



Convention on the Rights of the Child

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Committee on the Rights of the Child

Concluding observations on the combined third and fourth periodic reports of Lithuania, adopted by the Committee at its sixty-fourth session (16 September–4 October 2013)

1. The Committee considered the combined third and fourth periodic reports of Lithuania (CRC/C/LTU/3-4) at its 1826th and 1827th meetings (see CRC/C/SR.1826 and 1827), held on 23 September 2013, and adopted, at its 1845th meeting, held on 4 October 2013, the following concluding observations.

I. Introduction

2. The Committee welcomes the submission of the combined third and fourth periodic reports of Lithuania and the written replies to its list of issues (CRC/C/LTU/Q/3-4/Add.1), which allowed for a better understanding of the situation of children's rights in the State party. The Committee appreciates the constructive dialogue with the State party's high-level multisectoral delegation.

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

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

- (a) The amendments to the Criminal Code on 30 June 2012, expanding the definition of trafficking in human beings;
- (b) The Law on Protection against Domestic Violence on 26 May 2011;
- (c) The amendments to the Criminal Code on 2 July 2010, raising the age of sexual consent to 16 years;
- (d) The Law on Minimum and Medium Supervision of the Child on 28 June 2007;
- (e) The Resolution of the Government on the Procedure on Temporary Departure of a Child to Foreign States on 16 July 2008, making the consent of one of the parents obligatory when a child travels outside the Schengen area;
- (f) The Law on Social Services on 1 July 2006, providing access to social services to vulnerable groups, including children; and

(g) The Law on Social Assistance for Pupils on 13 June 2006, aimed at reducing the social exclusion of families with children, and providing adequate nutrition and other assistance in schools.

4. The Committee also welcomes the ratification of and/or accession to:

(a) The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Optional Protocol thereto in August 2010;

(b) The Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse in April 2013;

(c) The Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings in July 2012; and

(d) The Additional Protocol to the Council of Europe Convention on cybercrime, concerning the criminalization of acts of a racist and xenophobic nature committed through computer systems in October 2006.

5. The Committee also welcomes the following policy measures:

(a) The Child Welfare Programme 2013–2018;

(b) The National Programme for the Social Integration of the Disabled 2013–2019;

(c) The National Education Strategy 2013–2022;

(d) The National Programme on Drug Control and Prevention of Drug Addiction 2010–2016;

(e) The National Programme for the Prevention of Violence against Children and for Assistance to Children 2008–2012; and

(f) The Programme for Preschool and Pre-Primary Education Development 2007–2012.

III. Main areas of concern and recommendations

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

The Committee's previous recommendations

6. While welcoming the State party's efforts to implement the concluding observations on its second periodic report (CRC/C/83/Add.14), the Committee notes with regret that some of the recommendations contained therein have not been sufficiently addressed.

7. **The Committee urges the State party to take all necessary measures to address those recommendations from the concluding observations (CRC/C/LTU/CO/2) that have not been implemented or sufficiently implemented. In particular, it recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Ensure, in the light of the extensive data provided, that all data are disaggregated, inter alia, by age, gender, ethnicity, socioeconomic background, urban and rural areas, and by groups of children in need of special protection, in order to allow for detailed analysis of the situation of all children;**

(b) **Strengthen its support to the Office of the Children's Rights Ombudsman, including by providing sufficient human and financial resources to**

enable the Office to effectively carry out its mandate and monitor the fulfilment of children's rights under the Convention; and

(c) Continue its efforts to provide adequate and systematic training and/or awareness-raising about children's rights to professionals who work with and for children, such as judges, lawyers, law enforcement officials, civil servants, local government officials, teachers, social workers and health personnel, and especially to children themselves.

Legislation

8. The Committee takes note of the draft Law on Fundamentals of Protection of the Rights of the Child, which, according to the State party's information, contains many provisions that are in compliance with the Convention. However, it regrets the delay in the finalization and adoption of the law. The Committee is also concerned that the proposed draft contains provisions that are in conflict with the principles established by the Convention, inter alia, because they do not fully recognize children as rights holders.

9. **The Committee recommends that the State party revise its draft Law on Fundamentals of Protection of the Rights of the Child in order to better reflect the principles and provisions of the Convention that establish children as rights holders. It also recommends that the State party expedite the adoption of the revised draft law and other legislative proposals in the area of children's rights to bring its domestic legislation into full conformity with the Convention. It urges the State party to ensure that the laws are fully and effectively implemented and to establish enforcement mechanisms.**

Comprehensive policy and strategy

10. The Committee notes that the State party has adopted numerous programmes and plans of action in many areas covered by the Convention. However, it regrets that the State party lacks a comprehensive policy or strategy that would cover all issues related to the implementation of children's rights.

11. **The Committee recommends that the State party take measures to formulate a comprehensive policy on children's rights that would guide the development of programmes and projects that are needed and establish systems to monitor and evaluate them. It should provide the relevant bodies with the necessary human, technical and financial resources and clearly indicate their roles and responsibilities at the national, municipal and local levels.**

Coordination

12. The Committee notes that the State Child Protection and Adoption Service is responsible for inter-agency coordination on children's rights. However, the Committee is concerned that this body lacks the necessary authority to perform its duties properly and that its activities are limited to methodological counselling.

13. **The Committee recommends that the State party take the necessary measures to strengthen the State Child Protection and Adoption Service and provide it with sufficient authority and adequate human, technical and financial resources to ensure the effective coordination of children's rights activities across all sectors and at national, municipal and local levels.**

Allocation of resources

14. The Committee notes the State party's assertion that, despite the economic crisis, budget allocations to areas concerning children's rights have not been affected. However, the Committee is concerned that the budget allocations to children's rights remain inadequate and that they are not efficiently managed.

15. **In the light of its day of general discussion on "Resources for the Rights of the Child — Responsibility of States" in 2007, and with emphasis on articles 2, 3, 4 and 6 of the Convention, the Committee recommends that the State party:**

- (a) **Increase its budget allocations to the implementation of children's rights;**
- (b) **Earmark specific budgetary resources for the implementation of the rights of children in marginalized and disadvantaged situations; and**
- (c) **Establish an effective system of tracking, monitoring and evaluating the allocation and use of resources for children by all relevant sectors throughout the budget, thus ensuring that investments in children's rights are transparent.**

B. General principles (arts. 2, 3, 6 and 12 of the Convention)**Non-discrimination**

16. The Committee is concerned about gaps in the implementation of the 2008 Equal Opportunities Law and ongoing discrimination against children in marginalized and disadvantaged situations, including children with disabilities, Roma children, children living in poverty, children living in care institutions and children in conflict with the law.

17. **The Committee urges the State party to enforce its anti-discrimination legislation and take urgent measures to prevent discrimination against children in marginalized and disadvantaged situations, including children with disabilities, Roma children, children living in poverty, children living in care institutions and children in conflict with the law. The Committee further recommends that the State party include information in its next periodic report on measures and programmes of relevance to the Convention that the State party has undertaken in follow-up to the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action adopted at the 2001 World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance and the outcome document adopted at the 2009 Durban Review Conference.**

Best interests of the child

18. The Committee notes that, under the Civil Code of the State party, the regulation of family relations take into consideration the protection and safeguarding of children's rights and legitimate interests. However, the Committee is concerned that the "best interests of the child" are not fully incorporated into domestic legislation, since they are not equivalent to the "interests" or "legitimate interests" of the child. The principle of the best interests of the child does not therefore seem to be properly understood and consistently applied.

19. **The Committee draws the State party's attention to its general comment No. 14 (2013) on the right of the child to have his or her best interests taken as a primary consideration and urges the State party to amend its legislation to include specific reference to the "best interests of the child" and better reflect the right of the child to have his or her best interests taken as a primary consideration, as required by the Convention. It also recommends that the State party strengthen its efforts to ensure that this right is appropriately integrated and consistently applied in all legislative, administrative and judicial proceedings as well as in all policies, programmes and**

projects that are relevant to and have an impact on children at central and local levels. In this regard, the State party is encouraged to develop procedures and criteria to provide guidance to all relevant persons in authority on determining the best interests of the child in every area, and to disseminate these to the public, courts of law, administrative authorities and legislative bodies.

Respect for the views of the child

20. While noting that the right to be heard is included in a number of the State party's laws, the Committee is concerned that there are gaps in the implementation of these laws and that the right of the child to express his or her opinion is often considered to be a mere formality.

21. **The Committee draws the State party's attention to its general comment No. 12 (2009) on the right of the child to be heard and recommends that it take measures to strengthen this right in accordance with article 12 of the Convention. It recommends that, in doing so, the State party take the necessary measures to implement its legislation and promote and facilitate respect for the views of children in all settings on all matters affecting them.**

C. Civil rights and freedoms (arts. 7, 8, 13–17, 19 and 37 (a) of the Convention)

Right to identity

22. The Committee is concerned about the existence and proliferation of so-called baby boxes, which allow people to abandon children anonymously. This violates, inter alia, articles 7, 8, 9 and 19 of the Convention.

23. **The Committee strongly urges the State party to take all measures necessary to end the practice of anonymous abandonment and to strengthen and promote alternatives without delay. The Committee also urges the State party to increase its efforts to study and address the root causes of the abandonment of infants. The response should include the provision of family planning, reproductive health services, adequate counselling and social support for unplanned pregnancies, the prevention of high-risk pregnancies, and support for families in need, while making the possibility of anonymous births at hospitals a measure of last resort to avoid the abandonment and/or death of the child. In that respect, the State party should keep a confidential record of the parents, to which the child could gain access at a later stage, taking into account the duty to fully comply with all the provisions of the Convention.**

D. Violence against children (articles 19, 37 (a) and 39 of the Convention)

Corporal punishment

24. The Committee takes note that the State party plans to introduce a full prohibition of corporal punishment under the draft Law on Child Protection. Nevertheless, the Committee is concerned that corporal punishment is currently lawful in the home and in alternative care settings. Although the existing legislation stipulates that acts of physical and mental torture and other cruel behaviour must be avoided in the home, the Committee is concerned that the relevant provision is not interpreted as prohibiting corporal punishment and that there is widespread acceptance of corporal punishment as a parenting technique.

25. **The Committee draws the State party's attention to 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. The Committee urges the State party to ensure that the new legislation prohibits the use of all forms of corporal punishment in all settings, particularly the home and alternative care institutions, and provides for enforcement mechanisms, including appropriate sanctions in cases of violation. It further recommends that the State party strengthen and expand awareness-raising and education programmes and campaigns, in order to promote positive, non-violent and participatory forms of child rearing and discipline.

Freedom of the child from all forms of violence

26. Recalling the recommendations of the 2006 United Nations study on violence against children (A/61/299), the Committee recommends that the State party prioritize the elimination of all forms of violence against children. The Committee further recommends that the State party take into account its general comment No. 13 (2011) on the right of the child to freedom from all forms of violence, and in particular:

- (a) Develop a comprehensive national strategy to prevent and address all forms of violence against children;
- (b) Adopt a national coordinating framework to address all forms of violence against children;
- (c) Adopt legislation to explicitly prohibit all forms of violence against children in all settings;
- (d) Pay particular attention to the gender dimension of violence; and
- (e) Cooperate with the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children, and with other relevant United Nations agencies.

Abuse and neglect

27. The Committee is concerned about the increase in cases of child abuse, particularly in families with parents who are unemployed, abuse alcohol or live in poverty, as well as children in care institutions. It is especially concerned about the high level of tolerance of violent behaviour towards children in Lithuanian society and the lack of mechanisms for children, especially for those living in care institutions, to report cases of abuse and violence against them.

28. The Committee recommends that the State party take measures to prevent abuse and violence against children in all settings by ensuring the effective investigation of reports of abuse and violence against children as well as prosecuting and punishing perpetrators accordingly. It also recommends that the State party establish easily accessible mechanisms for children to report cases of abuse and violence against them, and ensure that victims receive the necessary protection and assistance for their recovery and rehabilitation.

Sexual exploitation and abuse

29. The Committee is concerned at reports that:

- (a) Cases of sexual abuse and exploitation of children remain unreported due to a fear of reprisals and stigmatization of the victims of such crimes;
- (b) The lack of psychotherapeutic services leads child victims of sexual abuse to commit suicide, especially when their cases are made public; and
- (c) The level of investigation, prosecution and punishment of perpetrators of sexual exploitation and abuse of children is insufficient.

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

(a) **Take measures to identify child victims of sexual abuse, exploitation and trafficking by raising public awareness, especially among children, and training professionals working with children to detect the signs;**

(b) **Ensure that children who are victims of sexual exploitation and abuse receive effective psychotherapeutic assistance, and take measures to keep the identity of child victims out of the public domain; and**

(c) **Step up its efforts to investigate cases of sexual exploitation and abuse and prosecute and punish perpetrators, handing down penalties that are commensurate with the gravity of the crime.**

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

Family environment

31. The Committee is concerned at the increasing number of children being placed outside the home or in the custody of temporary guardians, especially when parents travel to other countries for work or study.

32. **The Committee recommends that the State party increase the quality and availability of family support, including community-based services and employment opportunities, to families facing economic constraints, and at the same time strengthen their parenting skills to enable them to take care of their children. With reference to article 27, paragraph 4, of the Convention, the Committee also urges the State party to take all appropriate measures to secure the recovery of maintenance for children from their parents or other persons with financial responsibility for them, both within the State party and from abroad, including by acceding to or concluding international agreements for such purposes.**

Children deprived of a family environment

33. The Committee welcomes the adoption of the Strategic Guidelines for the deinstitutionalization of social care homes, including for children without parental custody and children with disabilities for 2010–2020 and the Strategy for the reorganization of childcare for 2008–2012. However, the Committee is concerned about:

(a) The large number of cases of deprivation of parental rights and the placement of children, particularly those under the age of 3, in care institutions;

(b) The lack of clear guidelines on the separation of children from their families;

(c) The very low number of foster families and the inadequate support they receive;

(d) The poor living conditions and limited space in care institutions; and

(e) The lack of a system to monitor non-governmental children's homes, which often fail to comply with the legal requirements for hygiene, quality of services and space.

34. **Recalling the Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children, the Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Ensure sufficient alternative family- and community-based care options for children deprived of their family environment;**

(b) Ensure that placement in institutional care is used only as a last resort and that adequate safeguards and clear needs-based criteria that uphold the best interests of the child are used to determine whether a child should be placed in institutional care;

(c) Establish clear guidelines and criteria on the deprivation of parental rights and review and regularly monitor all placements in care institutions;

(d) Establish a rigorous system to monitor services provided by care institutions, especially non-governmental care institutions; and

(e) Take into consideration the Common European Guidelines on the Transition from Institutional to Community-based Care, and utilize European Union funding to strengthen the implementation of domestic legislation.

Adoption

35. The Committee is concerned that the adoption process can be lengthy in the State party and that prospective adoptive parents face significant administrative burdens because care institutions are frequently reluctant to cooperate in the adoption process. It is also concerned that children do not receive appropriate information and support during the adoption process.

36. The Committee recommends that the State party establish effective mechanisms to facilitate the adoption process by removing unnecessary barriers, while at the same time ensuring that prospective adoptive parents are properly screened. It furthermore recommends that, depending on their age and maturity, children are informed, consulted and supported throughout the adoption process.

F. Disability, basic health and welfare (arts. 6, 18 (3), 23, 24, 26, 27 (1–3) of the Convention)

Children with disabilities

37. The Committee notes that the Law on Special Education has been integrated into the general Law on Education, enabling the State party to implement inclusive education for children with disabilities to a degree. However, the Committee is concerned that inclusive education has not been sufficiently implemented due to the lack of teacher training and equipment, and the negative attitude of teachers and the general public, especially towards children with mental disabilities. The Committee is particularly concerned about the ill-treatment of children with mental disabilities in care institutions, especially the nursing home at Venta.

38. In the light of its general comment No. 9 (2006) on the rights of children with disabilities, the Committee urges the State party to ensure the conformity of its legislation, policies and practices with, inter alia, articles 23 and 27 of the Convention, in order to effectively address the needs of children with disabilities in a non-discriminatory manner. Furthermore, the Committee recommends that the State party take all necessary measures to implement its legal provisions on inclusive education by training teachers, providing schools with the necessary equipment and raising awareness among school staff, children and the general public on the rights of children with disabilities, especially those with mental disabilities. The Committee further recommends that the State party take prompt and effective measures to investigate all allegations of abuse and ill-treatment of children with mental disabilities, to prosecute and punish the perpetrators and to provide assistance for the recovery and rehabilitation of victims.

Health and health services

39. The Committee welcomes the Children's Health Promotion Programme for 2008–2012, but is concerned that the budget allocations to maternal and child health-care programmes are continuously decreasing, making such programmes less accessible. The Committee is also concerned that women who choose to deliver at home do not receive the assistance or care they need during the delivery and post-partum.

40. **The Committee draws the State party's attention to its general comment No. 15 (2013) on the right of the child to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health, and recommends that the State party take measures to increase its budget allocations for maternal and child health programmes. The Committee also recommends that the State party ensure that women who choose to deliver at home receive proper maternal care by providing access to emergency obstetric care, trained care at delivery and post-partum care.**

Adolescent health

41. The Committee is concerned about the lack of information on sexual and reproductive health and child-friendly services available to adolescents in the country, as well as the inaccessibility of contraception and confidential tests and treatments for sexually transmitted infections. The Committee is also concerned about the high rates of substance abuse and the lack of measures to assist children who are addicted to tobacco, alcohol and drugs or children who are at risk of addiction and to address the stigma such children face. Furthermore, the Committee is concerned that the rates of suicides among adolescents remain high.

42. **The Committee recommends that the State party introduce sexual and reproductive health education into the school curriculum as a mandatory subject and provide adolescents with easy access to contraceptives and confidential tests and treatments. It also recommends that children are provided with information about the negative consequences of drug, alcohol and substance abuse and given access to confidential consultations and treatment for addictions. The Committee reiterates its previous recommendation that the State party increase its efforts to raise awareness about and prevent suicide among adolescents and continue to improve the quality and capacity of mental health services.**

Standard of living

43. The Committee regrets that the child poverty rate has increased due to the economic crisis, which has affected many areas including health and education. The Committee is particularly concerned about the lack of support for families with children that are living in poverty.

44. **The Committee urges the State party to strengthen its efforts to combat poverty and provide families with children that are living in poverty with the support and assistance they need by designing public policies to address the increasing problem of child poverty, both in the short-term and in a sustained manner. These policies must include the effective coordination of action at the national, municipal and local levels, and action in different areas of particular relevance to children, especially health care and education. Furthermore, children must be involved in developing these policies.**

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

Education, including vocational training and guidance

45. The Committee notes that, under the State party's Constitution and Law on Education, children below the age of 16 years are entitled to free primary and basic education. Nevertheless, the Committee remains concerned about:

- (a) The lack of reliable data on dropout rates from schools and the absence of such data for children above 16 years of age;
- (b) The lack of free textbooks in some municipalities, which means that parents have to buy textbooks;
- (c) The inadequate education in care institutions and penitentiary institutions, with fewer hours and combined classes; and
- (d) Widespread bullying in schools.

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

- (a) Establish a system of data collection on the dropout rate from schools for all children up to the age of 18 years and carry out studies on the root causes of this phenomenon;**
- (b) Ensure that free education and textbooks are provided to all children in all parts of the country;**
- (c) Ensure that children in care institutions and penitentiary institutions are provided with the same number of hours and classes as children in regular schools, in compliance with the law; and**
- (d) Take measures to combat all forms of bullying and harassment by improving the capacity of teachers, all other staff working in schools and students to accept diversity at school and strengthen their conflict resolution skills.**

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

Follow up to the Committee's previous concluding observations on the Optional Protocol on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography

47. The Committee regrets the lack of information on the implementation of its concluding observations of 16 October 2008 on the State party's initial report under the Optional Protocol on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography (CRC/C/OPSC/LTU/1). It regrets, in particular, that no information has been submitted in relation to the implementation of its recommendations to:

- (a) Incorporate the definitions of child prostitution and child pornography in the Criminal Code;
- (b) Reconsider the limitation periods for offences covered under the Optional Protocol; and
- (c) Extend its universal jurisdiction to all offences covered under the Optional Protocol and abolish the requirement of double criminality.

48. Furthermore, the Committee remains concerned that children above the age of 16 years who are engaged in prostitution or are victims of trafficking are not considered to be victims, are often subjected to fines and do not receive support and assistance during court proceedings.

49. **The Committee recommends that the State party take all necessary measures to implement the Committee's recommendations contained in its concluding observations under the Optional Protocol on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography (CRC/C/OPSC/LTU/CO/1), in particular with regard to the above-mentioned recommendations, and provide in its next report information on those measures and their outcomes. The Committee also recommends that the State party train its law enforcement officials and judiciary to treat child victims of offences under the Optional Protocol as victims and provide them with the necessary support and assistance during court proceedings. The Committee further recommends that the State party amend its legislation in order to ensure that child victims of offences under the Optional Protocol below the age of 18 years are not subject to any sanctions, including fines.**

Administration of juvenile justice

50. The Committee notes the information provided by the State party indicating that, under the ongoing process of court reform, a number of judges will be specialized in juvenile justice. The Committee also notes that some prosecutors are already specialized in juvenile justice and attend training and seminars on this issue. However, the Committee is concerned that:

(a) There is no comprehensive juvenile justice system, including juvenile courts and comprehensive legislation on juvenile justice, with provisions for diversion mechanisms and efficient alternatives to the formal justice system;

(b) The training and seminars that are currently provided target prosecutors only and do not seem to cover other important stakeholders in criminal proceedings, such as judges and lawyers; and

(c) The assistance public lawyers provide to children is of poor quality.

51. **The Committee urges the State party to establish a clear timeline for the consideration of its draft Criminal Procedure Code, which provides for the establishment of a comprehensive juvenile justice system. It should ensure that the Code complies fully 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 United Nations 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 children's rights in juvenile justice. In particular, the Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Establish a comprehensive juvenile justice system, including juvenile courts, on the basis of a comprehensive legal framework, as well as diversion measures to prevent children in conflict with the law from entering the formal justice system, and develop more alternatives to trial, sentencing and execution of punishment, such as community service and mediation between victim and offender in order to avoid stigmatization and for the effective reintegration of juvenile offenders;**

(b) Ensure that all stakeholders who work with children in criminal proceedings are trained and informed about the specificities of the juvenile justice system, including judges and lawyers; and

(c) Ensure that the legal assistance provided by public lawyers is of a high quality.

In implementing the recommendations above, the State party should make use, where relevant, of the technical assistance tools developed by the Interagency Panel on Juvenile Justice and its members, including the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and non-governmental organizations.

Child victims and witnesses of crime

52. The Committee is concerned that child victims and witnesses of crime can be confronted with suspects and perpetrators without any prior assessment and that the participation of municipal child rights protection services and psychologists in these meetings is insufficient and inefficient.

53. The Committee recommends that the State party ensure, through adequate legal provisions and regulations, that all children victims and/or witnesses of crimes are provided with the protection required by the Convention and that the State party take full account of the Guidelines on Justice in Matters involving Child Victims and Witnesses of Crime.

I. Ratification of international human rights instruments

54. The Committee recommends that the State party, in order to further strengthen the fulfilment of children's rights, ratify the core human rights instruments 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 on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture.

J. Cooperation with regional and international bodies

55. The Committee recommends that the State party cooperate with the Council of Europe for the implementation of the Convention and other human rights instruments, both in the State party and in other Council of Europe member States.

K. Follow-up and dissemination

56. 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 Head of State, Parliament, the relevant ministries, the Supreme Court and local authorities for appropriate consideration and further action.

57. The Committee further recommends that the combined third to fourth periodic reports and the written replies submitted by the State party and the related recommendations (concluding observations) adopted by the Committee be made

widely available in Lithuanian and other languages of the country, including (but not exclusively) through the Internet, to the public at large, civil society organizations, the 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

58. The Committee invites the State party to submit its combined fifth and sixth periodic report by 28 February 2019 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 that a report exceeding the page limitation 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 the purposes of examination by the treaty body cannot be guaranteed.

59. The Committee also invites the State party to submit an updated core document in accordance with the requirements of the common core document in chapter 1 of the harmonized guidelines on reporting, approved at the fifth Inter-Committee Meeting of the human rights treaty bodies in June 2006 (HRI/GEN/2/Rev.6).
