in decisions that affect them, by prioritizing the provision of child- and adolescent-centred services, with a focus on equitable access, particularly in relation to schooling, nutrition programmes, immunization, maternal and newborn care, and child protection programmes;

36. *Further calls upon* States to mitigate the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on families and communities by, inter alia, expanding programmes that protect them against economic shocks, including poverty eradication measures, labour policies, public services and gender-responsive social protection programmes;

37. *Calls upon* States to ensure uninterrupted access to and funding for essential health-care services, including sexual and reproductive health-care services, and to safe and affordable drinking water and adequate and equitable sanitation and hygiene for all, including menstrual hygiene, and including in disadvantaged areas such as rural communities, informal settlements and humanitarian settings;

38. *Encourages* relevant United Nations entities and agencies, regional and subregional organizations, within their respective mandates, civil society and other relevant actors and human rights mechanisms to continue to collaborate among themselves and with Member States in developing and implementing strategies and policies at the national, regional and international levels to prevent and eliminate child, early and forced marriage, as well as to support those who were married as children;

39. *Encourages* relevant United Nations entities and agencies, regional and subregional organizations, the international financial institutions, civil society and other relevant actors and human rights mechanisms to continue to collaborate with Member States and national statistical agencies in order to assist in strengthening and building capacity for data and reporting systems for analysing, monitoring and publicly reporting on progress to end child, early and forced marriage based on evidence and addressing data gaps, where they may exist, especially on girls with disabilities;

40. *Affirms* the need for States and relevant United Nations entities and agencies to improve the safe and ethical collection and use of quantitative, qualitative and comparable data on violence against women and girls and on harmful practices, including on those hardest to reach, disaggregated by sex, age, disability, civil status, race, ethnicity, migratory status, geographical location, socioeconomic status, education level and other characteristics relevant in national contexts, as appropriate, to identify and focus action, decision-making, policies and programmes on those furthest behind, to enhance research and dissemination of evidence-based and good practices relating to the prevention and elimination of child, early and forced marriage and to strengthen monitoring and impact assessment of existing policies and programmes as a means of ensuring their effectiveness and implementation;

41. *Encourages* the international community to fulfil its commitment in supporting developing countries, particularly African countries, least developed countries, small island developing States and landlocked developing countries, in strengthening the capacity of national statistical offices and data systems to ensure access to high-quality, timely, reliable and disaggregated data while ensuring national ownership in supporting and tracking progress, including in the context of child, early and forced marriage;

42. *Encourages* Governments to include information on progress towards eliminating child, early and forced marriage, including best practices and implementation efforts, in their national reports to relevant international treaty bodies and the universal periodic review and within the national voluntary reviews conducted through the high-level political forum on sustainable development;

43. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit a comprehensive report to the General Assembly, based on evidence, before the end of its seventy-eighth session, on progress towards ending child, early and forced marriage worldwide as well as best practices for programmes aimed at ending the practice and supporting already married girls and women affected by this practice, including girls' and women's empowerment programmes, gaps in funding, research and data collection, using information provided by Member States, United Nations bodies, agencies, funds and programmes, civil society and other relevant stakeholders;

44. *Decides* to consider the issue of child, early and forced marriage at its seventy-ninth session under the item entitled “Promotion and protection of the rights of children”, taking into account the multifaceted and worldwide nature of this issue.
