



# Convention on the Rights of the Child

Distr.: General  
9 March 2026

Original: English

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## Committee on the Rights of the Child

### Concluding observations on the combined sixth and seventh periodic reports of Ethiopia\*

#### I. Introduction

1. The Committee considered the combined sixth and seventh periodic reports of Ethiopia<sup>1</sup> at its 2927th and 2928th meetings,<sup>2</sup> held on 26 January 2026, and adopted the present concluding observations at its 2936th meeting, held on 30 January 2026.

2. The Committee welcomes the submission of the combined sixth and seventh periodic reports of the State Party and the written replies to the list of issues,<sup>3</sup> which allowed for a better understanding of the situation of children's rights in the State Party. The Committee expresses its appreciation for the constructive dialogue held with the delegation of the State Party.

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

3. The Committee welcomes the progress achieved by the State Party in various areas, including the adoption of the National Children's Policy (2017) and the Policy's Implementation Strategy (2025), Proclamation No. 1307/2024, providing for the establishment within the Ethiopian Institution of the Ombudsman of a special division for women, children and persons with disabilities, and the General Education Proclamation (Proclamation No. 1368/2025), guaranteeing that no child may be denied general education owing to the absence of a birth certificate.

#### III. Factors and difficulties impeding the implementation of the Convention

4. The Committee notes the fact that the State Party has been seriously affected by complex emergencies – including armed conflict in northern Ethiopia, inter-ethnic conflict, large-scale displacement, earthquakes in northern Ethiopia and the severe effects of climate change, resulting in recurrent droughts and floods, coupled with severe economic instability exacerbated by inflation – that have had a negative impact on the realization of the rights and on the welfare of children in the country. The Committee also acknowledges and deeply regrets that the State Party has been confronted with considerable cuts in the support provided through international cooperation, which has left millions of children and families in urgent

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\* Adopted by the Committee at its 100th session (12–30 January 2026).

<sup>1</sup> [CRC/C/ETH/6-7](#).

<sup>2</sup> See [CRC/C/SR.2927](#) and [CRC/C/SR.2928](#).

<sup>3</sup> [CRC/C/ETH/RQ/6-7](#).



need of food aid, provoked hundreds of hunger-related deaths, slowed economic development and forced the State Party to focus on debt repayment at the expense of investment in basic social services.

#### **IV. Main areas of concern and recommendations**

5. The Committee reminds the State Party of the indivisibility and interdependence of all the rights enshrined in the Convention and emphasizes the importance of all the recommendations contained in the present concluding observations. The Committee would like to draw the State Party's attention to the recommendations concerning the following areas, in respect of which urgent measures must be taken: legislation (para. 8); birth registration and nationality (para. 23); abuse, neglect, sexual abuse and exploitation (para. 27); harmful practices (para. 30); health and healthcare services (para. 38); and children in armed conflict, including the implementation of the Optional Protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict (para. 52).

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

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

###### **Legislation**

7. The Committee is concerned that the full text of the Convention has not yet been published in the official gazette, thus making it difficult for law enforcement officials, judicial personnel and other professionals working with and for children to have access to and an understanding of its provisions, and that the legislation is still not completely harmonized with the Convention and its Optional Protocols.

**8. The Committee reiterates its previous concluding observations<sup>4</sup> and recommends that the State Party:**

- (a) **Publish the full text of the Convention in the official gazette;**
- (b) **Expedite the adoption of a federal children's act in accordance with the Convention and the Optional Protocols thereto, and clearly define a "child" as a person below the age of 18;**
- (c) **Harmonize and continue the review of existing laws related to children's rights to ensure that they are in full compliance with the principles and provisions of the Convention, particularly regarding inconsistencies in the administration of child justice, corporal punishment and the minimum age of marriage, including in family laws in Afar and Somalia Regional States.**

###### **Comprehensive policy and strategy**

**9. The Committee notes the adoption of the National Children's Policy Implementation Strategy in 2025 and of several key child-related policies, and recommends that the State Party:**

- (a) **Establish an institutional and monitoring framework to support the effective implementation and assessment of the impact of the National Children's Policy and other child-related policies;**

<sup>4</sup> [CRC/C/ETH/CO/4-5](#), para. 9.

(b) Effectively address the gaps in performance of the National Social Protection Policy.

#### Coordination

10. The Committee recommends that the State Party:

(a) Strengthen the intersectoral coordination of the Ministry of Women and Social Affairs with other relevant sectors to ensure that the Ministry is provided with the necessary human, technical and financial resources for its effective operation;

(b) Enhance the coordination of policies and measures on children's rights across the federal and regional levels, particularly ensuring effective mechanisms with regard to internally displaced persons and refugees.

#### Allocation of resources

11. The Committee recalls its general comment No. 19 (2016) on public budgeting for the realization of children's rights, and its previous concluding observations,<sup>5</sup> and recommends that the State Party:

(a) Conduct a comprehensive assessment of the budget needs of children and allocate adequate budgetary resources, in accordance with article 4 of the Convention, for the implementation of children's rights and, in particular, increase the budget allocated to social protection, education, health and protection against violence and address disparities on the basis of indicators related to children's rights;

(b) Ensure transparent and participatory budgeting through public dialogue, especially with children and for proper accountability of local authorities;

(c) Define budget lines for all children, with special attention paid to those in disadvantaged or vulnerable situations, such as children with disabilities, internally displaced and refugee children, who may require special social measures, and make sure that those budget lines are protected even during situations of economic crisis, natural disasters or other emergencies.

#### Data collection

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

(a) In cooperation with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), among other entities, continue to support the national roll-out of the Child Protection Information Management System to ensure the smooth referral of vulnerable children to the social services that they need;

(b) Expeditiously improve its data-collection system, particularly at the federal and regional levels, and ensure that data collected on children's rights cover all areas of the Convention and the Optional Protocols thereto in order to facilitate analysis of the situation of children, particularly those in situations of particular vulnerability;

(c) Ensure that statistical data and indicators on children's rights are shared among the ministries concerned and used for the formulation, monitoring and evaluation of policies, programmes and projects for the effective implementation of the Convention.

#### Access to justice and remedy

13. Welcoming the Free Legal Aid initiative, the Committee recommends that the State Party:

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., para. 13.

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

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

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

#### **Independent monitoring**

14. The Committee recalls its previous concluding observations<sup>6</sup> and recommends that the State Party:

(a) Ensure the independence and effectiveness of the Ethiopian Human Rights Commission and the Ethiopian Institution of the Ombudsman, including with regard to funding, mandate and immunities, to enable them to allocate sufficient financial and human resources to the promotion and protection of children's rights;

(b) Ensure that human rights institutions and their departments dedicated to children operate free from government interference to effectively address violations of children's rights, and hold accountable those responsible for maladministration;

(c) Receive, analyse and implement the recommendations of the human rights institutions to the greatest extent possible.

#### **Dissemination of the Convention and awareness-raising**

15. The Committee recommends that the State Party strengthen its awareness-raising programmes, including campaigns, in cooperation with civil society organizations, to ensure that the Convention and the Optional Protocols thereto are available in local languages and child-friendly versions accessible to children with disabilities, and are widely known to the general public, including parents and children themselves, and promote the active involvement of children in public outreach activities, including in measures targeting parents, social workers, teachers and law enforcement officials.

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

16. The Committee notes with appreciation that the State Party amended its legislation on civil society organizations in 2022. It urges the State Party:

(a) To develop clear guidelines for the registration of civil society organizations;

(b) To lift the remaining restrictions on the work of civil society organizations on sensitive issues, such as the rights of LGBTQ children and of children in conflict situations, and ensure transparency and safeguard their role in child rights advocacy by guaranteeing that they can operate freely and have access to conflict zones, prisons and alternative care centres;

(c) To increase resource allocations for the child-related initiatives of civil society organizations in cooperation with development partners;

(d) To take all the measures necessary to guarantee the freedom of action of children as human rights defenders and to build a climate of trust.

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<sup>6</sup> Ibid., para. 16.

### Children's rights and the business sector

17. The Committee recalls its general comment No. 16 (2013) on State obligations regarding the impact of the business sector on children's rights, the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, which were endorsed by the Human Rights Council in 2011, its previous concluding observations<sup>7</sup> and the concluding observations of the Human Rights Committee on the second periodic report of the State Party.<sup>8</sup> The Committee recommends that the State Party:

(a) Adopt and implement the draft national action plan on business and human rights;

(b) Introduce mandatory human rights due diligence requirements for businesses, with a specific focus on preventing child labour throughout supply chains, including in high-risk sectors;

(c) Establish a clear regulatory framework for industries, such as mining, operating in or managed from the State Party to ensure that their activities do not negatively affect human rights or endanger environmental, health, labour and other standards, especially those relating to children's rights;

(d) Ensure the effective implementation by companies, especially mining companies, of international and national environmental and health standards, effectively monitor the implementation of such standards, ensure appropriate sanctioning and remedies when violations occur, and ensure that appropriate international certification is sought;

(e) Require companies to undertake assessments of, consultations on and the full public disclosure of the impact of their business activities on the environment, health and children's rights and their plans to address that impact.

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

### Non-discrimination

18. Noting that children from disadvantaged and marginalized groups experience widespread discrimination, including in access to essential services, which in turn exacerbates their vulnerability and exclusion, the Committee recalls its previous concluding observations<sup>9</sup> and recommends that the State Party:

(a) Strengthen the implementation of targeted policies and programmes to address the needs of children from disadvantaged and marginalized groups, particularly refugee children, internally displaced children, children belonging to pastoralist, ethnic and Indigenous minorities, children with disabilities, girls, children in rural areas, children living in poverty, children in street situations and children with HIV/AIDS, and ensure that they have equitable access to education, healthcare, social services and documentation without discrimination;

(b) Repeal all discriminatory laws and end practices and norms that perpetuate gender bias and harmful practices against girls and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex children, through legal reform and awareness-raising efforts in families, communities, schools and alternative care settings;

(c) Conduct media campaigns to change traditional attitudes and harmful social norms and behaviours that contribute to discrimination, and promote tolerance and respect for diversity.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., para. 22.

<sup>8</sup> CCPR/C/ETH/CO/2, para. 48.

<sup>9</sup> CRC/C/ETH/CO/4-5, para. 24.

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

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

(a) Ensure that the right of children to have their best interests taken as a primary consideration is appropriately integrated and consistently interpreted and applied in all legislative, administrative and judicial proceedings and decisions and in all policies, programmes and projects that are relevant to, and have an impact on, children;

(b) Develop procedures and criteria to provide guidance to all relevant persons in authority on determining the best interests of the child as a primary consideration in every area.

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

20. In view of the fact that millions of children are affected by overlapping crises, which are exacerbating their vulnerabilities and intensifying existing gender inequalities and risks for girls, food insecurity and malnutrition, the Committee urges the State Party:

(a) To address underlying determinants of infant and child mortality, including conflict, disease outbreak, natural emergencies, social and economic deprivation and inequality;

(b) To expand social services and safety net programmes and ensure food accessibility for children and families in emergencies, focusing on children's unique vulnerabilities;

(c) To implement the technical guidance issued by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the application of a human rights-based approach to the implementation of policies and programmes to reduce and eliminate preventable mortality and morbidity of children under 5 years of age.<sup>10</sup>

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

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

(a) Continue to ensure that the children's parliament is composed of a wide representation of all categories of children to reflect the reality of childhood and ensure that it is provided with a meaningful mandate and adequate human, technical and financial resources, in order to facilitate children's effective engagement with national legislative processes on issues that affect them;

(b) Take measures to ensure the effective implementation of legislation recognizing the right of the child to be heard in relevant legal proceedings, including by establishing systems and/or procedures for social workers and courts to respect that right;

(c) Promote the meaningful participation of all children within the family, communities and schools and transform social norms and cultural attitudes that hinder effective and empowered child participation.

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

### **Birth registration and nationality**

22. The Committee notes the adoption of the Civil and Family Registration Proclamation (Proclamation No. 1370/2025). It is, however, seriously concerned that a large number of

<sup>10</sup> [A/HRC/27/31](#).

children under the age of 5 remain unregistered, with stark disparities between urban and rural areas, particularly in Somali Regional State, where the rates are particularly low.

23. **Recalling target 16.9 of the Sustainable Development Goals and its previous concluding observations,<sup>11</sup> the Committee urges the State Party:**

(a) **To remove legal barriers to birth registration, such as birth registration fees, the time limit of 90 days, the necessity for both parents to be present and the requirement to register the child in the place of habitual residence;**

(b) **To raise awareness among the population of the importance of birth registration;**

(c) **To strengthen mobile registration systems to reach remote and marginalized populations, such as children in street situations, children living in remote areas, children in orphanages and children in refugee camps and in sites for internally displaced persons, where health facilities or civil registry offices are not available within a short distance;**

(d) **To strengthen interoperability between civil registration systems and health services to improve data management and service provision, ensuring prompt and accurate birth registration;**

(e) **To strengthen the agency for civil registration and vital statistics so that it can manage the high volume of registrations and is closer to remote populations, and identify and regularize the situation of children who have not been registered at birth or who do not have national identity documents;**

(f) **To continue its efforts to reduce statelessness, consider ratifying the Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons and the Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness and continue to seek technical assistance from UNHCR and UNICEF, among other entities, for the implementation of these recommendations.**

#### **Freedom of association and peaceful assembly**

24. **The Committee notes with concern the reports of alleged physical abuse, arbitrary arrests and unlawful detention during the student protest in Addis Ababa in 2023, and the alleged detention of more than 67 girls aged between 11 and 16 while they were protesting for their basic rights to education and healthcare in Somali Regional State in December 2022. The Committee urges the State Party to prevent the arbitrary restriction of the freedom of peaceful assembly, prevent the disproportionate use of force, investigate allegations of violations of this right, ensure that those accountable are brought to justice and ensure that children are not threatened, arrested or detained for expressing their views.**

#### **Access to appropriate information**

25. **Recalling its general comment No. 25 (2021) on children's rights in relation to the digital environment and the 2026 joint statement of the Committee and other signing parties on artificial intelligence and the rights of the child, the Committee recommends that the State Party:**

(a) **Continue to improve digital inclusion for children in disadvantaged situations, such as children in remote areas, refugee and internally displaced children and children with disabilities, including by means of accessible and affordable online services and connectivity and by providing schools with affordable devices;**

(b) **Adequately protect children from harmful content and materials and online risks, and provide for mechanisms to prosecute violations.**

<sup>11</sup> [CRC/C/ETH/CO/4-5](#), para. 34.

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

**Abuse, neglect, sexual abuse and exploitation**

26. The Committee is seriously concerned about:

- (a) The lack of unified and comprehensive legislation on child protection;
- (b) The high prevalence of violence against children, including domestic violence, abuse, neglect, sexual and gender-based violence, bullying and online sexual exploitation and abuse;
- (c) Reports of solitary confinement, beating, threats, withholding of mosquito nets, and forced labour in detention centres;
- (d) The lack of reliable data on violence against children, particularly girls;
- (e) Underreporting, lack of thorough investigations and inefficiency of court processes in handling cases of violence against children.

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

- (a) **To adopt comprehensive national legislation on child protection and provide adequate resources for the effective implementation of the national strategy on prevention of and response to violence against women and children (2021–2026);**
- (b) **To establish a national database on all cases of violence against children, and undertake a comprehensive assessment of the extent, causes and nature of such violence;**
- (c) **To investigate independently and thoroughly all allegations of violence, including allegations of crimes related to gender-based violence, and ill-treatment in detention centres, bring the perpetrators to justice and ensure that they are duly sanctioned;**
- (d) **To provide regular substantive training for judges, lawyers, prosecutors, the police and other relevant professional groups on standardized gender- and child-sensitive procedures for dealing with child victims;**
- (e) **To establish mechanisms, procedures and guidelines to ensure mandatory reporting and multi-agency intervention, investigation and prosecution in all cases of sexual exploitation and abuse of children, with the aim of preventing the revictimization of such children;**
- (f) **To ensure that the testimonies of child victims and witnesses are promptly taken in child-friendly facilities with full respect for their rights, and that such procedures are audiovisually recorded and allowed as evidence during court proceedings, with the aim of avoiding revictimization and preserving evidence;**
- (g) **To ensure that children have access to confidential and child-friendly complaint mechanisms for the reporting of cases;**
- (h) **To continue expanding safe homes and one-stop centres at the regional level and provide them with the human, technical and financial resources necessary for their effective operation;**
- (i) **To strengthen and expand child-friendly three-digit helplines with an effective referral mechanism;**
- (j) **To conduct awareness-raising activities to combat social and gender norms and traditional beliefs that perpetuate violence against girls.**

### Corporal punishment

28. Recalling its general comment No. 8 (2006) on the right of the child to protection from corporal punishment and other cruel or degrading forms of punishment and its previous concluding observations,<sup>12</sup> the Committee urges the State Party:

- (a) To explicitly prohibit corporal punishment in law in all settings, including in the home, in childcare centres, in alternative care settings and in the administration of justice, and repeal the relevant provisions, such as those on the “right to administer chastisement” (arts. 68 (b) and 659 (2) of the Criminal Code);
- (b) To strengthen the promotion of positive, non-violent and participatory forms of child-rearing and discipline;
- (c) To conduct awareness-raising campaigns for parents and professionals working with and for children to promote attitudinal change, within the family and the community, with regard to corporal punishment.

### Harmful practices

29. The Committee notes that the State Party has implemented community awareness and behavioural change programmes to eliminate harmful cultural practices affecting children. It remains deeply concerned, however, that, despite its previous recommendations:

- (a) Child marriage is still legal and prevalent in most rural areas, and is particularly widespread in Afar and Somalia Regional States;
- (b) Girls are still widely subjected to female genital mutilation;
- (c) Children are still subjected to harmful practices – such as girls being left outside the house during menstruation, labour and childbirth, children with epilepsy being abandoned, children being abandoned or killed according to the practice of *Mingi*, and the provision of girls as compensation for murder cases (*Asha*) – with a severe detrimental impact on their life, development and survival.

30. Recalling joint general recommendation No. 31 of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women/general comment No. 18 of the Committee on the Rights of the Child (2019) on harmful practices, the Committee recalls its previous concluding observations<sup>13</sup> and urges the State Party:

- (a) To ensure that the minimum age of marriage is set at 18 years without exception and is enforced in all the regions of the State Party;
- (b) To ensure effective implementation, monitoring and progressive domestic financing of the national plan on prevention of and response to violence against children and adolescents, specifically targeting child marriage and female genital mutilation;
- (c) To consider raising the fines related to female genital mutilation in the Criminal Code, strictly enforce its criminalization, particularly in Afar and Somalia Regional States, including by introducing mandatory reporting, support the victims and ensure that those performing the practice are prosecuted and punished in accordance with the severity of the offence;
- (d) To develop awareness-raising campaigns and programmes to eliminate underlying social and gender norms and traditional and religious beliefs that contribute to child marriage, the practice of female genital mutilation, *Mingi*, *Asha* and all other harmful practices that have detrimental effects on the physical and mental health and well-being of children, targeting parents, households, local authorities, religious leaders, medical practitioners, teachers, social workers, judges, prosecutors and other professionals in contact with children.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., para. 42.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., para. 48.

### Recovery and reintegration of child victims

31. The Committee notes the steps taken to ensure the rights of all child victims and witnesses and recommends that the State Party put in place child-sensitive mechanisms to facilitate and promote the reporting of cases and ensure that complaint mechanisms are child-friendly and available both online and offline, paying particular attention to children with disabilities, girls, children in alternative care settings, children in detention facilities and refugee and internally displaced children, and ensure that child victims and witnesses of crimes are interviewed without delay by trained forensic professionals in child-friendly facilities, avoiding revictimization resulting from repetitive interviews.

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

### Family environment

32. Drawing the State Party's attention to its statement on article 5 of the Convention,<sup>14</sup> the Committee recommends that the State Party strengthen its efforts to assess and prevent the root causes of child abandonment and separation and provide adequate resources to effectively implement the Child Maintenance Guideline.

### Children deprived of a family environment

33. The Committee notes the adoption of directives on alternative care, foster care and domestic adoption. Drawing the State Party's attention to the Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children, the Committee recommends that the State Party:

(a) Ensure that policies and practices are guided by the principle that financial and material poverty – or conditions directly and solely attributable to such poverty – can never be the sole justification for removing a child from parental care, for entrusting a child to alternative care or for preventing the family reintegration of a child;

(b) Continue to phase out institutionalization and adopt, without delay, a strategy and action plan for deinstitutionalization, ensuring that it has adequate human, technical and financial resources for its implementation and includes systemic transformation of the childcare, welfare and protection systems;

(c) Ensure sufficient alternative family-based and community-based care options for children who cannot stay with their families, including by allocating sufficient financial resources for foster care and domestic adoption;

(d) Establish and regularly monitor quality standards for all alternative care settings, ensure the periodic review of the placement of children in foster care and institutions, and provide accessible channels for reporting, monitoring and remedying the maltreatment of children;

(e) Ensure adequate safeguards and clear criteria, based on the needs as well as the best interests of the child, for determining whether a child should be placed in alternative care and ensure that decisions on the removal of children from their families are subject to judicial review.

### Adoption

34. Noting the Revised Family Code (Amendment) Proclamation (Proclamation No. 1070/2018), by which intercountry adoption was prohibited, and the subsequent decision of the Cassation Bench of the Federal Supreme Court (File No. 189201) in March 2020, the Committee recommends that the State Party:

<sup>14</sup> Available at <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/hrbodies/crc/statements/CRC-Article-5-statement.pdf>.

(a) Strengthen training for actors involved in the adoption process, including social workers and judges, on children's rights and the best interests of the child so that they can better assess families and support reunification or adoption processes;

(b) Enact measures to support adopted persons and to facilitate their access to their birth records and biological background information, including those who were subject to international adoption in the past.

#### **Children of incarcerated parents**

35. The Committee recommends that the State Party:

(a) Ensure that children of incarcerated parents receive appropriate nutrition, have access to healthcare and other services and are provided with birth certificates when they are born in detention centres;

(b) Consider replicating good practices from Afar and Binshangul Gumuz Regional States, where special procedures allow for mothers detained with their children to be released on bail, and from Kaliti maximum-security prison, where children detained with their mothers are provided with day-care services within the prison.

### **F. Children with disabilities (art. 23)**

36. Recalling its general comment No. 9 (2006) on the rights of children with disabilities, the Committee urges the State Party to adopt a human rights-based approach to disability, to set up a comprehensive strategy for the inclusion of children with disabilities and:

(a) To harmonize national legislation with the human rights model of disability, adopt a comprehensive legal and institutional framework on disability and provide adequate resources for effective implementation of the draft policy on disability;

(b) To organize the collection of data on children with disabilities and develop an efficient and harmonized system for disability assessment in order to facilitate access for children with all types of disabilities to services;

(c) To strengthen the early identification, assessment and rehabilitation of children with disabilities;

(d) To improve the accessibility and quality of physical rehabilitation services and assistive devices, particularly in conflict-affected areas;

(e) To establish a strong legal and regulatory framework on standards of accessibility for public and private institutions;

(f) To undertake awareness-raising campaigns aimed at government officials, the general public and families to combat the stigmatization of and prejudice against children with disabilities and promote a positive image of children with disabilities and their status as rights holders.

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

#### **Health and healthcare services**

37. The Committee is deeply concerned about:

(a) The serious interruptions in vaccinations, particularly in conflict-affected areas, and the fact that the State Party has the second highest number of zero-dose children in Africa (1.13 million), which has led to multiple outbreaks of preventable diseases such as measles and poliomyelitis in several regions;

(b) Infant mortality rates, at 47 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2019, exacerbated by outbreaks of cholera, dengue, tuberculosis and malaria;

(c) Disparities in access to essential healthcare services, particularly in rural and conflict-affected areas, and issues related to enrolment in Community-based Health Insurance, particularly for internally displaced children;

(d) The impact of the funding cuts to HIV/AIDS programmes on children living with HIV/AIDS;

(e) The findings in the preliminary report on the National Food and Nutrition Strategy Baseline Survey, published in March 2023, that 39 per cent of children under 5 years of age were affected by stunting, 22 per cent by underweight, 11 per cent by wasting and 6 per cent by overweight;

(f) The limited investment in long-term community-based resilience-building, the presence of corruption, the lack of technical expertise, the lack of human resources and the lack of institutional capacity, all of which are impeding the effectiveness of interventions through nutrition programme;

(g) Reports of cases of medical negligence, particularly those affecting children;

(h) Conflict-related destruction and looting of health facilities and the displacement of trained health service providers.

**38. Recalling its general comments No. 3 (2003) on HIV/AIDS and the rights of the child and No. 15 (2013) on the right of the child to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health, the Committee urges the State Party:**

**(a) To strengthen and expand community-level immunization services, especially for zero-dose children in underserved and conflict-affected areas, in order to prevent outbreaks of diseases such as measles and poliomyelitis, and conduct intensive campaigns to improve coverage rates;**

**(b) To continue to improve rates of infant, under-5 and maternity mortality and address the leading causes of child mortality, particularly outbreaks of cholera, dengue, tuberculosis and malaria;**

**(c) To address disparities in healthcare access among regions, particularly in remote and conflict-affected areas such as Binshangul Gumuz, Gambela and Somali Regional States;**

**(d) To improve access to and the coverage of antiretroviral therapy and prophylaxis for HIV-infected pregnant women, strengthen measures in place to prevent mother-to-child transmission of HIV/AIDS and improve follow-up treatment for mothers with HIV/AIDS and their infants;**

**(e) To operationalize policies and programmes on food and nutrition to enhance interdepartmental coordination and support for nutrition initiatives, increase resources and personnel for the national nutrition council, enhance transparency and effectiveness in nutrition programme partnerships and financial tracking to prevent corruption and ensure efficient use of funds;**

**(f) To promote exclusive breastfeeding for at least six months, with appropriate guidance and support for breastfeeding by HIV-infected mothers;**

**(g) To effectively implement the Health Service Administration and Regulation Proclamation (Proclamation No. 1362/2024), under which every health institution is required to establish a health professional ethics committee, responsible for monitoring professional misconduct;**

**(h) To increase efforts to reconstruct or establish health facilities and health service providers in conflict-affected areas and sites for internally displaced persons, and ensure their effective functioning and accessibility;**

**(i) To seek technical assistance from UNICEF, the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations in this regard.**

### Adolescent health

39. Recalling its general comments No. 4 (2003) on adolescent health and development in the context of the Convention and No. 20 (2016) on the implementation of the rights of the child during adolescence, the Committee recommends that the State Party:

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

(b) Ensure that all adolescents, including those who are out of school, those in rural and conflict-affected areas and those in sites for internally displaced persons and refugees, have access to youth-friendly reproductive health services and receive confidential and child-friendly information and services on HIV/AIDS and sexual and reproductive health, including access to contraceptives;

(c) Decriminalize abortion in all circumstances and ensure access to safe abortion and post-abortion care services for adolescents, making sure that their views are always heard and given due consideration as part of decision-making processes;

(d) Expand the availability of Michu clinics;

(e) Invest in developing a qualified workforce of psychologists, psychiatrists and social workers to provide care and support in the rising number of cases of mental health issues, particularly for children in disaster- and conflict-affected areas;

(f) Address the prevalence of the use of drugs and other psychoactive substances by children, including the chewing of khat, and the use of alcohol and tobacco, including around schools and by children in street situations, by, inter alia, effectively implementing the Narcotic and Psychotropic Medicines Control Directive (Directive No. 1121/2025) and providing children with accurate and objective information and life skills education on preventing substance use;

(g) Develop specialized and child-friendly treatment for drug dependence among children.

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

40. The Committee recommends that the State Party:

(a) Strengthen the provision of safe drinking water and equitable access to age-appropriate, gender-responsive sanitation and hygiene interventions across all regions, particularly underserved and conflict-affected communities;

(b) Ensure that development projects, which could result in evictions and demolition of houses, include consideration of the well-being of children, with a special focus on children in vulnerable situations;

(c) Ensure that children and their families living in poverty receive sufficient financial support and have free and non-discriminatory access to essential services, including healthcare, education, housing and social protection.

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

### Environmental health

41. The Committee recommends that the State Party:

(a) Conduct an assessment of the effects of polluted air, water and soil on children's health as a basis for designing a well-resourced strategy to remedy the situation, and regulate the maximum concentrations of air and water pollutants;

(b) Urgently and effectively implement the action plan under the memorandum of understanding between the authorities of Oromiya Regional State and MIDROC Gold Mine, a mining company, regarding the Lega Dembi gold mine, including the resolution of the social, health and environmental effects on children, payment of compensation to and the rehabilitation of affected children and the creation of an independent mechanism for ensuring the transparency and accountability of the mining company;

(c) Implement the environmental health standards, indicators and definitions set by WHO;

(d) Ensure that health professionals receive training in the diagnosis and treatment of the health effects of environmental harm on children.

#### **Impact of climate change on the rights of the child**

42. Recalling its general comment No. 26 (2023) on children's rights and the environment, with a special focus on climate change, the Committee recommends that the State Party:

(a) Ensure that children's special vulnerabilities, needs and views are taken into account in the National Adaptation Plan, the submission of the next round of nationally determined contributions, the Climate-resilient Green Economy Strategy and sectoral and disaster risk reduction strategies;

(b) Increase children's awareness and preparedness for climate change and natural disasters by incorporating the topic into the school curriculum and teachers' training programmes;

(c) Strengthen incentives for the private sector and the regulatory authority to adopt child-centred climate adaptation and resilience-building measures and expand and scale up access to renewable energy, including the conversion of health facilities, schools and water points to solar power.

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

#### **Aims and coverage of education**

43. While commending the State Party for the adoption of the General Education Proclamation (Proclamation No. 1368/2025), the Committee recommends that the State Party:

(a) Expeditiously implement all provisions of the General Education Proclamation throughout the territory;

(b) Increase budget allocations and human and technical resources for the operationalization of the General Education Proclamation, the Education and Training Policy, the Sixth Education Sector Development Programme, the multisectoral policy framework on early childhood development and education and the Code of Conduct on the Prevention of School-related Gender-based Violence in Schools;

(c) Ensure that all girls and boys complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes;

(d) Improve the rates of enrolment and retention, particularly for girls and children with disabilities in primary schools, expand the National School Feeding Programme with a view to improving children's health, education and cognitive development, and address, inter alia, teacher absence, bribery and favouritism, cultural and traditional barriers and inadequate infrastructure and resources, which hinder enrolment and affect dropout rates;

(e) **Improve literacy and numeracy outcomes, particularly for marginalized groups and for girls;**

(f) **Consistently enforce the Manual on Positive Child Disciplining to prevent corporal punishment of children in schools and protect them from other harmful action, continue to ensure that school discipline is administered in a manner consistent with the child's human dignity, as set out in article 28 (2) of the Convention, and develop guidance and training for teachers on positive discipline to address violence and other disturbances in schools;**

(g) **Ensure that pregnant teenagers and adolescent mothers are supported and assisted in continuing their education in mainstream schools;**

(h) **Take the measures necessary to improve the accessibility and quality of education, and provide quality training for teachers, with a particular emphasis on rural areas;**

(i) **Ensure that human rights education, the principles of the Convention and peace education are integrated into the mandatory school curriculum and into the training of teachers and education professionals, taking into account the framework of the World Programme for Human Rights Education;**

(j) **Ensure access to water, sanitation and hygiene services in all schools;**

(k) **Develop and promote quality vocational training to enhance the skills of children, especially those who drop out of school;**

(l) **Expediently adopt national standards on early childhood care and on the qualifications of educators and expand access to standardized, quality early childhood development for all children.**

#### **Inclusive education**

44. **The Committee recommends that the State Party:**

(a) **Ensure that all children with disabilities benefit from early childhood intervention and have access to inclusive education in mainstream schools, and that schools are equipped with trained teachers and accessible infrastructure and teaching materials;**

(b) **Ensure adequate human, financial and technical resources to support families of children with disabilities so that cost is not an obstacle for children to access education and specialized care;**

(c) **Continue to recover and speed up the reconstruction of educational infrastructure in conflict-affected areas, ensure the safety of students and educators in schools and provide for the full reintegration into the educational system of children in areas affected by conflict and humanitarian crisis, particularly in Amhara, Oromiya and Tigray Regional States.**

#### **Rest, leisure, play, recreational activities, cultural life and the arts**

45. **Recalling its general comment No. 17 (2013) on the right of the child to rest, leisure, play, recreational activities, cultural life and the arts, the Committee recommends that the State Party provide children, including children with disabilities, girls, children in remote areas, children in sites for refugees and internally displaced persons and children in marginalized and disadvantaged situations, with safe, accessible, inclusive spaces for play and socialization.**

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

**Asylum-seeking, refugee and internally displaced children**

46. The Committee notes the adoption of the Refugees Proclamation (Proclamation No. 1110/2019) and the National Comprehensive Refugee Response Strategy, into which child protection is integrated as a core component of refugee response and service delivery. Recalling its general comment No. 6 (2005) on the treatment of unaccompanied and separated children outside their country of origin, joint general comments No. 3 and No. 4 of the Committee on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families/No. 22 and No. 23 of the Committee on the Rights of the Child (2017) on the human rights of children in the context of international migration, the concluding observations of the Committee against Torture on the second periodic report of the State Party,<sup>15</sup> the concluding observations of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women on the eighth periodic report of the State Party<sup>16</sup> and its previous concluding observations,<sup>17</sup> the Committee urges the State Party:

(a) To strengthen referral and case management frameworks for asylum-seeking, refugee and internally displaced children, particularly unaccompanied and separated children, including specialized mental health and psychosocial support, education, healthcare, food, protection-related services, social protection schemes and increased access to self-reliance opportunities;

(b) To deal with cases involving unaccompanied asylum-seeking and refugee children in a positive, humane and expeditious manner, in line with article 10 (1) of the Convention, as a means of identifying durable solutions;

(c) To ensure that migrant children are not detained on the basis of their or their parents' migration status and that alternatives to detention are available through the timely provision of safe and dignified accommodation while maintaining family unity;

(d) To address the vulnerabilities of refugee and internally displaced children, particularly those affected by sexual and gender-based violence.

**Children belonging to minority and Indigenous groups**

47. Recalling its general comment No. 11 (2009) on Indigenous children and their rights under the Convention, the Committee urges the State Party to prevent the eviction and displacement of Indigenous Peoples, including pastoralists, provide redress to those evicted or displaced from their lands, improve child protection, infrastructure, social services and educational and healthcare access, address environmental challenges, combat severe malnutrition and prevent sexual and gender-based violence against the children of pastoralists.

**Economic exploitation, including child labour**

48. The Committee recommends that the State Party prevent the involvement of children in hazardous work, eliminate the worst forms of child labour and economic exploitation, including in agriculture, mining, domestic service, manufacturing and begging, strengthen labour inspection mechanisms, with a specific focus on child labour, and rigorously enforce existing laws and regulations.

<sup>15</sup> CAT/C/ETH/CO/2, para. 29.

<sup>16</sup> CEDAW/C/ETH/CO/8, para. 52.

<sup>17</sup> CRC/C/ETH/CO/4-5, para. 68.

### Children in street situations

49. Recalling its general comment No. 21 (2017) on children in street situations and its previous concluding observations,<sup>18</sup> the Committee urges the State Party to assess the number of children in street situations, ensure their access to adequate nutrition, healthcare, clothing, housing and educational opportunities, promote and implement programmes aimed at their physical and psychological recovery and social reintegration and facilitate their reunification with their families, taking into account the best interests of the child.

### Trafficking

50. The Committee recommends that the State Party:

(a) Enact laws criminalizing all forms of trafficking in children, improve protection of children at risk of trafficking and hold traffickers accountable, particularly in conflict-affected areas;

(b) Implement targeted prevention programmes to address the root causes of trafficking in children, and raise awareness among vulnerable groups;

(c) Ensure the effective provision of referral and support services to children who are victims of trafficking.

### Administration of child justice

51. Recalling its general comment No. 24 (2019) on children's rights in the child justice system, the Committee urges the State Party to assess its child justice system and bring it fully into line with the Convention and other relevant international instruments. In particular, the Committee urges the State Party:

(a) To draft a comprehensive law on juvenile justice and expand specialized child justice, including child-friendly benches in court;

(b) To raise the legal age of criminal responsibility to at least 14 years of age and, for those who are below this age, develop child-friendly and multidisciplinary responses to the first signs of behaviour that would, if the child were above this age, be considered an offence;

(c) To actively promote non-judicial measures, such as diversion and mediation, for all children under the age of 18 who are alleged as, accused of or recognized as having infringed criminal law and, wherever possible, the use of non-custodial sentences for children, such as probation or community service, and ensure that healthcare and psychosocial services are provided to such children;

(d) To ensure that detention is used only as a measure of last resort and for the shortest appropriate period of time, and is subject to judicial review on a regular basis with a view to release;

(e) To ensure, in the few situations where deprivation of liberty is justified as a measure of last resort, that the children detained are not held together with adults and that detention conditions are compliant with international standards, including with regard to access to education and vocational training, healthcare services, food, water and recreational activities;

(f) To strengthen the training of judges, prosecutors, lawyers, police officers, child probation officers and all other professionals in the child justice system, and ensure that training is continuous and covers all areas of the Convention.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., para. 66.

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

52. The Committee welcomes the progress made in the processes of national dialogue, transitional justice and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, but remains deeply concerned about the significant increase in grave violations of children's rights, including the killing and maiming of children, sexual violence against children and the abduction of children, as well as incidents of the denial of humanitarian access.

53. **The Committee urges the State Party to comply with applicable international law and:**

(a) **To adopt a national strategy for the prevention of the involvement of children in armed conflict;**

(b) **To end and prevent grave violations of children's rights, including sexual and gender-based violence, abduction and arbitrary detention, allow and facilitate safe, timely and unimpeded humanitarian access, and urgently facilitate access to encampments to enable children to be identified and transferred to civilian actors in the field of child protection;**

(c) **To hold perpetrators accountable and provide assistance, medical care, including reproductive healthcare, psychosocial support and legal aid to conflict-affected children;**

(d) **To facilitate the clearance of explosive ordnance, in particular in and around schools, and provide mine risk education for children;**

(e) **To prioritize the prompt release, disarmament, rehabilitation and reintegration of child victims of recruitment and their family reunification;**

(f) **To provide psychosocial support and rehabilitation services to all children who have been affected by conflict-related trauma, including specialized support for child victims of sexual and gender-based violence;**

(g) **To protect children from recruitment by and association with armed groups and forces by strengthening systems for birth registration to ensure accurate documentation of age;**

(h) **To protect schools and hospitals from attacks and from being used as military bases, and endorse the Safe Schools Declaration.**

### **L. Ratification of the Optional Protocol on a communications procedure**

54. The Committee recommends that the State Party ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention on a communications procedure.

55. The Committee urges the State Party to fulfil its reporting obligations under the Optional Protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict and the Optional Protocol on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, given that the related initial reports have been overdue since 14 May 2014.

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

56. The Committee recommends that the State Party, in order to further strengthen the fulfilment of children's rights, consider ratifying the following core human rights instruments:

(a) **Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights;**

(b) **Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty;**

- (c) **Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights;**
- (d) **Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women;**
- (e) **Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment;**
- (f) **International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families;**
- (g) **International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance;**
- (h) **Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.**

## **N. Cooperation with regional bodies**

57. The Committee recommends that the State Party cooperate with the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child of the African Union on the implementation of the Convention and other human rights instruments, both in the State Party and in other States members of the African Union.

## **V. Implementation and reporting**

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

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

### **B. National mechanism for reporting and follow-up**

59. The Committee recommends that the State Party establish a standing government structure and ensure that it has the mandate and adequate human, technical and financial resources to coordinate and engage with, and prepare reports to, international and regional human rights mechanisms and to coordinate and track national follow-up to, and the implementation of, treaty obligations and the recommendations and decisions emanating from such mechanisms effectively. The Committee emphasizes that such a structure should be adequately and continuously supported by dedicated staff and should have the capacity to consult systematically with the Ethiopian Human Rights Commission and civil society.

### **C. Next report**

60. The Committee will establish and communicate the due date of the combined eighth and ninth periodic reports of the State Party in due course, in line with the envisaged predictable reporting calendar and following the adoption of a list of issues and questions prior to reporting, if applicable, for the State Party. The reports should be in compliance with the Committee's harmonized treaty-specific reporting

**guidelines<sup>19</sup> and should not exceed 21,200 words.<sup>20</sup> In the event that reports exceeding the established word limit are submitted, the State Party will be asked to shorten the reports. If the State Party is not in a position to review and resubmit the reports, translation thereof for the purposes of consideration by the Committee cannot be guaranteed.**

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<sup>19</sup> [CRC/C/58/Rev.3](#).

<sup>20</sup> General Assembly resolution 68/268, para. 16.