



# Convention on the Rights of the Child

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## Committee on the Rights of the Child

### Sixtieth session

29 May–15 June 2012

## Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under article 44 of the Convention

### Concluding observations: Viet Nam

1. The Committee considered the combined third and fourth periodic report of Viet Nam (CRC/C/VNM/3-4) at its 1702nd and 1703rd meetings (see CRC/C/SR.1702 and 1703), held on 31 May 2012, and adopted, at its 1725th meeting, held on 15 June 2012, the following concluding observations.

#### I. Introduction

2. The Committee welcomes the submission of the State party's periodic report (CRC/C/VNM/3-4) and the written reply to its list of issues (CRC/C/VNM/Q/3-4/Add.1) which provided a better understanding of the situation in the State party. The Committee expresses its appreciation for the constructive and open dialogue held with the high-level, cross-sectoral delegation of the State party.

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

3. The Committee welcomes as positive the adoption of the following legislative measures:

- (a) Law against Human Trafficking, 2011;
- (b) Law on People with Disabilities, 2010;
- (c) Law on Adoption, 2010;
- (d) Law on Health-care Insurance, 2008;
- (e) Law on Nationality, 2008;
- (f) Law on Education 38/2005/QH11, 2005 and its amendment No. 44/2009/QH12, 2009;
- (g) Law on the Protection, Care and Education of Children, 2004.

4. The Committee welcomes the State party's ratification of the Hague Convention on Protection of Children and Cooperation in respect of Intercountry Adoption in 2011.
5. The Committee welcomes the withdrawal of the reservation to the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography on article 5, paragraphs 1–4, made upon ratification by the State party.
6. The Committee also welcomes the introduction of various child-related national goal programmes and institutional and policy measures, in particular the following:
  - (a) National Programme of Action for Vietnamese Children for 2011-2020;
  - (b) National Programme on Poverty Reduction for 2011-2020;
  - (c) Socioeconomic Development Plan for 2011-2015 and the Socioeconomic Development Strategy for 2011-2020;
  - (d) National Programme on Child Protection for 2011-2015.

### III. Main areas of concern and recommendations

#### A. General measures of implementation (arts. 4, 42 and 44, para. 6, of the Convention)

##### The Committee's previous recommendations

7. The Committee welcomes efforts by the State party to implement the Committee's concluding observations of 2003 on the State party's previous report (CRC/C/15/Add.200), as well as the Committee's concluding observations of 2006 on the initial reports under the Optional Protocol on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography (CRC/C/OPSC/VNM/CO/1) and the Optional Protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict (CRC/C/OPAC/VNM/CO/1). However, the Committee regrets that a number of its concerns and recommendations have been insufficiently addressed.

8. **The Committee urges the State party to take all necessary measures to address the recommendations that have not been implemented or that have been insufficiently implemented, including those relating to legislation, coordination, allocation of resources, independent monitoring, widespread and systematic training on the Convention, non-discrimination, the best interests of the child, the right to an identity, education and health, and juvenile justice, and to provide adequate follow-up to the recommendations contained in the present concluding observations.**

##### Legislation

9. The Committee notes with appreciation the adoption of the 2004 Law on the Protection, Care and Education of Children, as well as the State party's efforts to harmonize the domestic legislation with the Convention. The Committee however remains concerned that not all laws conform to the Convention, in particular as regards the definition of the child and juvenile justice, as well as about the slow pace of progress of the legal reform. The Committee is also concerned about the inadequacies in the coherence of all child rights-related legislation, as well as about the inadequate resources allocated for the implementation of such legislation.

10. **The Committee recommends that the State party continue to amend its national legislation with a view to bringing it into full compliance with the Convention. Particular attention should be given to the definition of the child and**

juvenile justice, in particular as regards legislation and expedition of the law reform process. It also recommends that the State party strengthen the coordination and coherence of legislation to support the implementation of the Convention. The effective implementation of its Strategy on the Development of the Legal System should be undertaken and sufficient resources allocated for the effective enforcement of child-related legislation, in particular the 2004 Law on the Protection, Care and Education of Children and its envisaged amendment in 2013, as well as the decrees to implement that Law.

#### **Coordination**

11. While the Committee notes that the coordination of children's issues was transferred to the Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs in 2007, the Committee is concerned that the devolution of powers from national to provincial, district and communal levels of government has contributed to an inconsistent implementation of the Convention, particularly at the local level, in the light of the dissolution of all local committees of the previous coordinating body. In this context, the Committee remains concerned about the adequacy of the coordination mechanism at the communal level, and about the lack of sufficient human resources responsible for children's issues at that level.

12. **The Committee recommends that the State party develop effective mechanisms to ensure a consistent application of the Convention in all provinces by strengthening coordination among the national, provincial, district and communal levels. In doing so, the State party is urged to ensure that the Department for Child Protection and Care within the Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs is strengthened and provided with the necessary human, technical and financial resources to implement child-rights policies that are comprehensive, coherent and consistent at the national, provincial, district and communal levels.**

#### **National plan of action**

13. While noting the National Programme of Action for Vietnamese Children for the period of 2011-2020, which is soon to be adopted, the Committee is concerned about the absence of proper coherence and coordination between the different existing national policies and programmes affecting children, leading to a weakening of the impact of some policies and overlapping mandates in some sectors.

14. **The Committee recommends that the State party adopt the National Programme of Action for Vietnamese Children without any delay and allocate sufficient funds for its implementation. The Committee also urges the State party to strengthen the coherence and coordination of plans, programmes and policies to support the implementation of the Convention in totality. In doing so, the State party is encouraged to continue to mainstream child rights within all policies and national programmes, and to allocate sufficient human, technical and financial resources for effective implementation. The Committee recommends that the State party continue to monitor and evaluate these policies and programmes to track progress and results, with a view to further refining child-related policies, plans and programmes.**

#### **Independent monitoring**

15. The Committee strongly reiterates its previous concern (CRC/C/15/Add.200, para. 12) about the lack of an independent monitoring body for the promotion and protection of children's rights as outlined in the Committee's general comment No. 2 (2002) on the role of independent human rights institutions.

16. The Committee reiterates its recommendation that the State party establish an independent monitoring body provided with sufficient human, technical and financial resources to guarantee its independence and efficacy, in accordance with the Committee's general comment No. 2 (2002) on the role of independent human rights institutions in the promotion and protection of the rights of the child. The Committee further encourages the State party to promptly establish a well-financed and adequately staffed independent human rights institution, in compliance with the principles relating to the status of national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights (Paris Principles), to ensure comprehensive and systematic monitoring of human rights, including children's rights.

#### **Allocation of resources**

17. While noting the increasing budget expenditure for education and health in recent years and recognizing the challenges the State party faces in the process of rapid socioeconomic development, the Committee remains concerned about the scarcity of resources allocated for children, as well as the disparities in the allocation for and spending on children, particularly in the areas of early childhood, child protection, education and health. This particularly affects children living in remote areas, children with disabilities and children belonging to ethnic minorities and indigenous groups. The Committee is also concerned about the lack of specific information on earmarked resources for children in the State party. While the Committee is aware of efforts made during the review period to combat corruption, including through the adoption of the Anti-Corruption Law (2005) and the subsequent establishment of the Office of the Steering Committee for Anti-Corruption, it is still concerned at the high levels of corruption which reduce the funds available for the implementation of children's rights.

18. The Committee recommends, in the light of the recommendations resulting from its day of general discussion in 2007 on "Resources for the rights of the child – responsibility of States", that the State party:

(a) Review and increase where necessary the level of financial resources allocated for the implementation of the Convention, and prioritize budgetary allocations for it. In this regard, the Committee urges the State party to allocate more resources for social protection policies and programmes, including for child protection, and in doing so to pay particular attention to socially and economically disadvantaged and marginalized children, especially children living in remote areas, children with disabilities and children belonging to ethnic minorities and indigenous groups;

(b) Develop capacity to utilize a child-rights approach in the elaboration of the national budget by implementing a tracking system for the allocation and use of resources for children throughout the budget, thus providing visibility to the investment in children;

(c) Ensure transparent and participatory budgeting processes through public dialogue, especially involving children where possible.

#### **Data collection**

19. The Committee remains concerned at the absence of a central system of data collection covering all areas of the Convention, despite the State party's intent to introduce new regulations on data collection on children as envisaged in the amendment of the 2004 Law on the Protection, Care and Education of Children. The Committee also expresses its concern about the limited data available on the enjoyment of children's rights, notably

disaggregated statistics on the social sector, child protection, children in street situations, children in situations of exploitation, and children in rural areas.

20. **The Committee encourages the State party to pursue its plan to establish regulations on data collection on children with a view to monitoring the implementation of all the rights of children. The Committee reiterates its recommendation that the State party adopt a central data collection system with standardized child rights indicators shared across all relevant ministries and agencies. The data collected should be analysed as a basis for assessing progress and for the development of policies and programmes to implement the Convention. In doing so the State party is recommended to ensure that the data collected is disaggregated by age, gender, place of residence, ethnic origin and socioeconomic background to facilitate analysis on the situation of all children in the State party. The Committee further urges the State party to focus on collecting statistics in sensitive areas, such as violence against children, situations of child abuse and exploitation, including sexual and economic exploitation, children in street situations, and children in remote and rural areas.**

#### **Dissemination and raising awareness**

21. The Committee expresses its concern at the limited knowledge of the Convention and of the rights-based approach enshrined therein, among children, the public at large, and professionals working with and for children. The Committee notes with appreciation the information provided by the State party during the dialogue that the Convention has been translated into eight ethnic minority languages; however it remains concerned that the Convention has not been translated into the remaining written minority languages and not sufficiently disseminated within minority groups, which disproportionately hampers the right of children belonging to ethnic minorities and indigenous groups to be aware of their basic rights and fundamental freedoms.

22. **The Committee urges the State party to intensify its efforts to incorporate child rights issues into all curricula of different levels of education and strengthen awareness-raising programmes, including campaigns on the Convention, among children, families and groups of professionals working with and for children. In this respect, the Committee encourages the State party to consider developing a national plan of action for human rights education, as recommended in the framework of the World Programme for Human Rights Education. The Committee also urges the State party to ensure appropriate distribution of the Convention to minority populations, including their children, in their own languages, and to take effective measures to ensure actual dissemination.**

#### **Training**

23. Despite information on some training provided to professionals working with and for children, the Committee regrets that such training remains dispersed and is not delivered systematically to all professional groups working for or with children.

24. **The Committee reiterates its recommendation to ensure systematic, mandatory and ongoing training on child rights for all professionals working with and for children, in particular law enforcement officers, prosecutors, judges, lawyers, teachers, health personnel and personnel working in all forms of alternative care.**

#### **Cooperation with civil society**

25. The Committee welcomes the progress achieved in fostering a civil society environment in the State party, including through the establishment of the Viet Nam

Association for the Protection of Children's Rights in 2008, and notes the draft law on associations. However, the Committee remains concerned at the limited scope civil society is granted to monitor the fulfilment of children's rights in the State party. The Committee is further concerned about the lack of effective coordination and cooperation between civil society and governmental offices with respect to the fulfilment of child rights.

26. **The Committee emphasizes the important role that civil society plays as a partner in implementing the provisions of the Convention, including with respect to civil rights and freedoms. The State party is encouraged to continue to strengthen more systematically its cooperation with civil society, in particular rights-based non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and other sectors of civil society working with and for children, throughout all stages of the implementation of the Convention. The Committee urges the State party to accelerate its efforts to bring the draft law on associations into force.**

## **B. Definition of the child (art. 1 of the Convention)**

27. While noting the State party's intention to amend the 2004 Law on the Protection, Care and Education of Children with a view to increasing the age of a "child" in conformity with the Convention, the Committee is concerned that in the State party, an individual is considered a child only until the age of 16, according to this Law in its present form.

28. **The Committee urges the State party to expedite its efforts to amend its national legislation, and in particular the 2004 Law on the Protection, Care and Education of Children, in order to raise the child age by definition up to the age of 18, in line with the definition provided in the Convention.**

## **C. General principles (arts. 2, 3, 6 and 12 of the Convention)**

### **Non-discrimination**

29. The Committee is aware of the efforts invested during the review period by the State party to eliminate discrimination against various vulnerable groups of children. This includes the adoption of special measures to improve the delivery of education and health services to children belonging to ethnic minorities, children with disabilities and migrant children. However, the Committee is seriously concerned at laws and practices that continue to discriminate against children and the persistence of both direct and indirect discrimination against children in vulnerable situations in the State party. In particular, the Committee is concerned at the following:

(a) The continued stigmatization and discriminating societal perception of children with disabilities, leading to their marginalization in all settings;

(b) Persistent disparities in service delivery for health, education and social protection between children who belong to the Kinh population and children who belong to ethnic minority populations. This is coupled with negative societal views against ethnic minorities;

(c) Marginalization of migrant children as a result of their unregistered status and lack of access to basic public services;

(d) Societal discrimination against girls who consequently drop out of school and engage in early marriage, especially in the mountainous areas, and such discrimination also resulting in the practice of aborting female fetuses.

30. In the light of article 2 of the Convention, the Committee urges the State party to ensure that all children in the State party effectively enjoy equal rights under the Convention without discrimination on any ground, and to this end:

(a) Expediently take all measures necessary to ensure the effective elimination of any form of discrimination against children with disabilities, in particular in the education and health system and the provision of essential services. The State party is recommended to, inter alia, amend its legislation so as to ensure that discrimination against children on the grounds of disability is explicitly prohibited by law, as expressed in the Committee's previous recommendation (CRC/C/15/Add.200, para. 23 (a)); take steps to promote the positive image of children with disabilities in all settings; and launch campaigns to raise awareness and combat the stigma associated with children with disabilities;

(b) Adopt and effectively implement a comprehensive and holistic strategy on the prevention of ethnic discrimination and intolerance that ensures that ethnic minorities are not penalized for their distinctive characteristics, taking into full account all the relevant provisions of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action and, in doing so, ensure equal access to social services to all groups of children, with a particular focus on children belonging to ethnic minorities and indigenous groups;

(c) Include a migrant perspective into all anti-discrimination policies and programmes and revise existing services for improved access of services for migrant children;

(d) Launch public awareness-raising programmes, including campaigns with a view to eliminating all forms of discrimination against girls, focusing on school dropout, on girls' engagement in early marriage, especially in mountainous areas, and on the practice of aborting female fetuses, and ensure gender mainstreaming in all anti-discrimination policies and programmes;

(e) Establish a specific monitoring and evaluation system to closely track the progress and results of these policies and programmes, and inform the Committee in its next periodic report on the progress achieved.

#### **Best interests of the child**

31. The Committee welcomes the introduction of the principle of the best interests of the child in the 2004 Law on the Protection, Care and Education of Children, and notes that various draft laws, including the draft amendment of the 2004 Law, fully incorporate this principle. The Committee, however, is concerned that the principle has not yet been included in all legislation affecting children, that the knowledge of the principle remains inadequate, and that it is not sufficiently applied in judicial and administrative decisions.

32. The Committee urges the State party to intensify its efforts to conclude the adoption of all draft laws that attach importance to the principle of the best interests of the child. The Committee further recommends that the State party strengthen its efforts to ensure that the principle of the best interests of the child is integrated in all laws affecting children, and that it is widely known and appropriately integrated and consistently applied in all legislative, administrative and judicial proceedings and all policies, programmes and projects relevant to and with an impact on children. In this regard, the State party is encouraged to develop procedures and criteria to provide guidance for determining the best interests of the child in every area, and to disseminate them to the public and private social welfare institutions, courts of law, administrative authorities and legislative bodies. The legal reasoning of all judicial and administrative judgments and decisions should also be based on this principle,

specifying the criteria used in the individual assessment of the best interests of the child.

#### **Right to life, survival and development**

33. The Committee notes with concern that injuries, many of them preventable, and particularly relating to drowning, road traffic and domestic accidents, are an important cause of child mortality.

34. **The Committee recommends that the State party strengthen its measures to protect children from injuries, in particular relating to drowning, road traffic and domestic accidents, including through the effective implementation of the National Programme on Child Injury Prevention for the period 2011-2015. It further recommends that the State party continue to include the prevention of accidents in priorities and objectives of national policies and programmes. The Committee moreover recommends that the State party pursue its intent to introduce swimming classes in school curricula with a view to preventing drowning among children, and to strengthen its public campaigns to increase traffic awareness among children, parents and the public in general.**

#### **Respect for the views of the child**

35. The Committee welcomes the various legislative measures adopted throughout the review period that acknowledged children's right to be heard, also in judicial and administrative proceedings, including the 2004 Law on Protection, Care and Education of Children and the 2004 Civil Procedure Code, and the forums for children to make their voices heard in the provinces and at the national level. The Committee, however, remains concerned at:

(a) The lack of sufficient awareness of the importance attached to this principle and the lack of systematic application of the right of the child to be heard in all settings, including in judicial hearings;

(b) The lack of systematic consultation of children in the process of making laws and policies affecting them at the national, regional or local levels, and the absence of more specific guidelines on children's participation in the development of future plans of action concerning children.

36. **In the light of article 12 of the Convention and the Committee's general comment No. 12 (2009) on the right of the child to be heard, the Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Carry out well-financed awareness-raising programmes, including campaigns aimed at, inter alia, children, parents, teachers, government administrative officials, the judiciary and society at large, on children's right to have their views taken into account and to participate in all matters affecting them, with a view to institutionalizing meaningful child participation;**

(b) **Take measures to involve children to a greater extent in the development of legislation and policies relevant to them, including by strengthening the children's councils through child-friendly methods of work and ensuring that children's views are given adequate weight.**

## **D. Civil rights and freedoms (arts. 7, 8, 13-17, 19 and 37 (a) of the Convention)**

### **Birth registration**

37. The Committee is aware of the significant increase in birth registration rates in recent years due to multiple legislative and administrative measures adopted by the State party. These include the legal recognition of the right to birth registration in the 2004 Law on Protection, Care and Education of Children, as well as the abolishment of the birth registration fee as of 2007. However, the Committee expresses its concern at the persisting geographical and ethnic disparities in birth registration rates whereby the lowest rate remains in the two poorest regions, the North West and the Central Highlands. The Committee is further concerned that parents, particularly in remote areas, are not always aware of birth registration requirements and of the importance attached to birth registration.

**38. The Committee, recalling its previous recommendation (CRC/C/15/Add.200, para. 32), recommends that the State party continue and strengthen its efforts to secure the registration at birth of all children, giving particular attention to children living in rural and mountainous areas, and undertake awareness-raising campaigns on the right of all children to be registered at birth, regardless of social and ethnic background and the resident status of parents.**

### **Preservation of identity**

39. The Committee is concerned about the limited possibilities that children of ethnic and indigenous populations enjoy as regards preserving and exercising their distinct identities.

**40. In the light of article 8 of the Convention, the Committee urges the State party to ensure full respect for the preservation of identity for all children, and to take effective measures so as to eliminate all efforts to assimilate ethnic minority populations with the Kinh majority. To this end, the Committee urges the State party to adopt legislative and administrative measures to account for the rights, such as name, culture and language, of children belonging to minority and indigenous populations.**

### **Freedom of association, expression and access to information**

41. The Committee takes note of the information provided by the State party during the dialogue, that children have the formal possibility to form associations in the State party. However, the Committee notes with concern that in practice children's freedom to association is severely restricted. It further expresses its concern at the extensive limitation on the freedom of expression of children, and at the limited access to information children enjoy in the State party. In this context the Committee is concerned about the fact that all sources of information – and media in particular – are subject to Government control and do not allow for diversity.

**42. The Committee urges the State party to amend its legislation by, inter alia, expediting the adoption of the draft law on associations, in order to establish a genuine and real freedom of association which is necessary for children. The Committee moreover urges the State party to take effective measures to remove all restrictions on the freedom of expression of the child, and to ensure the right of the child to access to information and material from a diversity of national and international sources of all forms, including through access to the Internet, with a view to guaranteeing the child's exposure to a plurality of opinions.**

**Torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment**

43. The Committee takes note of the State party's consideration of accession to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment. However, it expresses deep concern that many children have reportedly been and still are subjected to ill-treatment or torture while being administratively detained in drug detention centres, including through the imposition of solitary confinement punishment.

44. **In the light of article 37 (a) of the Convention, the Committee urges the State party:**

(a) **To take all necessary measures to prevent, prohibit and protect children administratively detained in connection with drug addiction problems from all forms of torture or other cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment or punishment;**

(b) **To introduce an easily accessible complaints mechanism for children in such centres, with formal authority to decide complaints;**

(c) **To ensure prompt, independent and effective investigation of all alleged cases of torture or ill-treatment of children and, as appropriate, prosecute offenders;**

(d) **To provide care, recovery, compensation and rehabilitation for victims;**

(e) **To ratify the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment and consider ratifying the Optional Protocol thereto.**

**Corporal punishment**

45. The Committee is concerned about the prevalence of corporal punishment in the home and that many parents still find it appropriate to use slapping as a means of discipline. While noting the State party's declaration during the dialogue that it intends to include a provision on corporal punishment in the amendment to the 2004 Law on Protection, Care and Education of Children, the Committee remains concerned that the State party has not yet passed legislation explicitly prohibiting all forms of corporal punishment in all settings, including in the home, despite the Committee's previous recommendation (CRC/C/15/Add.200, para. 34 (e)).

46. **The Committee recommends that the State party reform its domestic legislation, including the envisaged amendment to the 2004 Law on Protection, Care and Education of Children, to ensure the explicit prohibition of all forms of corporal punishment in all settings, taking into account the Committee's general comment No. 8 (2006) on the right of the child to protection from corporal punishment and other cruel or degrading forms of punishment, and general comment No. 13 (2011) on the right of the child to freedom from all forms of violence. The Committee further recommends that the State party raise awareness among parents and the general public on the negative impact of corporal punishment on the well-being of children, and on positive alternative methods of discipline in accordance with the rights of the child, also through the effective implementation of the National Programme on Child Protection for 2011-2015.**

**E. Family environment and alternative care (arts. 5, 18 (paras. 1-2), 9-11, 19-21, 25, 27 (para. 4) and 39 of the Convention)**

**Children deprived of a family environment**

47. The Committee is concerned about the lack of reliable information on children deprived of their family environment, whether they are children in street situations, orphans, abandoned children or displaced children, including information on the identification of children in such situations, on preventive measures to limit the number of these children, and on efforts to improve their situation and reintegrate the children with their families.

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

(a) **Undertake a comprehensive survey on all children deprived of a family environment and create a national register of all such children;**

(b) **Include children deprived of a family environment in the National Programme on Child Protection for 2011-2015;**

(c) **Develop and implement, with the active involvement of the children concerned, a comprehensive policy which should address the root causes in order to prevent and reduce the occurrence of children deprived of a family environment;**

(d) **Create an outreach programme for children in such situations with adequate services that are easily accessible to the children;**

(e) **Support family reunification programmes, when it is in the best interests of the child, or community-based alternative care and services.**

**Alternative care**

49. The Committee welcomes the progress made towards the deinstitutionalization of care for children deprived of a family environment, including the development of specific social assistance policies. Nevertheless, it is concerned at the high prevalence of institutionalization of children, in particular children with disabilities, children with HIV, and children who have lost one or both parents to death, as well as abandoned and unwanted children. The Committee is further concerned about the unreliable data relating to the magnitude of child institutionalization in the State party. While being aware of the development of national minimum standards of care in residential facilities, the Committee is highly concerned about: the lack of adherence to the Convention's principles in most of the residential care facilities; reports of physical abuse and sexual exploitation of children in residential institutions; and the long periods during which children deprived of family environment are placed in institutions.

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

(a) **Develop a strategy for the deinstitutionalization of children with a clear time frame and budget, which includes the reintegration of children with their families, while taking into account the best interests and the views of the child as far as possible;**

(b) **Ensure that all residential institutions for children are well financed and equipped with adequate human and technical resources, registered and officially authorized to serve as alternative care institutions, and ensure their strict adherence to the national minimum standards of care;**

(c) **Develop clear guidelines in order to ensure that children's rights are respected throughout the entire process of placement in alternative care, and ensure**

systematic periodic review of the quality of care and regular training of its relevant professionals, including in child rights, while taking into account the Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children (General Assembly resolution 64/142, annex);

(d) **Develop community-based alternative care policies and programmes with a view to reducing the number of children placed in institutions;**

(e) **Establish mechanisms for receiving complaints, for investigations and for prosecutions for child abuse in alternative care settings and ensure that victims of abuse have access to complaints procedures, counselling, medical care and other recovery assistance as appropriate.**

### **Adoption**

51. The Committee welcomes the approval of the Law on Adoption in 2010, in line with the key principles of the Hague Convention on Protection of Children and Cooperation in respect of Intercountry Adoption, as well as the establishment of the Intercountry Adoption Department under Decision No. 337/2003/QB-BTP in 2003. The Committee further takes note of the State party's statement that intercountry adoption is considered as a last resort after exhausting all other options inside the country, and also of the information provided by the State party during the dialogue on the decrease in the number of child adoptions in 2011.

52. **With a view to continuing this development, the Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Strengthen the implementation of the Law on Adoption and allocate sufficient resources for its effective enforcement, and reinforce the mandate of the Intercountry Adoption Department so that it effectively monitors intercountry adoptions and provide it with sufficient human and technical resources;**

(b) **In compliance with article 21 (d) of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, ensure effective and systematic monitoring of all private adoption agencies, consider options to limit even further the number of private adoption agencies, and ensure that adoption processes do not provide financial gains to any party;**

(c) **Continue to promote domestic adoption for children who would otherwise not have a family environment.**

### **Violence against children, including abuse and neglect of children**

53. While noting that national legislation contains various provisions on violence against children and bans child abuse, the Committee remains concerned about the lack of inclusion of all forms of child abuse and neglect in national legislation in line with the definition provided in article 19 of the Convention. The Committee expresses its concern at the widespread violence against and abuse of children and in particular girls; the lack of appropriate measures, mechanisms and resources to prevent and combat domestic violence, including physical and sexual abuse and the neglect of children; the lack of child-friendly reporting procedures; the limited access to services for abused children; and the lack of data on the aforementioned.

54. **The Committee recommends that the State party, taking into account the Committee's general comment No. 13 (2011) on the right of the child to freedom from all forms of violence:**

(a) **Reform domestic legislation to include all forms of child abuse in line with article 19 of the Convention, and disseminate the amended legislation among, in**

particular, law enforcement officials, the judiciary and professionals working with or for children;

(b) Strengthen the national system for receiving, monitoring and investigating complaints of child abuse and neglect in a child-sensitive manner;

(c) Prioritize the elimination of all forms of violence against children, including by ensuring the implementation of the recommendations of the United Nations study on violence against children (A/61/299), taking into account the outcome and recommendations of the Regional Consultations for South Asia (held in Islamabad, 19–20 May 2005), and paying particular attention to gender aspects;

(d) Provide information concerning the implementation by the State party of the recommendations of the above-mentioned study in its next periodic report, particularly those highlighted by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on violence against children, namely:

(i) The development in each State of a national comprehensive strategy to prevent and address all forms of violence against children;

(ii) The introduction of an explicit national legal ban on all forms of violence against children in all settings;

(iii) The consolidation of a national system of data collection, analysis and dissemination, and a research agenda on violence against children;

(e) Ensure that administrative measures reflect Government obligations to establish policies, programmes, monitoring and oversight systems required to protect the child from all forms of violence;

(f) Cooperate with the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on violence against children and seek technical assistance, inter alia, from the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the World Health Organization, the International Labour Organization (ILO), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, and NGO partners.

## **F. Disability, basic health and welfare (arts. 6, 18 (para. 3), 23, 24, 26, 27 (paras. 1-3) and 33 of the Convention)**

### **Children with disabilities**

55. The Committee notes the State party's intent to ratify the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. However, the Committee is highly concerned about the alarmingly disadvantaged position of children with disabilities with regard to their right to education, whereby 52 per cent of children with disabilities have no access to school, and the vast majority do not finish primary school. The Committee further notes with concern the lack of teachers trained to teach children with learning or developmental delays and the lack of adequate teaching equipment and materials, as well as the regional disparities in the provision of specialist teachers in schools. The Committee is moreover concerned that the barriers preventing children with disabilities from exercising their rights are regarded as a consequence of their disability, rather than an issue arising from the social and economic structure of the society that impedes their social inclusion, resulting also in a high rate of institutionalization of children with disabilities.

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

(a) **Expediently undertake the ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities to provide legal protection for children with disabilities;**

(b) **Review existing policies and programmes to develop a rights-based approach in relation to children with disabilities, and effectively implement inclusive education and free-tuition policies in order to further facilitate children with disabilities in having access to school;**

(c) **Provide all schools with sufficient numbers of teachers who have skills in inclusive education so that all children with disabilities can enjoy access to high-quality inclusive education, with a particular focus on children with disabilities living in rural areas;**

(d) **Raise public awareness, and include children with disabilities in these awareness-raising and social-change interventions, to address widespread stigma and discrimination. In addition, reduce the trend to institutionalize children with disabilities and seek community-based child care solutions;**

(e) **Take into account the Committee's general comment No. 9 (2006) on the rights of children with disabilities in this respect.**

#### **Health and health services**

57. The Committee appreciates the improvement in health indicators in the State party, inter alia, the decreasing rate of maternal mortality and under-five and infant mortality rates, as well as the increase in the average life expectancy in the State party. However, the Committee remains highly concerned at the lack of progress in certain critical areas of child survival and development, as follows:

(a) Stunting and malnutrition rates among children under the age of 5 years, with much higher rates in rural areas and among children of ethnic minorities;

(b) Higher frequency of neonatal mortality in rural areas and among ethnic minority populations reportedly attributed to a lack of quality services and clinics;

(c) Exclusive breastfeeding rates that remain very low, at 19 per cent with regional disparities, and a lack of parental awareness of infant and young-child feeding practices;

(d) Ethnic and geographic disparities in immunization rates.

58. **The Committee recommends that the State party take immediate steps to promote common standards in health-care services for all children in all regions, and:**

(a) **Develop nutrition strategies, policies and legislation relating to positive infant and young-child feeding practices, aimed at reducing regional disparities relating to acute and chronic undernutrition;**

(b) **Increase the resources available for district health centres and commune health stations and ensure that they have adequate human and material resources, particularly in relation to maternal health care and care of newborns, infants and preschool children;**

(c) **Take immediate action to improve the practice of exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months, through awareness-raising measures including campaigns, information and training for relevant Government officials, training of staff working in maternity units, and education for parents; and strengthen the monitoring of existing marketing regulations relating to the marketing of breast-milk substitutes,**

particularly through the revision of Decree No. 21 on the marketing of nutrition products and breast milk substitutes, and ensure that action is taken against those who violate the Decree, particularly those who advertise formula and provide free samples to mothers;

(d) Take measures, including awareness-raising campaigns and the expansion of service delivery, to increase immunization rates among infant and preschool children, paying special attention to ethnicity and geographic location.

#### **Adolescent health**

59. The Committee expresses its concern at the lack of information on adolescent health as well as at the reportedly high prevalence of abortions among teenagers. The Committee is further concerned at the limited access adolescents have to contraceptives and to reproductive health services, assistance and counselling.

60. **The Committee urges the State party to collect data on adolescent health and to report thereon to the Committee in its next periodic report. Referring to its general comment No. 4 (2003) on adolescent health and development in the context of the Convention, the Committee recommends that the State party raise awareness and provide access to services for adolescents in relation to sexual and reproductive health, respond to the increasing number of teenage pregnancies and abortions, and facilitate access to contraceptives, as well as to quality reproductive health services, assistance and counselling.**

#### **HIV/AIDS**

61. The Committee notes with appreciation the progress made with regard to HIV/AIDS prevention, however, it remains concerned about the weak enforcement of HIV/AIDS-related laws, and that children infected with HIV/AIDS are stigmatized, more vulnerable to institutionalization and tend to drop out of school to a greater extent. The Committee is moreover concerned at the unreliable information concerning the magnitude of HIV in the State party, resulting in fragmented policies and prevention mechanisms.

62. **In the light of its general comment no. 3 (2003) on HIV/AIDS and the rights of the child, the Committee recommends that the State party take into account the International Guidelines on HIV/AIDS and Human Rights, and:**

(a) **Take all measures to ensure effective enforcement of HIV/AIDS-related laws, including by conducting training for law enforcement officials, teachers, and professionals working with and for children, also with a view to ensuring that children affected by HIV/AIDS do not drop out of school and can enjoy inclusive education;**

(b) **Launch awareness-raising programmes, including campaigns to combat the stigmatization of children with HIV/AIDS, and foster an environment that enables families with children affected by HIV/AIDS to keep them in their family environment rather than send them to institutions, inter alia, by establishing community-based child care and assistance services;**

(c) **Integrate respect for the rights of the child into the development and implementation of its HIV/AIDS policies and strategies, with a particular emphasis on the Convention's four general principles, namely, non-discrimination (art. 2), best interests of the child (art. 3), right to life (art. 6) and respect for the views of the child (art. 12), and effectively implement the National Action Plan for Children Affected by HIV/AIDS to 2010 with a Vision to 2020;**

(d) **Improve the quality and extent of health-related disaggregated data, as regards both compilation and use, with a view to generating reliable data.**

**Drug and substance abuse**

63. While noting the information provided by the State party during the dialogue about its plan to introduce a community-based treatment for children with drug addiction, the Committee is highly concerned about:

- (a) The administrative detention system imposed on children with drug addiction;
- (b) Reports of child ill-treatment in the drug detention centres and lack of inspections;
- (c) Child detainees in these centres not being separated from adults.

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

**(a) Pursue its plan to revise the administrative detention system for children with drug addiction, and develop alternatives to deprivation of the child's liberty in such situations, focusing on community-based treatment. In doing so, the State party should ensure the provision of child rehabilitation and reintegration programmes;**

**(b) Establish an effective system of monitoring of drug detention centres, including regular inspections, and investigate effectively all child abuse cases in these centres, with a view to bringing perpetrators to justice and providing child victims with a remedy;**

**(c) Ensure that child detainees are separated from adults in all detention settings, and guarantee the availability of child detention cells.**

**Standard of living**

65. While welcoming the significant efforts made by the State party to reduce poverty, which have decreased the rate of poor households by 2 per cent per year, and while noting that Viet Nam moved from the group of poorest countries to the group of lower middle-income countries in 2010, the Committee is deeply concerned at the high number of children who still live in poverty in the State party and at the disproportional concentration of child poverty within certain ethnic minorities and migrant populations. In addition, while noting the national target programme on clean water and rural sanitation currently under way, the Committee expresses its concern about serious gaps in the supply of safe drinking water, especially in rural areas and among ethnic minority populations, and about the inadequate sanitation facilities in the home and at schools, which affect the health of the child and the ability to retain children in schools.

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

**(a) Increase and sustain the social assistance cash transfer programme (Decree 67/Decree 13) for low-income families with children, and ensure that such support is extended to all poor or near-poor families of ethnic minority origin, families of informal workers and families of migrants;**

**(b) Strengthen its efforts, also through the effective implementation of the National Programme on Poverty Reduction, in combating poverty among marginalized groups and in particular ethnic minority and migrant groups, while focusing on the issues relating to the needs and rights of children. In this respect the State party should take measures to promote equal opportunities for all persons, including children in particular, and stimulate economic growth and development for the ethnic minority groups and the indigenous communities, especially with regard to employment, education and health care with a focus on services for children;**

(c) Ensure the active involvement of targeted beneficiaries through adequate consultation and participation in the decisions relating to their rights and interests;

(d) Develop and implement well-financed policies and programmes relating to safe drinking water and sanitation, especially in rural areas, including the national target programme on clean water and rural sanitation, and ensure that children in schools have equitable access to sanitation facilities, in line with the Committee's previous recommendation (CRC/C/15/Add.200, para. 42).

## **G. Education, leisure and cultural activities (arts. 28, 29 and 31 of the Convention)**

### **Education, including vocational training and guidance**

67. The Committee welcomes the adoption of the Education Development Strategic Plan 2001-2010 and the National Education for All Action Plan 2003-2015. While appreciating efforts to implement its previous recommendations (CRC/C/15/Add.200, para. 48), inter alia, to increase budget allocations, to increase rates of primary and secondary school enrolment, and to develop financial education incentives to marginalized groups, and while appreciating the joint efforts of the State party together with UNICEF to provide for bilingual teaching for children belonging to ethnic minorities, the Committee is concerned at the following:

(a) The scarcity of State-run facilities and programmes for early childhood development;

(b) The fact that, despite the Constitutional provision for free-of-charge primary education, education-related fees are in fact being imposed, affecting the poorest, and mostly children of ethnic minorities and migrant children;

(c) Continuing striking disparities in access to school between children of ethnic minorities and children of the Kinh population;

(d) Continuing high rates of dropout at the primary and secondary school levels and in particular among children of ethnic minorities, mainly due to lack of access, poverty-related reasons, and linguistic barriers;

(e) Limited access to mother tongue-based education for ethnic minorities and indigenous groups; an insufficient number of ethnic minority and indigenous teachers and a lack of appropriate training for these teachers to teach in bilingual education, as well as the low quality of textbooks for children belonging to ethnic minorities or indigenous groups, which impedes the right of children belonging to such groups to learn adequately their distinctive language and preserve it;

(f) A lack of information relating to the monitoring of the children in boarding schools for ethnic minorities;

(g) A low quality of education and inappropriate teaching methods that do not allow children's participation, as well as low teacher capacity, and the lack of information on whether human rights education, in particular children's rights, is included in the school curriculum.

68. **The Committee recommends that the State party take into account its general comment No. 1 (2001) on the aims of education, and:**

(a) **Develop well-financed early childhood development programmes, using a holistic approach to cover all needs of children under the age of 5; and expeditiously**

adopt and implement the programme on the universalization of kindergarten education for children under 5 for 2010-2015;

(b) Ensure that education is de facto free of charge for all, and pay particular attention to the most vulnerable groups of children, including children from ethnic minority groups and migrant children. In doing so, inter alia, remove all indirect expenses and introduce educational support mechanisms for children from economically disadvantaged families;

(c) In line with its previous recommendation (CRC/C/15/Add.200, para. 48 (a)), take all appropriate measures to increase access to schools, in particular for girls and in rural areas, with a view to providing equal access to education to all groups of children, and ensure the right to quality education for all children;

(d) Take effective affirmative action, such as the provision of second-chance educational programmes, targeting children belonging to ethnic minorities and children living in rural areas, in order to close ethnic and geographical disparities in school dropout rates;

(e) Embark on an adequately resourced policy to support bilingual education for ethnic minority groups which establishes the minority language as the medium of instruction at the early school level and which is aimed at ensuring the proficiency of ethnic minority children in both languages, so as to enable them to fully take part in the wider society; intensify the provision of training and instructions for teachers who speak ethnic minority languages; and finance sufficiently the issuance of quality school textbooks for children who belong to ethnic minorities and invite the local teachers to participate in writing the content of textbooks;

(f) Establish an effective system for the monitoring of boarding schools for ethnic minorities, including regular inspections, and investigate all child abuse cases;

(g) Enable teachers to engage in quality teaching by paying them reasonable salaries. A thorough reform of the curricula and pedagogical methods should be undertaken, involving professional experts in education. The inclusion of human rights, and in particular children's rights, should be ensured in the school curriculum;

(h) Consider ratifying the UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education.

## **H. Special protection measures (arts. 22, 30, 38, 39, 40, 37 (b)-(d), 32-36 of the Convention)**

### **Economic exploitation, particularly child labour**

69. The Committee is highly concerned that child labour remains widespread in the State party, in particular in the informal sector; that the minimum age for labour remains relatively low (12 years for light work); that labour inspections outreach is limited; and that child inmates in drug detention centres are obliged to work and thus subject to forced labour.

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

(a) **Take immediate and effective measures to eliminate child labour in unacceptable conditions, including at an early age and under dangerous conditions;**

(b) **Implement effective measures to address the deep-rooted socioeconomic factors that push children into the workforce, in particular to increase the school**

attendance rate and reduce the school dropout rate with a view to avoiding child labour;

(c) Take necessary measures to harmonize national laws and regulations with ILO Convention No. 138 (1973) concerning Minimum Age for Admission to Employment by, inter alia, amending Circular No. 21/1999/TT-BLDTBXH and providing that children are allowed to be employed in “light work” only from the age of 13 years, and strengthen the enforcement of labour laws to protect children and to ensure prosecution of those who make use of forced labour of children, and provide reparation and sanctions;

(d) Improve labour inspections to ensure that these comprehensively monitor all aspects of the work environment, including the use of forced child labour in drug detention centres and child labour in the informal sector;

(e) Take effective measures, including through the legal revision of Decree No. 135 of 2004, to prevent and end the practice of forced child labour in drug detention centres, in line with ILO Convention No. 182 (1999) concerning the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour;

(f) Seek technical assistance from the ILO International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour in this regard.

#### **Sexual exploitation and trafficking**

71. The Committee welcomes the various legislation and administrative measures taken with a view to combating child commercial sexual exploitation and trafficking. However, it remains concerned about the rise in child prostitution; the rise in the number of cases of child trafficking including, inter alia, for prostitution purposes; and the increasing number of children involved in commercial sexual activity, mainly due to poverty-related reasons. The Committee is further concerned that children who are sexually exploited are likely to be treated as criminals by the police; that there is a lack of specific child-friendly reporting procedures; and that some provisions in the Penal Code (including articles 254 to 256 relating to child prostitution) refer to children as those below the age of 16 only.

72. **The Committee strongly recommends that the State party:**

(a) Increase efforts to combat child prostitution and trafficking, including by adequately implementing the 2011-2015 Plan of Action against Prostitution, and the 2011-2015 Plan of Action against Human Trafficking;

(b) Develop and implement a strategy for the prevention of child sexual exploitation and abuse, focusing on vulnerable groups of children, including street children and children of poor or near-poor families;

(c) Amend and disseminate administrative and criminal laws to ensure that child sex workers are treated as victims and not as criminals; develop child-friendly reporting procedures and ensure that child victims are aware of these procedures and can access them; and develop rehabilitation and reintegration programmes for child victims of sexual exploitation and trafficking, as well as confidential counselling services;

(d) Fully harmonize national legislation with the Optional Protocol on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography in order to explicitly criminalize all acts listed in article 3 of the Optional Protocol when committed against all persons below 18, in line with the Committee’s previous recommendation (CRC/C/OPSC/VNM/CO/1, para 11 (a));

(e) **Consider ratifying the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and its Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children.**

#### **Administration of juvenile justice**

73. In spite of progress in certain areas of juvenile justice, the Committee regrets that its previous recommendation (CRC/C/15/Add.200, para. 54) has not been fully addressed by the State party, and in particular expresses its concern about:

(a) The lack of a comprehensive juvenile justice system, including the absence of a juvenile court, and that the current measures cover children under the age of 16 only;

(b) The rising number of young offenders and the State party's punitive system of dealing with young offenders;

(c) The limited alternatives to child detention, and the absence of rehabilitation and reintegration programmes.

74. **The Committee recommends that the State party bring its juvenile justice system fully into line with the Convention, in particular articles 37, 39 and 40, and with other relevant standards, including the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Administration of Juvenile Justice (the Beijing Rules), the United Nations Guidelines for the Prevention of Juvenile Delinquency (the Riyadh Guidelines), the Rules for the Protection of Juveniles Deprived of their Liberty (the Havana Rules), the Guidelines for Action on Children in the Criminal Justice System, and the Committee's general comment No. 10 (2007) on the rights of the child in juvenile justice. In particular, the Committee urges the State party:**

(a) **To expedite the revision of the Penal Code, the Criminal Procedure Law and the Ordinance on administrative violations, with a view to ensuring their full compliance with the Convention's principles and provisions by, inter alia, including all children under the age of 18 in the juvenile justice system;**

(b) **To establish a specialized juvenile court and specialized police-protection units for children;**

(c) **To allocate adequate human, technical and financial resources to the juvenile justice system to ensure a focus on diversion and other alternative measures to deprivation of liberty, and ensure the provision of rehabilitation and reintegration programmes.**

#### **Children belonging to minority groups**

75. **The Committee urges the State party to take all effective measures to close disparities in the enjoyment of rights between children belonging to minority groups and children belonging to the majority population in all areas covered under the Convention, and to pay particular attention to standards of living, health and education as recommended in previous paragraphs. The Committee further urges the State party to intensify its efforts to comply with the recommendations set forth in the report of the Independent Expert on minority issues (A/HRC/16/45/Add.2), as well as those in the report of the Independent Expert on the question of human rights and extreme poverty (A/HRC/17/34/Add.1), in particular with the minority-related recommendations therein, and to report on progress achieved in that respect in its next periodic report to the Committee.**

### **Follow-up to the recommendations under the Optional Protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict (2006)**

76. The Committee remains concerned at the maintenance of the declaration, made by the State party upon its ratification of the Optional Protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict, that “those who are under the age of 18 shall not be directly involved in military battles unless there is an urgent need for safeguarding national independence, sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity”. It further expresses concern that the State party has not yet ratified the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court.

77. **The Committee recommends that the State party withdraw the declaration and reminds the State party of article 1 of the Optional Protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict, which states that persons under the age of 18 years should not “take a direct part in hostilities”. The Committee also recommends that the State party consider ratifying the Rome Statute. The Committee requests the State party to include information on the implementation and follow-up to the recommendations under the Optional Protocol (CRC/C/OPAC/VNM/CO/1) in its next periodic report to the Committee.**

### **Follow-up to the recommendations under the Optional Protocol on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography (2006)**

78. The Committee is concerned at the absence of information about the follow-up to the recommendations made by the Committee (CRC/C/OPSC/VNM/CO/1).

79. **The Committee recommends that the State party include follow-up and information about the implementation of the Optional Protocol on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography in its next periodic report to the Committee. The Committee further recommends that the State party ensure compliance with its previous recommendations under Optional Protocol (CRC/C/OPSC/VNM/CO/1), in particular with regard to ensuring that the criminal law adequately covers the crimes under the Optional Protocol, extraterritorial jurisdiction and extradition.**

## **I. Ratification of international human rights instruments**

80. **The Committee recommends that the State party ratify the core United Nations human rights treaties and the Optional Protocols thereto to which it is not yet a party, in particular, the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on a communications procedure, the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol, the 1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons and the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness. In addition, the State party is recommended to ratify ILO Convention No. 189 (2011) concerning Decent Work for Domestic Workers.**

## **J. Cooperation with regional and international bodies**

81. **The Committee recommends that the State party cooperate with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights and the ASEAN Commission on Women and Children towards the**

implementation of the Convention and other human rights instruments, both in the State party and in other ASEAN member States.

#### **K. Follow-up and dissemination**

82. The Committee recommends that the State party take all appropriate measures to ensure that the present recommendations are fully implemented by, *inter alia*, transmitting them to the National Assembly, relevant ministries, the Supreme Court, and regional and local authorities for appropriate consideration and further action.

83. The Committee further recommends that the combined third and fourth periodic report and written replies by the State party and the related recommendations (concluding observations) be made widely available in the languages of the country, including (but not exclusively) through the Internet, to the public at large, civil society organizations, media, youth groups, professional groups and children, in order to generate debate and awareness of the Convention and the Optional Protocols thereto and of their implementation and monitoring.

#### **L. Next report**

84. The Committee invites the State party to submit its combined fifth and sixth periodic report by 1 September 2017 and to include in it information on the implementation of the present concluding observations. The Committee draws attention to its harmonized treaty-specific reporting guidelines adopted on 1 October 2010 (CRC/C/58/Rev.2 and Corr. 1) and reminds the State party that future reports should be in compliance with the guidelines and not exceed 60 pages. The Committee urges the State party to submit its report in accordance with the guidelines. In the event a report exceeding the page limitations is submitted, the State party will be asked to review and resubmit the report in accordance with the above-mentioned guidelines. The Committee reminds the State party that if it is not in a position to review and resubmit the report, translation of the report for purposes of examination by the treaty body cannot be guaranteed.

85. The Committee also invites the State party to submit an updated core document in accordance with the requirements of the common core document in the harmonized guidelines on reporting, approved by the fifth Inter-Committee Meeting of the human rights treaty bodies in June 2006 (HRI/MC/2006/3).