



United Nations

Report of the Committee on the Rights of the Child

**Ninetieth session
(3 May–3 June 2022)**

**Ninety-first session
(29 August–23 September 2022)**

**Ninety-second session
(16 January–3 February 2023)**

**Ninety-third session
(8–26 May 2023)**

**Ninety-fourth session
(4–22 September 2023)**

**Ninety-fifth session
(15 January–2 February 2024)**

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Note

Symbols of United Nations documents are composed of letters combined with figures. Mention of such a symbol indicates a reference to a United Nations document.

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Contents

<i>Chapter</i>	<i>Page</i>
I. Organizational and other matters	1
A. States parties to the Convention.....	1
B. Sessions of the Committee.....	1
C. Membership and officers of the Committee	1
D. Adoption of the report	2
II. Reports submitted by States parties under article 44 of the Convention, article 8 of the Optional Protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict and article 12 of the Optional Protocol on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography	2
A. Submission of reports	2
B. Consideration of reports.....	2
C. Progress achieved: trends and challenges in the implementation process	5
III. Activities carried out under the Optional Protocol on a communications procedure	8
A. Action taken by the Committee in respect of issues arising under article 5 of the Optional Protocol.....	9
B. Action taken by the Committee in respect of issues arising under article 13 of the Optional Protocol.....	10
IV. Overview of the other activities of the Committee.....	11
A. Decisions adopted by the Committee	11
B. Methods of work.....	12
C. International cooperation and solidarity for the implementation of the Convention	14
D. General thematic discussions.....	18
Annex	
Membership of the Committee on the Rights of the Child.....	19

I. Organizational and other matters

A. States parties to the Convention

1. As at 2 February 2024, the closing date of the ninety-fifth session of the Committee on the Rights of the Child, there were 196 States parties to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, making it the most widely ratified human rights instrument, with only one ratification left to reach universal ratification, namely, that of the United States of America. An updated list of States that have signed, ratified or acceded to the Convention may be consulted at <http://treaties.un.org>.

2. As at the same date, the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict had been ratified or acceded to by 173 States parties, 1 more than at the time of submission of the previous report to the General Assembly (A/77/41), and the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography had been ratified or acceded to by 178 States parties, 1 more than at the time of the previous report.

3. The Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on a communications procedure, as at 2 February 2024, had been ratified or acceded to by 51 States, 3 more than at the time of submission of the previous report to the General Assembly. An updated list of States that have signed, ratified or acceded to the three Optional Protocols may be consulted at <http://treaties.un.org>.

B. Sessions of the Committee

4. The Committee held six sessions during the reporting period: the ninetieth session (3 May–3 June 2022); the ninety-first session (29 August–23 September 2022); the ninety-second session (16 January–3 February 2023); the ninety-third session (8–26 May 2023); the ninety-fourth session (4–22 September 2023); and the ninety-fifth session (15 January–2 February 2024).

5. Given that the duration of the eighty-ninth session, in January 2022, was reduced from four to two weeks, owing to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, the Committee decided to recover the two lost weeks during the following sessions. Therefore, the ninetieth and ninety-first sessions were four weeks long, instead of the usual three-week duration. On an exceptional basis, in May 2023, the Committee held the pre-sessional working group meeting for the ninety-fifth session before the session being held that month, to allow for the group of members drafting general comment No. 26 (2023) on children's rights and the environment, with a special focus on climate change, to complete their work before the ninety-third session started.

6. Subsequent to each session, the Committee makes public all concluding observations adopted, as well as any decisions and recommendations, including those emanating from a day of general discussion, and general comments adopted.

C. Membership and officers of the Committee

7. From the ninetieth to the ninety-second session, the Committee retained the same members and officers noted in its previous report to the General Assembly, with Otani Mikiko serving as Chair (see A/77/41, annex I).

8. In accordance with article 43 of the Convention, the nineteenth meeting of States parties to the Convention was convened on 6 June 2022 at United Nations Headquarters. The following nine members of the Committee were elected or re-elected for a term of four years beginning on 1 March 2023: Suzanne Aho, Aïssatou Alassane Moulaye, Thuwayba Al Barwani, Hynd Ayoubi Idrissi, Mary Beloff, Rosaria Correa, Bragi Gudbrandsson, Philip Jaffé and Faith Marshall-Harris.

9. The list of the members of the Committee, with an indication of their term of office, appears in annex I to the present report. Annex I also indicates the officers elected at the ninety-third session of the Committee, including the new Chair, Ann Marie Skelton.

D. Adoption of the report

10. At its 2816th meeting, held on 24 May 2024, the Committee unanimously adopted its biennial report to the General Assembly, covering its activities between the end of the eighty-ninth session and the end of the ninety-fifth session.

II. Reports submitted by States parties under article 44 of the Convention, article 8 of the Optional Protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict and article 12 of the Optional Protocol on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography

A. Submission of reports

11. The status of the submission of reports and the adoption of related concluding observations may be found at http://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/TreatyBodyExternal/Countries.aspx.

12. During the reporting period, the Committee received 39 new reports: 32 periodic reports under the Convention, of which 12 were submitted under the simplified reporting procedure; 2 initial reports under the Optional Protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict; and 5 initial reports under the Optional Protocol on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography. In total, the Committee has received 661 reports pursuant to article 44 of the Convention, including 202 initial and 459 periodic reports, as well as 122 initial reports and 3 periodic reports under the Optional Protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict and 125 initial reports and 3 periodic reports under the Optional Protocol on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography. As at 2 February 2024, the backlog of reports to be considered by the Committee stood at 69 reports: 50 under the Convention, 7 under the Optional Protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict and 12 under the Optional Protocol on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography.

B. Consideration of reports

13. During the period under review, the Committee considered a total of 50 reports: 2 initial and 43 periodic reports under the Convention, 3 reports under the Optional Protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict and 2 reports under the Optional Protocol on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography.

14. The Committee has now considered the initial reports of all States parties to the Convention.

15. The following table indicates, by session, the reports of States parties considered by the Committee during the period covered by the present report, including their respective document symbols and the document symbol of the concluding observations adopted. State party reports and the Committee's concluding observations thereon may be found on the Official Document System (<http://documents.un.org>).

	<i>State party report</i>	<i>Concluding observations</i>
Ninetieth session		
<i>Convention on the Rights of the Child</i>		
Cambodia	CRC/C/KHM/4-6	CRC/C/KHM/CO/4-6
Canada	CRC/C/CAN/5-6	CRC/C/CAN/CO/5-6
Chile	CRC/C/CHL/6-7	CRC/C/CHL/CO/6-7
Cuba	CRC/C/CUB/3-6	CRC/C/CUB/CO/3-6
Cyprus	CRC/C/CYP/5-6	CRC/C/CYP/CO/5-6
Djibouti	CRC/C/DJI/3-5	CRC/C/DJI/CO/3-5
Greece	CRC/C/GRC/4-6	CRC/C/GRC/CO/4-6
Iceland	CRC/C/ISL/5-6	CRC/C/ISL/CO/5-6
Kiribati	CRC/C/KIR/2-4	CRC/C/KIR/CO/2-4
Somalia	CRC/C/SOM/1	CRC/C/SOM/CO/1
Zambia	CRC/C/ZMB/5-7	CRC/C/ZMB/CO/5-7
Ninety-first session		
<i>Convention on the Rights of the Child</i>		
Germany	CRC/C/DEU/5-6	CRC/C/DEU/CO/5-6
Kuwait	CRC/C/KWT/3-6	CRC/C/KWT/CO/3-6
North Macedonia	CRC/C/MKD/3-6	CRC/C/MKD/CO/3-6
Philippines	CRC/C/PHL/5-6	CRC/C/PHL/CO/5-6
South Sudan	CRC/C/SSD/1	CRC/C/SSD/CO/1
Ukraine	CRC/C/UKR/5-6	CRC/C/UKR/CO/5-6
Uzbekistan	CRC/C/UZB/5	CRC/C/UZB/CO/5
Viet Nam	CRC/C/VNM/5-6	CRC/C/VNM/CO/5-6
Ninety-second session		
<i>Convention on the Rights of the Child</i>		
Azerbaijan	CRC/C/AZE/5-6	CRC/C/AZE/CO/5-6
Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	CRC/C/BOL/5-6	CRC/C/BOL/CO/5-6
Ireland	CRC/C/IRL/5-6	CRC/C/IRL/CO/5-6
Mauritius	CRC/C/MUS/6-7	CRC/C/MUS/CO/6-7
New Zealand	CRC/C/NZL/6	CRC/C/NZL/CO/6
Oman	CRC/C/OMN/5-6	CRC/C/OMN/CO/5-6
Sweden	CRC/C/SWE/6-7	CRC/C/SWE/CO/6-7
Ninety-third session		
<i>Convention on the Rights of the Child</i>		
Finland	CRC/C/FIN/5-6	CRC/C/FIN/CO/5-6
France	CRC/C/FRA/6-7	CRC/C/FRA/CO/6-7

	<i>State party report</i>	<i>Concluding observations</i>
Jordan	CRC/C/JOR/6	CRC/C/JOR/CO/6
Sao Tome and Principe	CRC/C/STP/5-6	CRC/C/STP/CO/5-6
Türkiye	CRC/C/TUR/4-5	CRC/C/TUR/CO/4-5
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	CRC/C/GBR/6-7	CRC/C/GBR/CO/6-7
<i>Optional Protocol on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography</i>		
Finland	CRC/C/OPSC/FIN/1	CRC/C/OPSC/FIN/CO/1
Ninety-fourth session		
<i>Convention on the Rights of the Child</i>		
Albania	CRC/C/ALB/5-6	CRC/C/ALB/CO/5-6
Andorra	CRC/C/AND/3-5	CRC/C/AND/CO/3-5
Dominican Republic	CRC/C/DOM/6	CRC/C/DOM/CO/6
Kyrgyzstan	CRC/C/KGZ/5-6	CRC/C/KGZ/CO/5-6
Liechtenstein	CRC/C/LIE/3-4	CRC/C/LIE/CO/3-4
Togo	CRC/C/TGO/5-6	CRC/C/TGO/CO/5-6
<i>Optional Protocol on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography</i>		
Liechtenstein	CRC/C/OPSC/LIE/1	CRC/C/OPSC/LIE/CO/1
<i>Optional Protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict</i>		
Togo	CRC/C/OPAC/TGO/1	CRC/C/OPAC/TGO/CO/1
Ninety-fifth session		
<i>Convention on the Rights of the Child</i>		
Bulgaria	CRC/C/BGR/6-7	CRC/C/BGR/CO/6-7
Congo	CRC/C/COG/5-6	CRC/C/COG/CO/5-6
Lithuania	CRC/C/LTU/5-6	CRC/C/LTU/CO/5-6
Russian Federation	CRC/C/RUS/6-7	CRC/C/RUS/CO/6-7
Senegal	CRC/C/SEN/6-7	CRC/C/SEN/CO/6-7
South Africa	CRC/C/ZAF/3-6	CRC/C/ZAF/CO/3-6
<i>Optional Protocol on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography</i>		
Senegal	CRC/C/OPSC/SEN/1	CRC/C/OPSC/SEN/CO/1
<i>Optional Protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict</i>		
Senegal	CRC/C/OPAC/SEN/1	CRC/C/OPAC/SEN/CO/1

16. The Government of Cuba sent its comments on the Committee's concluding observations on the combined third to sixth periodic reports of the State party ([CRC/C/CUB/CO/3-6](#)) on 30 December 2022. The Government of the Russian Federation sent its comments on the Committee's concluding observations on the combined sixth and seventh periodic reports of the State party ([CRC/C/RUS/CO/6-7](#)) on 19 February 2024.

C. Progress achieved: trends and challenges in the implementation process

17. In accordance with its practice regarding its biennial reports, in the present section, the Committee assesses achievements and challenges, as well as current trends, in children's rights. In the present report, the Committee has dedicated a subsection to children's rights and armed conflict.

1. Progress achieved in general

18. With the review of the report of Somalia, at the ninetieth session, and the report of South Sudan, at the ninety-first session, the Committee has now considered the initial reports of all States parties to the Convention.

19. During the period under review, the Committee adopted decisions on 45 individual communications under article 5 of the Optional Protocol on a communications procedure. It also adopted, at its ninety-fifth session, its second inquiry report under article 13 of the same Optional Protocol.

20. At its ninety-third session, the Committee adopted general comment No. 26 (2023) on children's rights and the environment, with a special focus on climate change. The theme was selected in recognition of the disproportionate, cumulative and long-term effects of climate change on children.¹ Children in every part of the world are suffering from the negative effects of environmental degradation and climate change, and they are calling for urgent and decisive measures to tackle global environmental harm. The momentum for the general comment came from the efforts of children themselves to draw attention to the environmental crises. There was an unprecedented level of participation of children in the Committee's development of the general comment. Over 16,000 children were consulted in the drafting process, including very young children (see para. 57 below).

21. The Committee welcomed the Guidance Note of the Secretary-General on Child Rights Mainstreaming, in which he underscored the urgent need for systematic attention to children's rights in order for the United Nations to be fully inclusive and able to deliver on its mandate across all pillars, including upholding all rights of all people, achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and ensuring peace and security. Following the adoption of the Guidance Note, in July 2023, the Committee decided to create a working group on the mainstreaming of children's rights to promote cooperation on related issues across the United Nations system.

22. Intersessionally, the Bureau of the Committee issued decisions and statements and sent correspondence. The Committee members were personally engaged in numerous activities, including participating in several meetings, conferences, seminars, lectures and courses, as well as working intersessionally on individual communications, inquiries and general comments. In addition, many Committee members were involved in the follow-up to the concluding observations of the Committee through visits to a number of countries, upon the invitation of States, civil society organizations and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). Such work remains indispensable to guaranteeing the better application of the Convention and the Optional Protocols thereto.

2. Children's rights and armed conflict

23. The reporting period was marked by increasing conflicts and serious violations of children's rights in conflict settings. One child in every five is still living in a conflict zone. Close to half a billion children are currently living in conflict zones around the world, including in Afghanistan, Burkina Faso, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Haiti, Mali, Myanmar, the Niger, Somalia, the Sudan, the Syrian Arab Republic, Ukraine and Yemen, which is double the number from 1990. Children have been killed, injured and abused, lost family members and friends, been forcibly displaced, been recruited and used by armed forces and armed groups, been deprived of liberty and lost education, and they are suffering

¹ Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, Sixth Assessment Report, Synthesis Report, figure SPM.1. Available from <https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/syr/figures/summary-for-policymakers/figure-spm-1/>.

from trauma. In many places, armed conflicts have coincided with other devastating crises, such as disease outbreaks, food insecurity and natural disasters, which again have a disproportionate impact on children. In 2022 alone, the highest-ever number of grave violations against children was verified by the United Nations, for killing and maiming, recruitment and use, abduction, sexual violence, attacks on schools and hospitals and denial of humanitarian access. The number of children who are victims of these grave human rights violations rose exponentially in the escalation of conflicts, in particular, in Myanmar, the Sudan and Gaza.

24. The Committee reviewed the reports of several States parties in conflict or post-conflict situations, examined the wide range of children's rights affected by the conflicts, both under the Convention and the Optional Protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict, and made detailed specific recommendations concerning children in armed conflict in its concluding observations on those reports.

25. To address the long-lasting and increasingly serious concerns about children affected by armed conflict, the Committee took several initiatives, including the establishment of a working group on children's rights in emergencies and undertaking enhanced cooperation with the relevant United Nations mandate holders, bodies and other organizations. Joint activities conducted with the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict during the reporting period included the event to commemorate the twentieth anniversary of the entry into force of the Optional Protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict, in March 2022, the event on taking a children's rights approach to children and armed conflict by strengthening children's participation and accountability, in March 2023, and the issuance of joint statements, together with other United Nations bodies, in October 2022, on upholding children's rights in conflict situations, and in March 2023, on ensuring children's rights while implementing counter-terrorism and national security measures. The Committee also held informal meetings with the human rights monitoring mission in Ukraine (ninetieth session), the International Committee of the Red Cross (ninetieth session), the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict (ninety-first session), the Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and Israel (intersessionally) and the Independent International Commission of Inquiry for the Syrian Arab Republic (ninety-second session).

26. The Committee issued statements and joint statements specifically focused on children in conflict in Ukraine (March 2022 and October 2022), Myanmar (June 2022), Haiti (November 2022), the Syrian Arab Republic (March 2023), the Sudan (March 2024) and Gaza (October 2023 and February 2024). The Committee called for accountability for grave violations, in its statement to mark Protection of Civilians Week (May 2023) and for ending the killing of children in armed conflict, in its statement to mark World Children's Day (November 2023). The Committee also contributed to consultations for the drafting process of the new policy on children of the Office of the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court.

3. Trends and challenges

27. The Committee has noted increased awareness among States of the importance of children's participation in important issues facing them in the world today, and this was notable in the inclusion of children in delegations to the twenty-eighth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, held in December 2023 in Dubai, United Arab Emirates. However, the need to ensure that children are included in decisions that affect them in an expansive manner needs more elaboration. The Committee has followed the progress towards the Summit of the Future and has proposed that there should be more inclusion of children and increased awareness of children's rights in the finalization of the Pact for the Future and the global digital compact. The Summit should integrate a children's rights perspective into all discussions and decisions, including on the climate crisis, peace and security, the global digital compact and future generations.

28. Children deserve special attention and a seat at the table, as important partners and stakeholders today to build peaceful, just and inclusive societies and to ensure the lasting

protection of the planet, as well as the most significant future decision makers in the determination to preserve the planet for future generations. There cannot be sustainable development or peace and security until each and every child has their rights fulfilled, respected and protected.

29. Nevertheless, children continue to be faced with major challenges. The effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, and the intersecting political, economic and environmental crises, continued to have a negative impact on children's rights globally during the period under review. In the past few years, there have been notable setbacks concerning most children's rights, including in the areas of health, education, protection from violence and special protection measures.

30. The displacement of children reached an all-time high during the period under review, with 44 million children living in situations of forced displacement, a large proportion of which has been caused by war. This amounts to a doubling of the number of children being forced to leave their homes over the past decade. While armed conflict is a major cause, extreme weather events also contribute to the phenomenon. Many children live in situations of displacement for several years of their childhoods, missing out on routine vaccinations, health care and education. Migration continues to be an area in which there are many children's rights violations, and the Committee has engaged with States parties to urge them to take a children's rights-based approach to issues such as age determination, best interests assessments in asylum proceedings, legal representation and rights of appeal and access to health, education and social services.

31. Poverty and inequality remain a root cause of the challenges that children face in their daily lives. One in six of the world's children live in extreme poverty. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, many States were on track to reduce the number of children living below the international poverty line. However, the pandemic has caused serious setbacks, and Sustainable Development Goal 1, to end poverty in all its forms everywhere, by 2030, now seems unlikely to be met, given the current trajectory. Poverty levels are highest in sub-Saharan Africa, where 40 per cent of children live in extreme poverty. The Committee has also noted that, even in stable, more wealthy economies, the number of children living in poverty is increasing.

32. Concerning children's rights and the digital environment, the Committee continues to build on the work of its general comment No. 25 (2021) on children's rights in relation to the digital environment, which has also been taken note of in a resolution of the General Assembly.² The Committee has recently been confronting the issue of the impact of artificial intelligence on children and has been liaising with the International Telecommunication Union in this regard.

33. The Committee observes with great concern a clear trend in all regions of the world and in intergovernmental forums, such as the Human Rights Council. Children's status as rights holders is being questioned, under the guise of cultural, religious and patriarchal traditions, such as "family values". Children's agency, autonomy and right to participation are subjugated to the dominance of parental guidance. The Committee recognizes the importance of the family, as enshrined in the preamble to the Convention, which recognizes the family as the natural environment for the growth and well-being of children, where they should grow up in an atmosphere of happiness, love and understanding. However, this should not be used as an argument that detracts from the recognition of children as subjects of rights independently from their parents. The attempts to weaken the position of children as rights holders has been reflected in several considerations of the reports of States parties to the Convention during the period of review. This trend has been reflected in the legislative and policy actions in many States parties, which is of serious concern to the Committee, as it has the potential to undermine the progress already achieved in the implementation of many of the children's rights set out in the Convention.

² See General Assembly resolution 78/187.

34. In order to clarify its position, the Committee adopted a statement on article 5 of the Convention,³ with the aim of interpreting how article 5 strikes a balance between the rights of the child and the responsibilities, rights and duties of parents, as well as the State's obligation to strengthen the family in order to ensure children's exercise of their rights. The Committee stresses that article 5 of the Convention affirms that all children have a right to exercise their rights, irrespective of their age, and that, as they grow, develop and mature, they become entitled to an increasing level of responsibility, agency and autonomy in the exercise of those rights. Children's evolving capacities must be recognized and respected by those adults who exercise influence and control over children's lives.

35. Children have been expressing their concerns about issues, such as climate change, lack of services and a range of rights violations, including through protest. The Committee has engaged with States parties during the reviews of their reports, urging them to provide space for children's freedom of expression and to facilitate the right of children to safe, peaceful assembly, and has collaborated with UNICEF in the drafting of a paper setting out guidance for the policing of protests involving children.⁴ The Committee has noted with concern, during its dialogues with States parties, that there is shrinking space for children human rights defenders and for those advocating with or on behalf of children.

36. The dialogues with States parties have also revealed that there has been backsliding in the area of access to sexual and reproductive health and rights and sexual and reproductive education, with girls being particularly affected. Some States have regressed in the areas of both policy and practice, leaving girls more vulnerable to sexual abuse and exploitation and to early pregnancy. Although the fight against the harmful practice of female genital mutilation has resulted in many countries legally banning the harmful practice, achieving eradication takes decades. It is of serious concern that, in some countries, the momentum has stagnated – or even regressed.

37. At the Committee level, the backlog of reports received by the Committee due to be reviewed increased exponentially, because reviews had to be postponed owing to the pandemic. As at 2 February 2024, the number of reports due to be reviewed stood at 69. When a report is received by the Committee, it therefore takes almost three years before being reviewed. More resources are needed to address the backlog of both reports and individual communications.

38. In addition, the Committee is very concerned about the continuing challenges concerning virtual meetings with stakeholders during the pre-sessional working groups, which have a negative impact on the participation of civil society organizations and children. The Division of Conference Management, upon instruction from the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management, suddenly suspended all virtual and hybrid meetings during the ninety-fifth session, because of a lack of a mandate from the General Assembly to continue to provide hybrid services. The Committee calls upon Member States to provide such a mandate to ensure the continuation of hybrid services.

III. Activities carried out under the Optional Protocol on a communications procedure

39. Article 16 of the Optional Protocol on a communications procedure provides that the Committee is to include in its report submitted every two years to the General Assembly a summary of its activities carried out under the Optional Protocol.

³ See <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/hrbodies/crc/statements/CRC-Article-5-statement.pdf>.

⁴ See <https://www.unicef.org/media/144876/file/%20Free%20and%20safe%20to%20protest%20:%20Policing%20assemblies%20involving%20children%20.pdf>.

A. Action taken by the Committee in respect of issues arising under article 5 of the Optional Protocol

40. During the reporting period, the Committee received over 200 individual communications under article 5 of the Optional Protocol, of which 72 were registered, bringing the total number of registered cases to 240 as at 2 February 2024. As at the same date, there were 92 cases still pending examination by the Committee, an increase from 83 cases pending as at the end of the previous reporting period.

41. The Committee adopted decisions in the following cases during the reporting period: *J.M. v. Chile* (CRC/C/90/D/121/2020); *M.S.B. v. Spain* (CRC/C/90/D/20/2017); *M.D.B. v. Spain* (CRC/C/90/D/42/2018); *N.B. v. Georgia* (CRC/C/90/D/84/2019); *A.R.A. et al. v. Slovakia* (CRC/C/90/D/93/2019); *S.M.F. v. Denmark* (CRC/C/90/D/96/2019); *S.K. v. Denmark* (CRC/C/90/D/99/2019); *W.W. and S.W. v. Ireland* (CRC/C/91/D/94/2019); *A.S. v. Denmark* (CRC/C/91/D/85/2019); *M.A.M. v. Switzerland* (CRC/C/91/D/141/2021); *A.B.A. et al. v. Spain* (CRC/C/91/D/114/2020-CRC/C/91/D/116/2020-CRC/C/91/D/117/2020-CRC/C/91/D/118/2020); *S.N. et al. v. Finland* (CRC/C/91/D/100/2019); *M.Z. v. Spain* (CRC/C/92/D/147/2021); *L.H.C. v. Spain* (CRC/C/92/D/134/2020); *S.E.M.A. v. France* (CRC/C/92/D/130/2020); *C.A.K.O. v. Chile* (CRC/C/92/D/129/2020); *W.F. et al. v. Switzerland* (CRC/C/92/D/126/2020); *K.K. v. Switzerland* (CRC/C/92/D/110/2020); *M.M. v. Switzerland* (CRC/C/92/D/102/2019); *Z.T. et al. v. Switzerland* (CRC/C/92/D/101/2019); *J.R.P. et al. v. Chile* (CRC/C/93/D/91/2019); *U.M. et al. v. Finland* (CRC/C/93/D/194/2022); *S.S.S. v. Switzerland* (CRC/C/93/D/192/2022); *S.F.W.F. v. Ireland* (CRC/C/93/D/158/2021); *S.H.K. v. Denmark* (CRC/C/93/D/140/2021); *B.J. and P.J. v. Czechia* (CRC/C/93/D/139/2021); *H.F. v. Luxembourg* (CRC/C/93/D/138/2021); *Camila v. Peru* (CRC/C/93/D/136/2021); *J.N.E.A. and L.R.E.A. v. Spain* (CRC/C/93/D/133/2020); *I.D. v. Switzerland* (CRC/C/93/D/128/2020); *D.E.P. v. Argentina* (CRC/C/94/D/89/2019); *S.A.J. and S.A.J. v. Switzerland* (CRC/C/94/D/181/2022); *C.C.O.U. et al. v. Denmark* (CRC/C/94/D/145/2021); *F.R.B. v. Spain* (CRC/C/94/D/142/2021); *M.F. v. Switzerland* (CRC/C/94/D/125/2020); *A.C.R.B. et al. v. Switzerland* (CRC/C/94/D/120/2020); *Y.K.S. v. Türkiye* (CRC/C/95/D/212/2023); *R.K. v. Switzerland* (CRC/C/95/D/211/2023); *E.L. v. Switzerland* (CRC/C/95/D/210/2023); *M.A. and Z.A. v. Finland* (CRC/C/95/D/206/2022); *B.M. et al. v. Finland* (CRC/C/95/D/199/2022); *B.W. v. Argentina* (CRC/C/95/D/190/2022); *S.J. v. Spain* (CRC/C/95/D/165/2021); *E.P. et al. v. Bosnia and Herzegovina* (CRC/C/95/D/124/2020); *C.S.D. v. Argentina* (CRC/C/95/D/123/2020); and *G.G.P. v. Paraguay* (CRC/C/95/D/119/2020).

42. All the decisions were adopted by consensus. They are available from the Official Document System, the treaty body database⁵ and the jurisprudence database.⁶

43. The Committee found violations of the Convention in 14 of those 45 cases: 3 against Denmark; 2 against Spain; 1 against Argentina; 1 against Chile; 1 against Czechia; 1 against France; 1 against Finland; 1 against Georgia; 1 against Paraguay; and 1 against Peru. It found no violations of the Convention in three cases: two against Switzerland; and one against Luxembourg. It declared seven cases inadmissible: two against Chile; one against Argentina; one against Bosnia and Herzegovina; one against Ireland; one against Spain; and one against Switzerland. It discontinued consideration of 21 cases: 8 against Switzerland; 5 against Spain; 2 against Finland; 2 against Denmark; 1 against Argentina; 1 against Ireland; 1 against Slovakia; and 1 against Türkiye. Most of those cases were discontinued because of a satisfactory outcome, namely, the States parties concerned put an end to the alleged violations. As a result, the objects of the communications became moot. Cases considered during the reporting period related to the following issues: non refoulement; education; international abduction of children; the institutionalization of children; the child justice system; the repatriation of children from refugee camps; reproductive rights; corporal punishment; and adequate standard of living. The cases considered concerned a wider range of States parties, from Europe and Latin America, than in the previous reporting period.

⁵ See https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/TreatyBodyExternal/TBSearch.aspx.

⁶ See <https://juris.ohchr.org>.

44. In the framework of the follow-up procedure established under article 11 of the Optional Protocol and rule 28 of the rules of procedure under the Optional Protocol, at its ninetieth session, the Committee assessed the measures taken to implement the Views and recommendations concerning six individual communications submitted under the Optional Protocol against Spain, one against Finland and one against Switzerland. The Committee decided to maintain the follow-up dialogue open for all eight cases and to request a meeting with the States parties concerned in order to discuss the prompt implementation of the Committee's Views. At its ninety-second session, the Committee assessed the measures taken to implement the Views and recommendations concerning two cases against Denmark, one case against France, one case against Paraguay and one case against Switzerland. The Committee decided to close the follow-up dialogue for one case, *C.R. v. Paraguay* (CRC/C/83/D/30/2017), with an A assessment (compliance) and to maintain the follow-up dialogue open in the other four cases. At its ninety-fifth session, the Committee assessed the measures taken to implement the Views and recommendations adopted under the Optional Protocol concerning one case against Belgium, two cases against Denmark, one case against Georgia and one case against Finland. The Committee decided to close the follow-up dialogue for four cases: *A.B. v. Finland* (CRC/C/86/D/51/2018), with a B assessment (partial compliance); *E.H. et al. v. Belgium* (CRC/C/89/D/55/2018), with an A assessment; *S.M.F. v. Denmark* (CRC/C/90/D/96/2019), with an A assessment; and *S.K. v. Denmark* (CRC/C/90/D/99/2019), with an A assessment. It decided to maintain the follow-up dialogue for the other case. The Committee is satisfied at the generally high level of compliance by States parties with its Views and recommendations.

45. At its ninetieth session, with the support of Germany, Slovenia, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and Child Rights Connect, the Committee held an informal meeting with States parties, and including national human rights institutions and parliamentarians, aimed at sharing recent jurisprudence and procedural developments, with a view to strengthening the collaboration between the Committee and States parties and promoting the ratification of the Optional Protocol.

B. Action taken by the Committee in respect of issues arising under article 13 of the Optional Protocol

46. During the reporting period, the Committee received four requests to open an inquiry. The Committee dismissed three of those requests, as the States concerned were not parties to the Optional Protocol. In relation to a submission received on 4 March 2022, and registered as No. 2022/1, the Committee requested additional information from the source of the information. At its ninety-first session, the Committee decided not to open an inquiry.

47. With regard to request No. 2020/1 (A/77/41, para. 52), on 28 July 2022, the State party denied the Committee's request to visit the State party. In the absence of the consent from the State party, the Committee decided to proceed with the inquiry with the technological means available and therefore conducted an inquiry through videoconferencing, which took place over the course of the period from 27 October 2022 to 28 February 2023 and included meetings held virtually with government officials from the State party. At its ninety-fifth session, the Committee adopted its report on the inquiry No. 2020/1, finding that a grave violation had occurred.

48. In relation to request No. 2020/2 (Ibid., para. 53), on 20 April 2022, the State party agreed to a visit from the Committee and provided the name of a government focal point. The visit to the State party has since been postponed, including owing to the United Nations liquidity crisis in relation to the United Nations regular budget.

49. In relation to request No. 2020/3 (Ibid., para. 54), on 18 March 2022, the State party was informed of the Committee's decision to launch an inquiry, which had been adopted at its eighty-ninth session. On 16 March 2023, the designated members sent additional questions to the State party. On 3 May 2023, the State party provided its observations. On 30 August 2023, the State party agreed to a visit from the Committee. The Committee visited the State party from 16 to 20 October 2023. The report on the findings of the Committee will be adopted at an upcoming session.

50. With regard to request No. 2021/1 (Ibid., para. 55), at its ninety-first session, the Committee decided to open an inquiry and sent a request to the State party to allow for the Committee to visit the State party and for the name of the government focal point. On 12 December 2022, the State party agreed to the visit, but it did not provide the name of the focal point. In the absence of a further response from the State party, despite numerous reminders, at its ninety-fifth session, the Committee decided to inform the State party of its decision to proceed with the inquiry, even in the absence of a response or cooperation from the State party.

51. At its ninety-second session, the Committee decided to set up a working group on inquiries.

IV. Overview of the other activities of the Committee

A. Decisions adopted by the Committee

52. During the reporting period, the Committee adopted the following four decisions:

Decision No. 16

At its 2660th meeting, on 19 September 2022, the Committee decided to integrate days of general discussion into the process of developing general comments. The working group on working methods will develop a proposal with further details of the process in this regard.

Decision No. 17

Simplified reporting procedure for reports under the Optional Protocol on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography and the Optional Protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict

At its 2695th meeting, on 2 February 2023, the Committee decided that the simplified reporting procedure would apply for reports submitted under the Optional Protocol on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography and the Optional Protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict, unless a State party opts out.

Decision No. 18

Implementation of the simplified reporting procedure for reports to the Committee

At its 2695th meeting, on 2 February 2023, the Committee, with reference to its decisions No. 15 and No. 17, decided that the simplified reporting procedure would be the standard reporting procedure for periodic reports submitted by States parties under the Convention on the Rights of the Child and for reports under the Optional Protocol on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography and the Optional Protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict, as from 1 January 2024. States parties should inform the Secretariat if they wish to opt out by 30 September 2023.

Decision No. 19

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

At its 2756th meeting, on 22 September 2023, in follow-up to the adoption of general comment No. 26 (2023) on children's rights and the environment, with a special focus on climate change, the Committee decided to create a new cluster, entitled Children's rights and the environment, to be used in the dialogue with States parties and in the Committee's concluding observations.

B. Methods of work

1. Rules of procedure and working methods

53. At its ninety-second and ninety-fifth sessions, the Committee revised its working methods for dealing with individual communications received under the Optional Protocol on a communications procedure.

54. On 8 February 2024, the Committee decided to draft intersessionally a guidance note on the work to be done to revise the Committee's rules of procedure, with a view to making a proposal to the Committee to revise the rules of procedures under the Convention and to make recommendations to the working group on communications regarding the rules of procedure on communications. The process is intended to ensure more clarity and transparency and to fill gaps. It is also aimed at supporting the process of strengthening and harmonizing the United Nations treaty body system, so that the regulations of equivalent bodies will be taken into consideration.

55. With regard to strengthening the treaty body system, at its ninety-second session, the Committee decided to appoint two focal points on the harmonization of the working methods of the treaty bodies, in accordance with the conclusions of the thirty-fourth meeting of the Chairs of the treaty bodies. At its ninety-fifth session, the Committee decided to start using a new structure for dialogues and concluding observations, including changes to headings and clusters. The main changes include the introduction of three new clusters, namely, access to justice, rights of the child and the environment and standard of living. In addition, the Committee decided to integrate the follow-up information on the implementation of the Optional Protocol on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography and of the Optional Protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict into the clusters of, respectively, violence against children and special protection measures.

56. At the ninety-third session, the Committee and the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women carried out back-to-back reviews of the reports of Sao Tome and Principe. While the two reviews were held separately, the Committees decided to formulate joint concerns and recommendations, specifically in relation to the following issues affecting the rights of girls: (a) gender stereotypes against women and girls; (b) gender-based violence against women and girls; (c) harmful practices; (d) school dropout among girls; and (e) early pregnancy among and the health of adolescent girls. The back-to-back reviews required considerable coordination intersessionally and during the session between the two secretariats and the Committees' respective country task forces. At its ninety-fourth session, the Committee decided to undertake a second back-to-back review with the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, of the reports of Estonia, in May 2024.

2. General comments

57. At its ninety-third session, the Committee adopted general comment No. 26 (2023) on children's rights and the environment, with a special focus on climate change. For this general comment, the Committee received more than 170 written submissions from States, United Nations entities, national human rights institutions, civil society, children's organizations and experts, and drew from expert thematic workshops and regional consultations in Asia and South America. In addition, a diverse and dedicated children's advisory team, comprising 12 advisors of between 11 and 17 years of age, supported the consultation process undertaken for the general comment, with 16,331 contributions from children, from 121 countries, through online surveys, focus groups and in-person national and regional consultations.

58. At its ninety-fourth session, on 18 September 2023, the Committee held an event to launch the general comment, at the Palais des Nations, with the participation of the children's advisory team for the general comment, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (video message), representatives of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and UNICEF (video message) and other stakeholders. The Committee also organized, jointly with Terre des Hommes and the City of Geneva, a tree-planting ceremony at a local school to celebrate the launch of the general comment.

59. At its ninety-fifth session, the Committee began work on its general comment on children's rights to access to justice and effective remedies. The concept note and the details of how to participate in the process may be found on the Committee's web page.⁷

3. Informal meetings with States

60. The Committee met with States at its ninety-second and ninety-fifth sessions. On 2 February 2023, the Committee held its fourteenth informal meeting with States⁸ at the Palais des Nations, in a hybrid format, with representatives of nearly 50 States attending, in person and/or virtually. The Chair and members of the Committee made presentations on a range of issues, including the Committee's draft general comment on children's rights and the environment, the participation of children and the simplified reporting procedure. Six States took the floor in the ensuing discussion, which was focused on such issues as the scope and the timeline for adoption of the general comment and the simplified reporting procedure. The meeting was followed by a presentation on the inquiry procedure under article 13 of the Optional Protocol on a communications procedure.

61. On 1 February 2024, the Committee held its fifteenth informal meeting with States⁹ at the Palais des Nations, with representatives of nearly 50 States in attendance. Presentations were made on the draft general comment on ensuring children's rights to access to justice and effective remedies for the full realization of their rights, the Committee's communication and simplified reporting procedures, its follow-up visit to the Pacific region, the negative impact on the work of the Committee, and on children's rights in general, of the liquidity crisis in relation to the United Nations regular budget and of the cancellation of hybrid or virtual meetings and the Committee's work with parliamentarians to promote children's rights, among other topics. The ensuing discussion with six States was focused on the impact of the conflict in the Middle East on children.

4. Press releases

62. During the reporting period, the Committee issued 28 press releases and statements, 13 alone and 15 jointly with other treaty bodies and/or special procedure mandate holders, including the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism, the Special Rapporteur on trafficking in persons, especially women and children, the Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions, the Special Rapporteur on the sale, sexual exploitation and sexual abuse of children, the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights in the context of climate change, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children. In addition, the Committee issued three joint press releases, with the multi-country office in Samoa, UNICEF and the Pacific Community, in relation to the Committee's follow-up visit to the Pacific region and the Pacific launch of the Committee's general comment No. 26 (2023) on children's rights and the environment, with a special focus on climate change.

63. Press releases were also issued on the following subjects: specific situations related to children's rights in Afghanistan, Ecuador, Haiti, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territory, Myanmar, Peru and Ukraine; emphasizing that children in the northeast of the Syrian Arab Republic must be urgently repatriated; ending the killing of children in armed conflict; recalling that children have specific rights and should be protected at all times; and trafficking in persons in conflict situations, emphasizing the need to

⁷ See <https://www.ohchr.org/en/documents/general-comments-and-recommendations/draft-general-comment-no-27-childrens-rights-access>.

⁸ See <https://www.ohchr.org/en/news/2023/02/committee-rights-child-holds-fourteenth-informal-meeting-states>.

⁹ See <https://www.ohchr.org/en/news/2024/02/committee-rights-child-holds-fifteenth-informal-meeting-states>.

strengthen prevention and accountability, on the occasion of the World Day against Trafficking in Persons. All press releases are available from the OHCHR website.¹⁰

5. Orientation meeting for new members

64. The three newly elected members of the Committee participated in a general orientation meeting, held virtually by OHCHR for newly elected treaty body members on 22 and 23 November 2022. At the ninety-third session, they received tailored inductions by Committee members and the secretariat.

C. International cooperation and solidarity for the implementation of the Convention

1. Cooperation with United Nations entities and other competent bodies

65. During the reporting period, the Committee pursued active cooperation with United Nations entities and specialized agencies and other relevant bodies.

66. In addition to representatives of OHCHR, UNICEF and Child Rights Connect, who are permanent guest speakers at the Committee's public opening sessions, the following speakers participated at the sessions held during the reporting period:

(a) At the ninetieth session, representatives of the International Labour Organization and UNEP;

(b) At the ninety-first session, a representative of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and a child adviser of the Children's Advisory Team of Child Rights Connect;

(c) At the ninety-second session a child adviser from the children's advisory team that supported the consultation process undertaken for general comment No. 26 (2023) on children's rights and the environment, with a special focus on climate change.

67. The Committee engaged with United Nations entities, especially OHCHR and UNICEF. In particular, it held regular meetings with OHCHR to discuss the challenges for the work of the Committee owing to the liquidity crisis in relation to the United Nations regular budget, follow-up efforts in relation to the process of strengthening the treaty body system and matters relating to the universal periodic review mechanism.

68. On 16 September 2022, the Committee held its eighth biennial meeting with UNICEF, which included representatives from UNICEF headquarters, as well as regional directors and deputy regional directors, to seek ways to enhance the existing cooperation between the Committee and UNICEF (ninety-first session). In addition, the Committee was briefed by UNICEF on child marriage (ninetieth session), on a multi-country impact assessment on children's rights with regard to States' measures related to COVID-19, together with the European Network of Children's Ombudspersons (ninetieth session), on the right of the child to identity, together with UNHCR, the Institute on Statelessness and Inclusion and Child Identity Protection (ninety-first session), and on research conducted on unaccompanied children from Ukraine (ninety-third session). On 8 December 2022, the Chair of the Committee and the Executive Director of UNICEF issued a joint statement on the occasion of Human Rights Day.¹¹

69. The Committee strengthened its cooperation with regional bodies dealing with children's rights. A meeting was held with representatives of the African Committee of

¹⁰ See

https://www.ohchr.org/en/latest?field_content_category_target_id%5B187%5D=187&field_content_category_target_id%5B190%5D=190&field_content_category_target_id%5B189%5D=189&field_entity_target_id%5B1327%5D=1327.

¹¹ See <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/hrbodies/crc/2022-12-09/20221209-UNICEF-CRC-Joint-Statement-HRD.pdf>.

Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child in December 2023, and work began on a memorandum of understanding between the two Committees.

70. The Committee held an online meeting on 25 January 2024 with the European Committee on Social Rights of the Council of Europe to discuss areas of common interest, with a focus on education and migration.

71. The Committee met with the following other bodies and representatives:

(a) Child Rights Connect, for a meeting with its General Assembly (ninetieth session of the Committee), a celebration of the fortieth anniversary of Child Rights Connect (ninety-third session) and a presentation of its strategic plan for 2025–2029 (ninety-fifth session);

(b) Leiden University, for a presentation on child-friendly versions of the Committee's decisions in cases submitted under the Optional Protocol on a communications procedure (ninetieth session);

(c) Human Rights Watch, for a presentation on the right to education (ninetieth session);

(d) 5Rights Foundation, for a presentation on an online safety toolkit for children (ninetieth session);

(e) Child Rights International Network (ninety-first session);

(f) Inter-Parliamentary Union for an online event to launch the joint statement with the Committee on children's rights and the role of parliaments (ninety-third session);

(g) Child Rights Connect working group on children and violence (ninety-second session);

(h) Meta and Facebook (ninety-second session);

(i) World Policy Analysis Centre, for a presentation on their work (ninety-second session);

(j) Consortium Street Children, for update on general comment No. 21 (2017) on children in street situations (ninety-third session);

(k) United Nations Inter-Agency Task Force on the Prevention and Control of Non-communicable Diseases (ninety-fourth session);

(l) Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ninety-fourth session);

(m) European Committee on Social Rights (ninety-fifth session).

72. With regard to cooperation with other United Nations human rights mechanisms and special procedure mandate holders, at its ninety-first session, the Committee adopted a joint statement with the Committee on Enforced Disappearances, the Special Rapporteur on the promotion of truth, justice, reparation and guarantees of non-recurrence, the Special Rapporteur on the sale, sexual exploitation and sexual abuse of children, the Special Rapporteur on trafficking in persons, especially women and children, and the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances on illegal intercountry adoptions.¹² It also adopted a joint statement with the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities on children with disabilities in alternative care in Ukraine.¹³ On 28 September 2022, it held a joint meeting with the Committee on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families to mark the fifth anniversary of the adoption of 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.

¹² See https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/hrbodies/ced/2022-09-29/JointstatementICA_HR_28September2022.pdf.

¹³ See <https://www.ohchr.org/en/statements/2022/10/un-experts-call-urgent-action-protect-ukrainian-children-disabilities>.

73. At the ninety-third session, the Committee held a joint event with the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women to launch a documentary on girls in street situations living in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. It also met with the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women and the Special Rapporteur on violence against women and girls, its causes and consequences, in an event organized by the Geneva Academy of International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights, to discuss issues of mutual interest. At the ninety-fourth session, the Committee held a joint event with the Committee on Enforced Disappearances to commemorate the first anniversary of the adoption of the joint statement on illegal intercountry adoptions. At the ninety-fifth session, members of the Committee attended a joint presentation with the Chair and a few members of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights on the guiding principles on early childhood care and education rights.

74. The Committee also participated in the global consultation of children on sustainable development and economic, social and cultural rights convened by the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in April 2022 as part of the drafting process of that Committee's general comment on sustainable development and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. The Chair of the Committee on the Rights of the Child, Ms. Skelton, participated in a closed meeting with the Committee against Torture to discuss child justice issues in July 2023 and in the opening of the twenty-ninth session of the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, at which she discussed points of commonality in such areas of work as the testimony of children victims in court proceedings.

75. In addition, the Committee held meetings with the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran (ninety-first session), the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children, the Special Rapporteur on violence against women and girls, its causes and consequences, the Independent International Commission of Inquiry for the Syrian Arab Republic and the independent international fact-finding mission on the Islamic Republic of Iran (ninety-second session), the Independent Expert on protection against violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity, the Special Rapporteur on the promotion of truth, justice, reparation and guarantees of non-recurrence (ninety-fourth session), the Working Group on discrimination against women and girls (intersessionally, in October 2023) and the Special Rapporteur on the right to development (ninety-fifth session).

76. The Committee also sent contributions concerning the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development to the high-level political forum on sustainable development in 2022 and 2023, in response to its calls for input.¹⁴

2. Participation in United Nations and other relevant meetings

77. In 2022, the then-Chair of the Committee, Ms. Otani, represented the Committee at the thirty-fourth meeting of the Chairs of the human rights treaty bodies, which was held in New York. In 2023, the newly appointed Chair of the Committee, Ms. Skelton, represented the Committee at the thirty-fifth meeting of the Chairs of the human rights treaty bodies, which was also held in New York.

78. On 7 October 2022, Ms. Otani, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 76/147, presented an oral report and participated in an interactive dialogue with the Third Committee of the Assembly. On 5 October 2023, pursuant to the same resolution, Ms. Skelton presented the report and participated in the interactive dialogue.

79. Members of the Committee are also always represented in the annual full-day meeting on the rights of the child convened by the Human Rights Council. In 2023, at the fifty-second session of the Council, the theme of the meeting was the rights of the child and the digital environment, and the Committee was represented by Mr. Jaffé.

80. Members of the Committee participated in a variety of meetings at the international, regional and national levels at which issues relevant to the rights of the child were raised. In May 2022, the then-Chair, Ms. Otani, participated in the fifth Global Conference on the

¹⁴ See <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/2022-06/2022-03-11-Draft-Submission-HLPF-bdm.pdf>.

Elimination of Child Labour. In November 2022, she participated in the twenty-seventh session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, held in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt. In February 2023, she participated in the half-day general discussion of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women on the equal and inclusive representation of women in decision-making systems, held as part of the drafting process of that Committee's general recommendation on the subject. In April 2023, she participated in the opening session of the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child and on the day of general discussion held by that Committee.

81. The current Chairperson, Ms. Skelton, participated in the twenty-eighth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. She was a panellist in the high-level round table on environment and climate change, which took place on 12 December 2023, as part of the celebrations and High Commissioner's initiative surrounding the seventy-fifth anniversary of the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Ms. Skelton also participated in a strategic consultation held by OHCHR on the right to a healthy environment, on 13 December 2023.

3. Other related activities

82. At its ninety-first session, the Committee adopted a joint statement with the Inter-Parliamentary Union on the role of parliaments in the implementation of the Convention and the Optional Protocols thereto, with the aim of raising awareness of children's rights among parliamentarians and strengthening the implementation by States parties of the recommendations contained in the Committee's concluding observations.¹⁵

83. On 23 March 2022, the Committee, in collaboration with the Special Rapporteur on the sale, sexual exploitation and sexual abuse of children, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children, the Slavery Fund, Child Rights Connect and Foundation ECPAT International, and with the support of the Government of Japan, convened a public online celebration of the twentieth anniversary of the entry into force of the Optional Protocol on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography.¹⁶ The event brought together children, members of the Committee, representatives of States, non-governmental organizations and national human rights institutions, professionals working on children's rights and other interested stakeholders to reflect on progress achieved through the Optional Protocol in the past 20 years and what is needed to secure its implementation within the current context, both with respect to digital advances, travel and tourism and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the sale and sexual exploitation of children.

84. On 11 October 2023, the Committee issued a statement on article 5 of the Convention,¹⁷ in which it aimed to clarify the concepts of parental guidance and evolving capacities of the child as enshrined in article 5 of the Convention and to explain how article 5 struck a balance between the rights of the child and the responsibilities, rights and duties of parents (see also para. 34 above).

85. From 13 to 15 November 2023, three Committee delegations conducted follow-up country visits in the Pacific region to the three States parties whose reports were reviewed at the eighty-fourth session, held in Samoa in 2020, namely, the Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia and Tuvalu. The Committee delegations met with children, communities, Governments and civil society to evaluate the progress made in implementing the Committee's recommendations in the three Pacific island countries and to consider issues affecting children, including protection from all types of violence, child justice, health and well-being, and the impact of climate change on the rights of children in the Pacific region.

¹⁵ See <https://www.ipu.org/documents/2022-11/joint-statement-role-parliaments-in-implementation-convention-rights-child-and-its-optional-protocols>.

¹⁶ See <https://www.ohchr.org/en/events/events/2022/20th-anniversary-entry-force-optional-protocol-convention-rights-child-sale-and>.

¹⁷ See <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/hrbodies/crc/statements/CRC-Article-5-statement.pdf>.

86. From 20 to 22 November 2023, the Committee delegations convened for a regional experience-sharing workshop on the implementation of recommendations, held in Apia, and met with government delegations from 12 Pacific island countries. The Committee members and government delegations discussed children's rights issues, including protection from violence and exploitation, protection in the administration of children's rights in the child justice system and the protection and promotion of children's rights in the context of the environment and climate change. The event also included the Pacific launch of the Committee's general comment No. 26 (2023) on children's rights and the environment, with a special focus on climate change, and a celebration of World Children's Day and the seventy-fifth anniversary of the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

D. General thematic discussions

87. At its ninety-first session, the Committee adopted decision No. 16, to integrate days of general discussion into the process of developing general comments (see para. 52 above). However, due to the liquidity situation affecting the United Nations regular budget at the beginning of 2024, it will not be possible to hold a day of general discussion in 2024 in the context of the development of the draft general comment on ensuring children's rights to access to justice and effective remedies.

Annex

Membership of the Committee on the Rights of the Child

<i>Name of member</i>	<i>Country of nationality</i>
Suzanne Aho **	Togo
Aïssatou Alassane Moulaye **	Niger
Thuwayba Al Barwani **	Oman
Hynd Ayoubi Idrissi **	Morocco
Mary Beloff **	Argentina
Rinchen Chophel ***	Bhutan
Rosaria Correa **	Panama
Bragi Gudbrandsson **	Iceland
Philip Jaffé **	Switzerland
Sopio Kiladze ***	Georgia
Faith Marshall-Harris **	Barbados
Benyam Dawit Mezmur ***	Ethiopia
Otani Mikiko*	Japan
Luis Ernesto Pedernera Reyna *	Uruguay
Ann Skelton *	South Africa
Velina Todorova *	Bulgaria
Benoit Van Keirsbilck ***	Belgium
Ratou Zara *	Chad

Bureau of the Committee on the Rights of the Child, 2023–2025

<i>Position</i>	<i>Name of member</i>
Chair	Ann Skelton
Vice-Chair/Rapporteur	Rinchen Chophel
Vice-Chair	Bragi Gudbrandsson
Vice-Chair	Sopio Kiladze
Vice-Chair	Luis Ernesto Pedernera Reyna

* Term expires 28 February 2025.

** Term expires 28 February 2027.

*** Term expires 28 February 2029.