



Convention on the Rights of the Child

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Committee on the Rights of the Child

Concluding observations on the combined fourth to sixth periodic reports of Paraguay*

I. Introduction

1. The Committee considered the combined fourth to sixth periodic reports of Paraguay¹ at its 2804th and 2805th meetings,² held on 16 and 17 May 2024, and adopted the present concluding observations at its 2816th meeting, held on 24 May 2024. In the present document, the Committee uses the term “child” to refer to a person who is under 18 years of age.

2. The Committee welcomes the submission of the combined fourth to sixth periodic reports of the State party and the written replies to the list of issues,³ which allowed for a better understanding of the situation of children’s rights in the State party. The Committee expresses its appreciation for the constructive dialogue held with the high-level and multisectoral delegation of the State party.

II. Follow-up measures taken and progress achieved by the State party

3. The Committee welcomes the progress achieved by the State party in various areas, including the ratification of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on a communications procedure, in January 2017. The Committee also welcomes the various legislative, institutional and policy measures taken by the State party to implement the Convention, including the national strategy for comprehensive early childhood care, the country plan to end violence against children, 2017–2022, and the national strategy to eradicate child labour and to protect the adolescent work, 2019–2024.

III. Main areas of concern and recommendations

4. The Committee reminds the State party of the indivisibility and interdependence of all the rights enshrined in the Convention and emphasizes the importance of all the recommendations contained in the present concluding observations. The Committee would like to draw the State party’s attention to the recommendations concerning the following areas, in respect of which urgent measures must be taken: the right to life, survival and development (para. 17), abuse, neglect and sexual abuse and exploitation (para. 22), harmful practices, especially in relation to child marriage (para. 25), torture and other cruel, inhuman

* Adopted by the Committee at its ninety-sixth session (6–24 May 2024).

¹ [CRC/C/PRY/4-6](#).

² See [CRC/C/SR.2804](#) and [CRC/C/SR.2805](#).

³ [CRC/C/PRY/RQ/4-6](#).



or degrading treatment or punishment (para. 27), health and health services (para. 34) and children belonging to Indigenous groups (para. 46).

5. **The Committee recommends that the State party ensure the realization of children's rights in accordance with the Convention, the Optional Protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict and the Optional Protocol on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, throughout the process of implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It urges the State party to ensure the meaningful participation of children in the design and implementation of policies and programmes aimed at achieving all 17 Sustainable Development Goals as far as they concern children.**

A. General measures of implementation (arts. 1, 4, 42 and 44 (6))

Comprehensive policy and strategy

6. **With reference to its statement on article 5 of the Convention, the Committee urges the State party to extend, on the basis of evaluation and with sufficient consideration given to the gender-related aspects of children's rights and the evolving capacities of children, the scope of its policy on children so that it is comprehensive and encompasses all areas covered by the Convention and, on the basis of the policy, to develop a strategy with clear indicators and timeline and sufficient human, technical and financial resources.**

Allocation of resources

7. **Concerned by the continual decrease in the budget allocations for children, and recalling its general comment No. 19 (2016) on public budgeting for the realization of children's rights, the Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Set up a budgeting process, guided by a costing analysis of the investment gaps for the fulfilment of children's rights, that specifies clear allocations to children in the relevant sectors and agencies and that includes specific indicators and a tracking system to monitor and evaluate the adequacy, efficacy and equitability of the distribution of resources allocated and commit to using the existing fiscal spaces for the full implementation of the Convention;**

(b) **Increase systematically the budget allocations for children, setting performance targets linking child-related programme goals to budget allocations and actual expenditures, to allow for the monitoring of the outcomes and of the impact on children, including those in vulnerable situations;**

(c) **Strengthen tax collection and audits to increase transparency and accountability and to eradicate corruption, in order to mobilize the maximum available resources for the realization of children's rights.**

Data collection

8. **Recalling its general comment No. 5 (2003) on general measures of implementation of the Convention, the Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Expediently improve its data collection system and ensure that it covers all areas of the Convention and the Optional Protocols thereto, with data disaggregated by age, sex, disability, geographical location, ethnic, national and Indigenous origin, migration status and socioeconomic background, in order to facilitate analysis of the situation of children, in particular those in situations of vulnerability;**

(b) **Prioritize the strengthening of the Institute of National Statistics to ensure the production and dissemination of consistent, unified and timely data that can be used to develop and disseminate public policies for the realization of children's rights.**

Access to justice and remedies

9. The Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) Ensure that all children have access to confidential, child-friendly and independent complaint mechanisms in schools, alternative care settings, including foster care, and detention for reporting all forms of violence, abuse, discrimination and other violations of their rights and to legal aid and age-appropriate information on access to counselling and remedies, including compensation and rehabilitation;

(b) Raise awareness among children of their right to file a complaint under existing mechanisms;

(c) Ensure the systematic and mandatory training of all relevant professionals working with children on child-friendly procedures and remedies, children's rights and the Convention.

Independent monitoring

10. Noting the A status granted to the Office of the Ombudsman, the Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) Extend the mandate of the Office to include a specific mechanism for monitoring children's rights that is able to receive, investigate and address complaints by children in a child-sensitive and child-friendly manner;

(b) Ensure the privacy and protection of child victims and undertake monitoring, follow-up and verification activities for victims.

Dissemination of the Convention and awareness-raising

11. Taking into consideration the statement made by the head of the State party's delegation regarding its commitment to children's rights, but concerned by the current trend of calling children's rights into question, the Committee recommends that the State party reinforce its efforts for the systematic dissemination of the Convention and awareness-raising among the general public, including children, adolescents, families and teachers, but also among members of public administration, among other groups, including in the languages of the Indigenous peoples.

Cooperation with civil society

12. The Committee urges the State party to build a climate of trust and cooperation with civil society and to systematically involve communities and civil society, including non-governmental organizations and children's organizations, in the planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies, plans and programmes related to children's rights.

Children's rights and the business sector

13. Recalling its general comment No. 16 (2013) on State obligations regarding the impact of the business sector on children's rights and the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, the Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) Ensure the accountability of the business sector, including agriculture and in particular the soybean farming sector, and informal sectors in relation to international and national human rights, health and environmental standards;

(b) Require companies to undertake due diligence in their operations and across supply chains and to undertake assessments and consultations and make full public disclosure of the impacts of their business activities on the environment, health and children's rights and their plans to address such impacts.

B. General principles (arts. 2, 3, 6 and 12)

Non-discrimination

14. Noting Act No. 6940/2022 to prevent racism and discrimination against people of African descent, but very concerned about the existence of resolutions from State agencies and speeches from high-ranking officials that contain strong discriminatory content towards certain groups of children, the Committee urges the State party:

(a) To put in place laws and regulations to explicitly prohibit all forms of discrimination on the grounds of social origin, ethnicity, disability, sex, gender identity and sexual orientation, and to promote a positive image of children as rights holders;

(b) To implement targeted policies and programmes to eliminate discrimination against children, in particular children with disabilities, Indigenous children, children living with HIV/AIDS, children in street situations and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or intersex children, and ensure their access to health services, education and a decent standard of living;

(c) To promote a positive image of children as rights holders, address social norms and behaviours that contribute to discrimination against children and encourage tolerance and respect for diversity.

Best interests of the child

15. Recalling its general comment No. 14 (2013) on the right of the child to have his or her best interests taken as a primary consideration, the Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) Ensure that this right is appropriately integrated and consistently interpreted and applied in all legislative, administrative and judicial proceedings and decisions and in all policies, programmes and projects that are relevant to, and have an impact on, children, in particular in the context of education and justice;

(b) Evaluate and eliminate, on the basis of the procedure and criteria described above, practices, policies and services that may not be in the best interests of the child.

Right to life, survival and development

16. The Committee is deeply concerned about the following:

(a) High levels of adolescent mortality in road accidents;

(b) High rates of missing children, in particular girls and in the context of *criadazgo* (forced child servitude);

(c) Deaths of children in institutions of deprivation of liberty during the period 2013–2020.

17. The Committee urges the State party:

(a) To urgently develop measures to prevent and eradicate road accidents, in particular by further identifying and addressing their root causes and ensure children's safety in roads;

(b) To take immediate and effective measures to prevent children going missing, addressing its root causes, including *criadazgo*, designing and implementing effective procedures, recording whether children are living with their own families at the time of enrolment in school and following up on cases of missing children by the National Police and the Office of the Public Prosecutor;

(c) To urgently address the deaths of children in State-run detention institutions, ensure that those accountable for the deaths of children in the Itauguá Educational Center and the Educational Center of Ciudad del Este are properly

investigated, prosecuted and brought to justice and take measures to prevent such occurrences.

Respect for the views of the child

18. Recalling its general comment No. 12 (2009) on the right of the child to be heard, the Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) Ensure that children's views are given due consideration in the family, at school in courts and in all relevant administrative, health and other processes concerning them;

(b) Conduct programmes and awareness-raising activities to promote the meaningful and empowered participation of all children, with particular attention paid to girls and children in vulnerable situations, and inform children of the mechanisms in place for them to be heard;

(c) Consider re-establishing the Directorate of Protagonist Participation, reporting to the Ministry of Children and Adolescents, and its association with the National System for the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of the Child, with a view to strengthening programmes.

C. Civil and political rights (arts. 7, 8 and 13–17)

Birth registration and nationality

19. Welcoming the adoption of Act No. 6149/2018 on the Protection of and Facilities for the Naturalization of Stateless Persons, the Committee strongly urges the State party:

(a) To ensure comprehensive free-of-charge birth registration and issuance of birth certificates for all children born in its territory, immediately after the birth, regardless of their or of their parents' immigration status, including those who have expressed an intention to apply for asylum and those who are undocumented;

(b) To enforce the provisions of Act No. 6149/2018 related to the registration as nationals of the children of Paraguayans born abroad that are stateless by legal provisions of their country of birth;

(c) To address disparities in birth registration between urban and rural areas, especially in Indigenous communities, ensuring that all births are properly registered;

(d) To review article 56 of Act No. 1266/1987 to ensure that it aligns with non-discriminatory practices and respects the rights to Guaraní identity;

(e) To review the current registration system in order to identify any deficiencies that are preventing parents, especially in rural communities, from registering their children as soon as they are born;

(f) To perform an institutional evaluation with the National Directorate of the Civil Registry, in particular of their territorial offices, and mobilize public discussions starting within the National Council for Children and Adolescents to formulate and execute an institutional strengthening plan;

(g) To coordinate the departmental and municipal councils and the Municipal Advisory Services on the Rights of Children and Adolescents with the respective institutions, with a view to promoting the registration of children and the exercise of the right to identity, and disseminate the new regulations and existing legal and institutional adjustments to strengthen this process;

(h) In the case of Indigenous communities and isolated populations, to propose mobile service operations that, in addition to registration, bring other public services closer, under the conceptual slogan "the State reaches out to the community";

(i) To ensure through data analysis and the monitoring of the mobile campaigns that all newborns in rural and isolated communities are registered.

Freedom of expression

20. The Committee recommends that the State party ensure and guarantee that student associations, in particular those in secondary education, have channels for participation in the processes of discussing initiatives that affect them.

D. Violence against children (arts. 19, 24 (3), 28 (2), 34, 35, 37 (a) and 39 of the Convention, and the Optional Protocol on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography)

Abuse, neglect and sexual abuse and exploitation

21. While welcoming the country plan to end violence against children, 2017–2022, and the national plan to prevent gender-based violence, 2020–2025, the Committee is seriously concerned about the following:

(a) Lack of a comprehensive system and strategy for preventing and combating child abuse and sexual violence and for protecting children who are victims of domestic violence, rape and sexual abuse;

(b) High rate of child sexual abuse, in particular of girls and Indigenous children, both online and in the context of tourism;

(c) Limited reporting, investigating and prosecution of perpetrators and assistance to victims.

22. The Committee urges the State party:

(a) To extend, on the basis of an evaluation, the national plan to end violence against children, the scope of the strategy for preventing and combating child abuse and sexual violence so that it is comprehensive, prioritizing their gender aspects, paying special attention to children who live in homes with domestic violence and/or parents in confined situations and taking into account the specificities of different stages in the life cycle, including early childhood, childhood and adolescence;

(b) To amend the Penal Code so as to clearly criminalize all acts of sexual violence regardless of sex and gender against children, with minimum and maximum penalties proportionate to the seriousness of the offences, to eliminate any kind of excuse or justification that would allow impunity for the perpetrators;

(c) To facilitate and promote the mandatory reporting of violence against children;

(d) To ensure that perpetrators of all cases of child abuse, including sexual abuse, are promptly reported, investigated and prosecuted, applying a child-friendly and multisectoral approach to avoid the revictimization and retraumatization of the child, that appropriate remedies, treatment and support are provided to victims and that perpetrators are prosecuted and duly sanctioned and deterred from having contact with children;

(e) To take effective measures for the re-integration of children who are victims of sexual violence and ensure that girls who are victims of rape receive adequate and human rights-based attention from the health-care system and personnel;

(f) To encourage community-based and family-based programmes aimed at preventing and tackling domestic violence, child abuse and neglect, sexual violence and infanticide, including by involving former victims, volunteers and community members, in particular on such issues as sexual abuse and harassment, and combat the stigmatization of victims of sexual exploitation and abuse;

(g) To further strengthen awareness-raising and training programmes, including campaigns, targeting State officials, teachers, health professionals, members

of the police and the prosecution and judges, on violence against children and its gender-related aspects;

(h) To ensure the allocation of adequate human, technical and financial resources to the Office of the Minister of Childhood and Adolescence to enable it to implement long-term programmes for addressing the root causes of violence and abuse.

Corporal punishment

23. Recalling its general comment No. 8 (2006) on the right of the child to protection from corporal punishment and other cruel or degrading forms of punishment, the Committee urges the State party:

(a) To implement and translate into public policies Act No. 5659/2016 on the protection of children against physical punishment and ensure that there is no corporal punishment in the State-run military school;

(b) To conduct awareness-raising campaigns for parents and professionals working with and for children to promote behavioural change, within the family and the community, with regard to corporal punishment;

(c) To implement a national strategy to tackle corporal punishment at home through the systematic promotion of positive parenting and non-violent and participatory forms of child-rearing and discipline and guarantee that families in rural and isolated areas are duly reached in this regard.

Harmful practices

24. The Committee is deeply concerned about exceptions to the minimum age for marriage of 18, under Act No. 5419/2015, for children 16 years of age and over marrying with the consent of parents, guardians or a judge and about child marriage still taking place, in particular in Indigenous and rural areas.

25. Recalling joint general recommendation No. 31 of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women/general comment No. 18 of the Committee on the Rights of the Child (2019) on harmful practices, the Committee urges the State party:

(a) To abolish all exceptions to the marriage age of 18 in law and prevent child marriage in practice, in particular in Indigenous and rural areas;

(b) To establish protection schemes for victims of child marriage who file a complaint;

(c) To develop awareness-raising campaigns and programmes on the harmful effects of child marriage on the physical and mental health and well-being of adolescents, targeting households, local authorities, religious leaders, judges and prosecutors.

Torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment

26. The Committee is seriously concerned about the following:

(a) Cases of the ill-treatment or cruel or degrading treatment of children in police stations and in centres of deprivation of liberty;

(b) The lack of prosecution and accountability of those responsible for such abuse;

(c) Children who are victims not receiving adequate remedies;

(d) Forcing girls who have been raped to carry a pregnancy to term, being a form of institutionalized violence, which may constitute torture and other ill-treatment;

(e) Episodes of violence in educational institutions and the security-based approach taken in response.

27. Recalling its general comment No. 13 (2011) on the right of the child to freedom from all forms of violence, the Committee urges the State party:

(a) To enforce the prohibition of torture and ensure that allegations of torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment of children, including in police stations and in institutions where children are deprived of liberty, are duly investigated, that perpetrators are punished in a manner commensurate with the gravity of their acts and that children who are victims receive effective remedies and psychosocial services;

(b) To ensure that children have access to confidential, independent, effective and child-friendly complaint mechanisms for the reporting of cases, including in children's detention centres and alternative care settings;

(c) To enhance the monitoring of children's detention facilities, including by providing them with adequate human, technical and financial resources, and ensure that all recommendations of the national mechanism for the prevention of torture are carried out;

(d) To incorporate a gender perspective into risk-based plans and actions to respond to emergencies and ensure a line of action linked to the protection of children and adolescents against all types of violence;

(e) To introduce prevention measures to ensure the non-repetition of violence in institutions;

(f) To address violence in educational institutions through a holistic approach and ensure the participation of children in the implementation of any programme or measure.

Optional Protocol on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography

28. The Committee welcomes the information provided on the implementation of its initial concluding observations and recommends that the State party:

(a) Improve the collection and disaggregation of data that allows for the effective monitoring of cases of child sexual exploitation in order to address the deficiencies in the traceability and monitoring of judicial processes;

(b) Take measures to prevent, detect, process and prosecute effectively the sexual abuse of girls and Indigenous children, both online and in the context of tourism;

(c) Generate formative and training spaces for the teachers, parents and adults responsible for children and adolescents on information and communication technologies and the dangers of the digital society, including grooming, sexting and cyberbullying;

(d) Ensure enough human, technical and financial resources for the recovery and reintegration of children who are victims and avoid their revictimization;

(e) Develop and implement new prevention and sanction mechanisms adapted to the current reality and the increase in the number of victims.

E. Family environment and alternative care (arts. 5, 9–11, 18 (1) and (2), 20, 21, 25 and 27 (4))

Family environment

29. Recalling its statement on article 5 of the Convention, the Committee recommends that the State party strengthen its efforts:

(a) To ensure that parental responsibilities are equally shared by both parents and raise their awareness on the need to provide appropriate guidance and direction to children in a manner consistent with their evolving capacities;

(b) To adopt all measures necessary to implement effectively Act No. 6486/2020 and review legislative initiatives that seek to revise this Act, ensuring that it complies with the rights enshrined in the Convention;

- (c) To provide legal protection for all types of families;
- (d) To ensure the implementation of Act No. 7103/2023 regarding the international recovery of child support.

Children deprived of a family environment

30. Drawing the State party's attention to the Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children, the Committee recommends that the State party:

- (a) Phase out institutionalization and adopt, without delay, a strategy and action plan for deinstitutionalization, ensuring that it has adequate human, technical and financial resources for its implementation;
- (b) Ensure sufficient family-based and community-based alternative care options for children who cannot stay with their families, including by allocating sufficient financial resources for foster care and adoption, regularly reviewing placement measures and facilitating the reunification of children with their families when possible;
- (c) Establish quality standards for all alternative care settings and regular monitoring of the quality of care therein, including by providing accessible channels for reporting, monitoring and remedying the maltreatment of children;
- (d) Ensure that adequate human, technical and financial resources are allocated to alternative care centres and relevant child protection services, in order to facilitate the rehabilitation and social reintegration of children resident therein to the greatest extent possible;
- (e) Strengthen the capacity of professionals working with families and children, in particular social workers and service providers, family judges and law enforcement personnel.

Children of incarcerated parents

31. The Committee recommends that the State party provide comprehensive protection of the rights of children of incarcerated parents, including visiting rights, by increasing the frequency and duration of visits, providing adequate and child-friendly meeting facilities in all centres of deprivation of liberty and allowing multiple members of families to visit simultaneously without restrictions.

F. Children with disabilities (art. 23)

32. Recalling its general comment No. 9 (2006) on the rights of children with disabilities, the Committee urges the State party to set up a comprehensive strategy for the inclusion of children with disabilities and:

- (a) To organize the collection of data on children with disabilities and develop an efficient system for classifying disability;
- (b) To take measures to facilitate access for children with all types of disabilities to services, including to education and health, social protection and support services;
- (c) To take immediate measures to ensure that children with disabilities have access to early detection and intervention programmes;
- (d) To take measures to address the challenges faced by service provisions that continue to be centralized in segregated care centres;
- (e) To expand the services of the National Secretariat for the Promotion of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities to all age groups of children;
- (f) To continue to undertake awareness-raising campaigns aimed at government officials, the public and families to combat the stigmatization of, and

prejudice against, children with disabilities, promote a positive image of children with disabilities as rights holders and eliminate any use of derogatory terminology and definitions.

G. Health (arts. 6, 24 and 33)

Health and health services

33. The Committee is concerned about the following:

- (a) Quality of health care, in particular in rural areas and among people of African descent and Indigenous communities;
- (b) Possible impact on vaccination coverage, in part exacerbated by disinformation about vaccines;
- (c) Cases of preventable mortality and morbidity among children under 5 years of age, including cases of chronic malnutrition in children;
- (d) Health setbacks, such as maternal mortality and the reappearance of measles, in part exacerbated as a result of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic;
- (e) Lack of sufficient resources allocated to children’s mental health;
- (f) Failure to implement the provisions banning “conversion therapy” in Act No. 7018/2022 on mental health.

34. **Recalling its general comment No. 15 (2013) on the right of the child to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health, the Committee recommends that the State party:**

- (a) **Increase access to quality and culturally sensitive health care, in particular in rural areas and Indigenous communities, and improve vaccination coverage and provide accurate information about the importance of vaccines;**
- (b) **Implement and apply the technical guidance of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the application of a human rights-based approach to the implementation of policies and programmes to reduce and eliminate preventable mortality and morbidity among children under 5 years of age, including cases of chronic malnutrition in children;**
- (c) **Identify the root causes of child food insecurity and malnutrition and regularly monitor and assess the effectiveness of policies and programmes on children’s food security and nutrition, including school meal programmes and food banks and programmes addressing infants and young children;**
- (d) **Take targeted measures to address the health challenges that have been exacerbated in particular as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic;**
- (e) **Develop policies and allocate sufficient resources to promote the mental health of children, prevent suicide and implement Act No. 7018/2022 on mental health and eradicate “conversion therapies”.**

Adolescent health

35. **Seriously concerned about the high number of adolescent pregnancies and about the prohibition by the Ministry of Education and Science of disseminating age-appropriate information on sexual and reproductive health and rights in educational institutions, and recalling its general comment No. 4 (2003) on adolescent health and development in the context of the Convention and general comment No. 20 (2016) on the implementation of the rights of the child during adolescence, the Committee recommends that the State party:**

- (a) **Repeal resolution No. 933/2023 of the Ministry of Education and Sciences and the corresponding material entitled “Twelve sciences for the education of sexuality and affectivity”;**

(b) Adopt a comprehensive sexual and reproductive health policy for adolescents and ensure that sexual and reproductive health and gender-related education is part of the mandatory school curriculum and targeted at adolescents, with special attention paid to preventing early pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections;

(c) Ensure that all adolescents, including those who are out of school and those in rural areas, receive confidential, age-appropriate and child-friendly sexual and reproductive health information and services, including access to contraceptives;

(d) Decriminalize abortion in all circumstances and ensure access to safe, timely and quality abortion and post-abortion care services for adolescent girls, in particular following rape and incest, making sure that their views are always heard and given due consideration as a part of the decision-making process;

(e) Reduce the percentage of teenage pregnancy and the high rates of maternal mortality among adolescents and develop and implement a policy to protect the rights of pregnant adolescents, adolescent mothers and their children and combat discrimination against them;

(f) Take measures to further strengthen the prevention of HIV among adolescents, ensure that children and adolescents with HIV/AIDS are not discriminated against and guarantee their access to education.

H. Standard of living (arts. 18 (3), 26 and 27 (1)–(3))

36. While noting with appreciation the high spending on social protection and welcoming the national plan on drinking water and sanitation, the Committee is deeply concerned about the large number of children living in poverty and the regional disparities in access to water and sanitation facilities and appropriate housing. The Committee urges the State party:

(a) To strengthen measures to end child poverty and ensure the right of all children to an adequate standard of living, including their access to adequate housing, water and sanitation, and paying particular attention to children living in rural areas and urban informal settlements;

(b) To increase budget allocations for social protection programmes affecting children and strengthen their effectiveness, in particular by improving multiagency coordination in the identification and disbursement of grants, expanding coverage of the child grant programme to cover all groups of children in disadvantaged situations and addressing barriers that prevent certain groups of children from acquiring access to social assistance;

(c) To ensure the effective implementation of the sanitation and hygiene strategy by allocating dedicated budget lines and strengthening multisectoral coordination, transparency and accountability mechanisms;

(d) To ensure that measures to combat poverty are compliant with a children's rights-based approach, address the root causes of multidimensional child poverty and inequality and include a particular focus on children in disadvantaged situations, including children with disabilities and children living in rural areas and urban informal settlements, with a view to preventing child labour;

(e) To ensure that children and their families living in poverty receive adequate financial support and free, accessible services without discrimination.

I. Children's rights and the environment (arts. 2, 3, 6, 12, 13, 15, 17, 19, 24 and 26–31)

37. Recalling its general comment No. 26 (2023) on children's rights and the environment, with a special focus on climate change, and taking note of the

environmental protection legislation of the State party, the Committee recommends that the State party:

- (a) Conduct an assessment of the effects of polluted air, water and soil and electromagnetic pollution on children's health as a basis for designing a well-resourced strategy to remedy the situation and prevent similar occurrences in the future and implement the environmental health standards, indicators and definitions set by the World Health Organization;
- (b) Evaluate the impact of pesticides, in particular in Indigenous communities, and take appropriate measures based on the evaluation's findings;
- (c) Monitor the effective compliance with environmental regulations and sanction those responsible for their violation;
- (d) Ensure that children's rights-based approach is integrated into its climate change-related strategies and plans and that they reflect children's views on this matter;
- (e) Increase children's awareness of and preparedness for climate change-related events, in particular by incorporating them into the school curriculum and teacher training programmes;
- (f) Ensure that health professionals receive training in the diagnosis and treatment of the health impacts related to environmental harm;
- (g) Take the necessary adaptation measures in the areas of public services, including access to clean water and housing, in particular in climate change-affected zones.

J. Education, leisure and cultural activities (arts. 28–31)

Education: aims and coverage

38. Welcoming the implementation of the plurilingual education plan from the perspective of Indigenous Peoples, 2022–2023, the Committee recommends that the State party:

- (a) Address the causes of school exclusion, including language policies, to ensure that all children, in particular Indigenous children, children living in poverty, children with disabilities and children living in rural areas, are in school and take measures to address the causes of school dropout;
- (b) Ensure that all children complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education leading to achieving effective learning outcomes;
- (c) Develop gender-sensitive strategies for school retention and reintegration, in particular for adolescent mothers, pregnant girls and those in early unions, ensure that they are supported and assisted in continuing their education in mainstream schools and include educational programmes on human rights and gender equality;
- (d) Take measures to further expand the scholarship programmes that are aimed at supporting children in vulnerable situations;
- (e) Take measures to prevent discrimination, violence and harassment, including cyberbullying, in schools, in particular against pregnant adolescents and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex children and adolescents.

Early childhood development

39. The Committee recommends that the State party:

- (a) Allocate sufficient financial resources for the effective implementation of a national strategy for early childhood development based on a comprehensive and holistic policy of early childhood care and development, paying particular attention to ensuring access to preschool education for children living in poverty, children in rural areas and children with disabilities;

(b) Consider expeditiously adopting the national standards on early childhood care and the qualifications of educators and ensure that educators receive systematic and appropriate in-service training.

Quality of education

40. The Committee recommends that the State party further strengthen the quality of education, including by reforming its school curricula, ensuring the availability of qualified teachers, in particular in rural areas, providing high-quality pre-service and in-service training and ensuring that schools are fully and safely accessible to all.

Inclusive education

41. The Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) Make further investments to increase the percentage of schools that admit students with disabilities;

(b) Take further measures to ensure that all children with disabilities have access to inclusive education in mainstream schools;

(c) Ensure that schools are equipped with trained teachers and accessible infrastructure and teaching materials adapted to the needs of children with disabilities thereby facilitating their individualized support.

Human rights education

42. The Committee recommends that the State party ensure that human rights education and the principles of the Convention are integrated into the mandatory school curriculum and in the training of teachers and education professionals, taking into account the framework of the World Programme for Human Rights Education.

Rest, play, leisure, recreation and cultural and artistic activities

43. Recalling its general comment No. 17 (2013) on the right of the child to rest, leisure, play, recreational activities, cultural life and the arts, the Committee recommends that the State party strengthen its efforts to guarantee the right of the child to rest and leisure and to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to the age of the child and provide children, including those with disabilities and children in marginalized and disadvantaged situations, with safe, accessible, inclusive and smoke-free spaces for play and socialization.

K. Special protection measures (arts. 22, 30, 32, 33, 35, 36, 37 (b)–(d) and 38–40 of the Convention, and the Optional Protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict)

Asylum-seeking, refugee and migrant children

44. Welcoming the high number of recognized refugees from the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, and recalling the joint general comments No. 3 and No. 4 of the Committee on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families/No. 22 and No. 23 of the Committee on the Rights of the Child (2017) on the human rights of children in the context of international migration, the Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) Adopt standard operating procedures and protocols for the asylum and migration authorities to ensure timely effective safeguards for access to the territory and to asylum for those children and their families in need of international protection and to prevent refoulement in a context marked by mixed migration flows;

(b) Ensure that new arrivals have access to information on the asylum procedure, receive assistance and have access to reception facilities and other support or referrals, ensure that asylum claims submitted at the border are handled in

accordance with due process and establish relevant protocols for and provide training on international protection to migration and asylum authorities, the police and other protection actors operating in border areas;

(c) Ensure that migration officers and border officers respect the right of children to seek asylum and the principle of non-refoulement without discrimination and apply an age-sensitive approach that considers the needs of children;

(d) Strengthen child protection mechanisms by providing the authorities with the appropriate technical and material resources to duly respond to cases of unaccompanied or separated children in need of international protection, ensuring that their interventions are carried out in a timely manner and in accordance with the law;

(e) Put in place the regulation that is necessary for the full implementation of Act No. 1938/2002 so that unaccompanied and separated children receive favourable treatment, including family reunification, free legal representation and local integration.

Children belonging to Indigenous groups

45. The Committee is seriously concerned about the following:

(a) Increase of forced evictions and displacement of Indigenous and rural children in recent years;

(b) Contamination of ancestral land and water;

(c) Persisting food insecurity, poverty and vulnerabilities to violence and exploitation among Indigenous children.

46. Recalling its general comment No. 11 (2009) on indigenous children and their rights under the Convention, the Committee urges the State party:

(a) To prevent evictions and displacement of Indigenous peoples, including pastoralists, hunter-gatherers and forest people, guarantee that Indigenous children and adolescents have access to their ancestral lands, as well as to uncontaminated land and water and provide redress to those evicted or displaced from their lands;

(b) To develop a protocol for evictions aligned with the conventions and treaties ratified by the State party;

(c) To consult and cooperate with the Indigenous Peoples concerned, including Indigenous children, in order to obtain their free, prior and informed consent before adopting and implementing legislative or administrative measures that may affect them and provide effective remedies in cases of violations of their rights;

(d) To develop a national action plan to respect, protect and promote the rights of Indigenous children and to eliminate their food insecurity, poverty and vulnerabilities to violence and exploitation, with their full and effective participation;

(e) To take effective measures to promote Indigenous languages, including through strengthening the provision of bilingual education to Indigenous children in their own Indigenous languages and in the official languages of the State party.

Economic exploitation, including child labour

47. Welcoming the national strategy to eradicate child labour and to protect the adolescent work, 2019–2024, the Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) Immediately withdraw all children involved in the worst forms of child labour, especially in rural areas and in domestic labour, and ensure their reintegration into the education and social protection systems, eliminate the practice of *criadazgo* and provide full protection to children who are victims;

(b) Implement Act No. 6285/2016 on forced labour;

(c) Strengthen the harmonization of actions between the various coordination mechanisms at the government and civil society levels to achieve greater results in the eradication of child labour;

(d) **Raise public awareness of child labour, its exploitative character, its consequences and the lack of implementation of relevant laws;**

(e) **Guarantee the comprehensive protection of the rights of children and adolescents through the improvement of labour inspection practices.**

Children in street situations

48. **Drawing attention to its general comment No. 21 (2017) on children in street situations, the Committee recommends that the State party assess the number of children living and/or working in the streets, update studies on the root causes of their situations and strengthen measures to eradicate this situation and provide sufficient resources for the implementation of these measures, ensuring that local governments provide such children with comprehensive protection of their rights.**

Trafficking

49. **The Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Develop a national strategy to combat trafficking in persons;**

(b) **Ensure the effective protection and provision of referral and support services to children who are victims of trafficking;**

(c) **Investigate all cases of trafficking of children, in particular among the Indigenous population, and bring perpetrators to justice;**

(d) **Conduct awareness-raising activities to make both parents and children aware of the dangers of trafficking.**

Administration of child justice

50. **Recalling its general comment No. 24 (2019) on children's rights in the child justice system, and with reference to the global study on children deprived of liberty, the Committee urges the State party to bring its child justice system fully into line with the Convention and other relevant standards. In particular, the Committee urges the State party:**

(a) **To continue the efforts to strengthen restorative mechanisms and non-custodial sanctions for the social insertion of adolescents in conflict with the law, actively promote non-judicial measures, such as diversion and mediation for children alleged of, accused of or recognized as having infringed criminal law, and, wherever possible, the use of non-custodial measures for children, such as probation or community service, and ensure that health and psychosocial services are provided to such children;**

(b) **To ensure that detention is used as a measure of last resort and for the shortest appropriate period of time and is reviewed on a regular basis with a view to its withdrawal;**

(c) **For the few situations where deprivation of liberty is justified as a measure of last resort, to ensure that the children are not detained together with adults, including at police stations, and that detention conditions are compliant with international standards, including with regard to access to education and health services.**

Children in armed conflict, including the implementation of the Optional Protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict

51. **The Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Take measures to ensure that State policies, practices and legislation are compliant with the Optional Protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict, including with reference to the prevention of the recruitment of children and adolescents and practices for the training of the armed forces;**

(b) Provide support for the physical and psychological recovery, rehabilitation and integration into society of children who may have been recruited or used in armed conflicts abroad, upon their entering the State party;

(c) Consider extending extraterritorial jurisdiction for crimes concerning the recruitment and use of children in hostilities;

(d) Explicitly criminalize in criminal law the recruitment, under any circumstances, in the armed forces or non-State armed groups of children under 18 years of age;

(e) Establish mechanisms for the early identification of asylum-seeking children from conflict areas, collect disaggregated data on such children and strengthen the physical and psychological support provided to them.

L. Ratification of international human rights instruments

52. The Committee recommends that the State party, in order to further strengthen the fulfilment of children's rights, consider ratifying the following core human rights instruments, in particular the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

M. Cooperation with regional bodies

53. The Committee recommends that the State party cooperate with the Organization of American States (OAS) on the implementation of the Convention and other human rights instruments, both in the State party and in other OAS member States.

IV. Implementation and reporting

A. Follow-up and dissemination

54. The Committee recommends that the State party take all appropriate measures to ensure that the recommendations contained in the present concluding observations are fully implemented and that a child-friendly version is disseminated to, and made widely accessible for, children, including those in the most disadvantaged situations. The Committee also recommends that the combined fourth to sixth periodic reports, the written replies to the list of issues and the present concluding observations be made widely available in the languages of the country.

B. National mechanism for reporting and follow-up

55. The Committee recommends that the State party strengthen its national mechanism for implementation, reporting and follow-up to ensure that it has the mandate, including an institutional framework and adequate human, technical and financial resources to coordinate and engage with, and prepare reports to, international and regional human rights mechanisms and to coordinate national follow-up to, and the implementation of, treaty obligations and the recommendations and decisions emanating from those mechanisms effectively. The Committee emphasizes that the national mechanism should be adequately and continuously supported by a permanent secretariat with dedicated staff.

C. Next report

56. The Committee will establish and communicate the due date of the combined seventh and eighth periodic reports of the State party in due course, in line with the

envisaged predictable reporting calendar based on an eight-year review cycle, and following the adoption of a list of issues and questions prior to reporting, if applicable, for the State party. The report should be in compliance with the Committee's harmonized treaty-specific reporting guidelines⁴ and should not exceed 21,200 words.⁵ In the event that a report exceeding the established word limit is submitted, the State party will be asked to shorten the report. If the State party is not in a position to review and resubmit the report, translation thereof for the purposes of consideration by the Committee cannot be guaranteed.

⁴ [CRC/C/58/Rev.3](#).

⁵ General Assembly resolution 68/268, para. 16.