



Convention on the Rights of the Child

Distr.: General
12 December 2025

Original: English
English, French and Spanish only

Committee on the Rights of the Child

List of issues in relation to the report submitted by the United States of America under article 8 (1) of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict*

1. The State Party is requested to submit in writing additional, updated information, of 10,700 words maximum, by 15 February 2026. The Committee may take up all aspects of children's rights set out in the Optional Protocol during the dialogue with the State Party.
2. Please clarify whether the State Party intends:
 - (a) To reconsider its position regarding the prohibition of the recruitment of children under the age of 18 years into its armed forces, with updated data on the number of children under the age of 18 years currently in its armed forces;
 - (b) To consider withdrawing its declaration on the Optional Protocol, in particular its understandings of the phrase "direct participation in hostilities" and with regard to the minimum age for voluntary recruitment.
3. Please clarify how the criterion of being "in the national interest", as referred to in the State Party's report,¹ is interpreted in the granting of presidential waivers, under the Child Soldiers Prevention Act of 2018, to countries involved in the recruitment or use of children in armed conflict and/or hostilities.
4. Please inform the Committee as to whether the State Party plans to establish a national independent mechanism in line with the principles relating to the status of national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights (the Paris Principles) to monitor the situation of children's rights, including the rights covered under the Optional Protocol.
5. Please provide additional information on the measures taken to disseminate the Optional Protocol among the general public, especially children and their families, in particular by including it in school curricula at the relevant levels and in the information package received by recruits to the armed forces.
6. Please inform the Committee of the measures taken to identify children who enter or are already in the State Party's territory who may have been recruited or used in hostilities abroad, with the aim of rehabilitation and social reintegration of such children, and provide relevant data.
7. In the light of the information provided in the State Party's report,² please specify:

* Adopted by the Committee intersessionally on 29 September 2025.

¹ CRC/C/OPAC/USA/5, para. 7.

² CRC/C/OPAC/USA/5, paras. 13 and 14.



(a) The number of children who have been injured and killed in military operations conducted by the State Party or with its support, and whether any steps have been taken to ensure that the perpetrators of violations against children, in particular the deaths of children as a result of air strikes, by its armed forces or foreign forces backed by the State Party are brought to justice and receive sanctions commensurate with the gravity of the crimes committed;

(b) The measures taken or foreseen to prevent such violations and to provide compensation to all victims and their families;

(c) Details of the arrest and secret detention of children in connection with operations following the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001, in particular regarding the conditions of their detention and measures to provide them with rehabilitation services and reparation.

8. Please inform the Committee as to whether the State Party intends to amend the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 and United States Code, title 18, section 503, which permit military recruiters to have access to the personal information of secondary school students. Please also provide information on the steps taken:

(a) To ensure that recruitment policies and practices do not target persons under the age of 18 years and to abolish recruitment quotas;

(b) To ensure that educational institutions comply with their legal obligation to notify parents of the ability to opt out of the list of students provided to recruiters;

(c) To investigate allegations of the falsification of documents, including parental consent, and of threats and harassment used during the recruitment.

9. Please clarify whether the State Party has taken measures:

(a) To investigate cases of coercion of children to participate in the Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps programme and allegations of sexual abuse therein;

(b) To ban training for children in the use of firearms, including in the context of the Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps and other courses;

(c) To monitor the United States Cadet Corps and the activities undertaken therein;

(d) To address the racial, economic and gender-based dynamics in the recruitment practices and functioning of programmes such as the Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps, especially in view of the 2025 executive order ending diversity, equity and inclusion programmes within the armed forces.

10. Given that the State Party's legislation criminalizes the recruitment of children under the age of 15 years only, please provide updated information on the efforts made to prohibit explicitly and criminalize the recruitment and use of children between the ages of 15 and 18 years in hostilities by the armed forces or by private military and security companies abroad. Please also update the Committee about measures taken to prohibit the recruitment and use of children under the age of 18 years by non-State armed groups, including private military companies.

11. Please clarify how the Dignity for Immigrants while Guarding Our Nation to Ignite and Deliver the American Dream (DIGNIDAD – Dignity) Act of 2025 may affect the right of children who were engaged in armed conflict abroad – considered as victims first and foremost – and who are otherwise eligible for protection to seek asylum in the State Party. Please also specify whether measures have been taken to prioritize the best interests of children in the State Party's policies related to migration and asylum.

12. Please provide further information on:

(a) How the presidential waivers allowing arms exports to countries where children are known to be, or may potentially be, recruited or used in armed conflict and/or hostilities have contributed to the prevention of such practices, including in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Somalia and Yemen; and measures taken to ensure that no arms are transferred to a country that commits serious violations of international human rights law and international humanitarian law;

(b) Measures taken to cooperate internationally in implementing the Optional Protocol, including in the prevention of activities contrary to the Protocol and in the rehabilitation and social reintegration of children who are victims of such acts, including through technical cooperation and financial assistance;

(c) Measures taken to ensure that its funding cuts in international cooperation do not affect children protected by the Optional Protocol.
