



Convention on the Rights of the Child

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Committee on the Rights of the Child Ninety-seventh session

Summary record (partial)* of the 2846th meeting**

Held at the Palais Wilson, Geneva, on Friday, 13 September 2024, at 3 p.m.

Chair: Ms. Skelton

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Closure of the session

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- * No summary record was prepared for the rest of the meeting.
** No summary records were issued for the 2834th to 2845th meetings.

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The discussion covered in the summary record began at 5.05 p.m.

Closure of the session

1. **The Chair** said that it had been with great concern that, during the session, the Committee had had to address serious violations of children's rights, in particular the right to life. Children in situations of armed conflict continued to be killed, maimed and abducted, and the denial of humanitarian access remained an issue. Accordingly, the Committee had seen fit to reiterate that the purpose of the Convention was not only to provide for the highest level of protection for children but also to ensure that States parties and other actors respected and guaranteed respect for the provisions of international humanitarian law governing the treatment of children in armed conflict.

2. Several Committee members had participated in a workshop organized by the Geneva Human Rights Platform and the Watchlist on Children and Armed Conflict, in follow-up to which the Committee had discussed options for focusing more closely on the topic of children affected by armed conflict. The discussion had taken into consideration the forthcoming report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the rights of the child and violations of the human rights of children in armed conflict, which was due to be presented at the sixtieth session of the Human Rights Council. The Committee had taken note of the alarming rise in attacks on schools and hospitals, as detailed in the most recent annual report of the Secretary-General on children and armed conflict, and had been briefed on that issue by the Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack.

3. The Committee had raised concerns regarding enforced disappearance, killings and gang violence involving children in several dialogues with States parties. On 30 August 2024, it had observed the International Day of the Victims of Enforced Disappearances by calling on States to take steps to uphold the rights of children subjected to enforced disappearance and ensure the restoration of their identity and family ties. In addition, the Committee remained deeply troubled by the impact of humanitarian crises caused by war and natural disasters and continued to receive worrying reports of malnutrition in the Gaza Strip, the Sudan and Afghanistan. Recent heavy rain and flooding in West Africa had had a significant impact on children, hundreds of thousands of whom had been displaced from their homes and faced disease, hunger and disruption to their education.

4. During the session, the Committee had participated in a number of events on topics such as artificial intelligence and children's rights, a topic that it would continue to address, and the impact of drug policies on children's rights. It had discussed the resolution of the Human Rights Council in which the Council had decided to establish a working group to explore the possibility of drafting a fourth optional protocol, on the rights to early childhood education, free pre-primary education and free secondary education, and had been briefed on matters including the cross-border placement of children and international child abduction by the International Social Service. The Committee's working groups had also met to continue their work.

5. On 13 September 2024, the date of the closure of the Committee's ninety-seventh session, there were 196 States parties to the Convention, 173 to the Optional Protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict, 178 to the Optional Protocol on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography and 52 to the Optional Protocol on a communications procedure. No State had ratified or acceded to the Convention or any of the Optional Protocols since the opening of the session.

6. The Committee had held 30 meetings during the session, which had been attended by all 18 members in person. It had considered periodic reports submitted under the Convention by Argentina, Armenia, Israel, Mexico and Turkmenistan. It had also considered the reports submitted by Bahrain 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. One of the meetings with the delegation of Mexico had been held online, and the entire delegation of Argentina had participated in the dialogue remotely. Such practices fell short of the Committee's expectations. If there were no further comments, she would take it that the concluding observations on the reports of those six States parties could be adopted.

7. *It was so decided.*

8. The Committee had adopted decisions concerning eight communications. It had found that one State party – Finland – had violated rights enshrined in the Convention. It had declared two communications concerning France inadmissible and had discontinued its consideration of the other five, which concerned Argentina, Denmark, Finland and Spain. The Committee had also discussed the four article 13 inquiries it was currently dealing with. No decisions to initiate new inquiries had been taken during the session.

9. On 12 September 2024, the Committee had held an event to commemorate the tenth anniversary of the entry into force of the Optional Protocol on a communications procedure. The event, which had been opened by the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights, had included statements from a number of stakeholders, such as a 16-year-old girl who had brought a case under the Optional Protocol in order to obtain access to education.

10. The Committee had continued discussing its methods of work and the action to take in follow-up to the treaty body strengthening process and the 2020 review, taking into account the recommendations adopted by the Chairs of the human rights treaty bodies at their thirty-sixth meeting, held in June 2024. The Committee had also signed a memorandum of understanding with the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, in addition to two agreements to enhance cooperation with the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict.

11. If there were no further comments, she would take it that the Committee wished to adopt the report on its ninety-seventh session.

12. *It was so decided.*

13. After the customary exchange of courtesies, she declared the Committee's ninety-seventh session closed.

The meeting rose at 5.20 p.m.