



Convention on the Rights of the Child

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Committee on the Rights of the Child

Concluding observations on the combined fifth and sixth periodic reports of Norway*

I. Introduction

1. The Committee considered the combined fifth and sixth periodic reports of Norway (CRC/C/NOR/5-6) at its 2296th and 2297th meetings (see CRC/C/SR.2296 and 2297), held on 23 and 24 May 2018, and adopted the present concluding observations at its 2310th meeting, held on 1 June 2018.

2. The Committee welcomes the submission of the combined fifth and sixth periodic reports of the State party and the written replies to the list of issues (CRC/C/NOR/Q/5-6/Add.1), which allowed for a better understanding of the situation of children's rights in the State party. The Committee expresses appreciation for the constructive dialogue held with the high-level and multisectoral 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 ratification of or accession to international instruments, in particular the ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (3 June 2013) and the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (27 June 2013). The Committee notes with appreciation the legislative, institutional and policy measures adopted to implement the Convention, in particular the introduction of a provision on children's rights into the Constitution (2014), the new Equality and Anti-Discrimination Act (2018), amendments to the Education Act (2017) and the Giant Leap Programme, aimed at implementing the Convention at the local level. It further welcomes the efforts made to increase gender equality and combat discrimination against children in various categories.

III. Main areas of concern and recommendations

4. 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: independent monitoring (para. 8); non-discrimination (para. 12); sexual exploitation and abuse (para. 18); children deprived of

* Adopted by the Committee at its seventy-eighth session (14 May–1 June 2018).



a family environment (para. 21); mental health (para. 26); and asylum-seeking and refugee children (para. 32).

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

Comprehensive policy and strategy

5. While noting with appreciation the services provided by local authorities, the Committee recommends that the State party increase its efforts to eliminate regional disparities in the provision of services, and that any plans or measures to increase the autonomy of local authorities be accompanied by clear guidelines to ensure that services are of equally high quality throughout the State party.

Allocation of resources

6. With reference to its general comment No. 19 (2016) on public budgeting for the realization of children's rights, the Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) Conduct a comprehensive assessment of the budget needs for children, with a particular emphasis on children in vulnerable and marginalized situations;

(b) Allocate adequate budgetary resources, in accordance with article 4 of the Convention;

(c) Significantly strengthen its efforts to ensure that each municipality is allocated the necessary funds to meet its obligations with regard to implementing children's rights;

(d) Allocate earmarked funds to local authorities instead of block grants in order to ensure that funds intended for the implementation of children's rights are adequately used for their intended purpose.

Independent monitoring

7. The Committee welcomes the establishment in 2015 of a national human rights institution and its compliance with the principles relating to the status of national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights (the Paris Principles). It also welcomes the additional funds allocated to the Ombudsman for Children. It is concerned, however, about the absence of any institution mandated to receive complaints about violations of the rights of the child.

8. With reference to its general comment No. 2 (2002) on the role of independent national human rights institutions in the promotion and protection of the rights of the child, and in line with its previous recommendations (CRC/C/NOR/CO/4, para. 14), the Committee recommends that the State party take measures to ensure that the Ombudsman for Children and/or the national human rights institution are entrusted with the mandate to receive, investigate and address complaints by children, in all areas that concern them, in a child-sensitive manner.

Data collection

9. The Committee, while welcoming the availability of disaggregated data on a significant number of issues, encourages the State party to increase its efforts to ensure that its data-collection system allows for the collection of disaggregated data related to all areas of the Convention. In this regard, the Committee recommends that the State party disaggregate data by ethnicity, as the absence of such data prevents the State party from gaining the knowledge needed to measure discrimination based on ethnicity and develop measures to overcome it, in particular regarding children exposed to intersecting forms of discrimination.

Dissemination, awareness-raising and training

10. The Committee notes with appreciation the efforts undertaken to provide training on the Convention to relevant professionals. However, given that the training provided still does not fully cover all professional groups and is not systematic, and that knowledge of the rights of the child among relevant professional groups remains insufficient, the Committee, in line with its previous recommendations (CRC/C/NOR/CO/4, para. 18), recommends that:

- (a) Instruction on the Convention be a part of school curricula at all levels;
- (b) The State party continue and strengthen the systematic dissemination of relevant information to and training of all professional groups working for and with children, including personnel of childcare institutions, health personnel, social workers and law enforcement officials;
- (c) Awareness of children's rights be increased in policymaking bodies and municipal administrations.

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

Non-discrimination

11. The Committee, while welcoming the progress made by the State party in enacting legislation to tackle discrimination against children, notes with concern that:

- (a) Girls are sometimes represented in an oversexualized and objectifying manner in the media;
- (b) Children with an immigrant background are exposed to discrimination and often face difficulties at school, which teaching staff are insufficiently trained to address;
- (c) Children who do not conform to gender stereotypes are subjected to discrimination, bullying and intimidation, and violence.

12. The Committee recommends that the State party:

- (a) Allocate resources for research into the root causes and possible impact of oversexualized representations of girls in the media and the possible connections between sexualization and pornography and the root causes of gender-based violence, in particular in relation to girls, in line with the recommendation by the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW/C/NOR/CO/9, para. 23 (c));
- (b) Research and develop specific measures on how to address the particular difficulties and discrimination faced by many children with an immigrant background, and train teachers accordingly, and include the results of the ongoing survey on the living conditions of Norwegian-born children of immigrant parents in its seventh periodic report to the Committee;
- (c) Develop a new plan of action for promoting gender equality and preventing ethnic discrimination;
- (d) Take awareness-raising measures to foster tolerance and openness about non-conformity with gender stereotypes and the harmful effects of social pressure, targeting the public at large, in addition to awareness-raising campaigns specifically targeting children.

Best interests of the child

13. The Committee, with reference 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, recommends that the State party strengthen its efforts to:

- (a) Establish clear criteria regarding the best interests of the child for all authorities that take decisions affecting children;

(b) Ensure that this right is appropriately integrated and consistently interpreted and applied in all legislative, administrative and judicial proceedings and decisions, as well as in all policies, programmes, projects and international cooperation relevant to and having an impact on children.

Respect for the views of the child

14. While noting with appreciation that the State party's legal framework is, to a large extent, in line with the principles enshrined in article 12 of the Convention, the Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) Increase its efforts to strengthen compliance in practice with the child's right to be heard, in particular with regard to children who are more vulnerable to exclusion in this regard, such as children with disabilities, children of a younger age and migrant, asylum-seeking and refugee children;

(b) Ensure that relevant professionals are regularly trained on implementing an age-appropriate, meaningful and empowered participation of children in decisions affecting their lives and sensitizing parents to the positive impact of respecting the views of their children;

(c) Strengthen the implementation of the child's right to be heard in asylum and expulsion procedures affecting children, particularly with respect to younger children, and ensure that children are given the possibility to be heard individually in all instances in all cases affecting them;

(d) Ensure that children are informed about the possibility of participating in mediation processes in the context of their parents' separation;

(e) Increase its efforts to ensure the meaningful participation of children in youth councils or other forums accessible to all children in all municipalities, address disparities in this regard and consider requiring each municipality to make participation in such forums or other types of participative bodies available to children.

C. Civil rights and freedoms (arts. 7, 8 and 13–17)

Nationality

15. The Committee, taking note of target 16.9 of the Sustainable Development Goals, on providing legal identity for all, including birth registration, and in line with the recommendation made by the Human Rights Committee (CCPR/C/NOR/CO/7, para. 35), recommends that the State party:

(a) Establish all necessary safeguards to ensure that all children born in the State party are entitled to a nationality at birth if otherwise stateless;

(b) Provide in the law a specific definition of statelessness, in line with international standards.

D. Violence against children (arts. 19, 24 (3), 28 (2), 34, 37 (a) and 39)

Abuse and neglect

16. While noting with appreciation the many legislative and policy measures taken by the State party to prevent and address violence against children, the Committee, with reference 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, and target 16.2 of the Sustainable Development Goals, on ending abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children, recommends that the State party:

(a) **Increase its efforts to promote positive, non-violent and participatory forms of child-rearing and discipline, with the cooperation of the media and by offering information sessions for parents and parents-to-be on that topic and on the illegality of violence against children;**

(b) **Ensure that children have access to a helpline available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, as well as to other reporting avenues, such as specially designated and trained staff, for example, school nurses, who can be approached confidentially, and special service desks at the municipal level, and ensure that children are informed about those reporting avenues;**

(c) **In the light of information before the Committee indicating that students have on occasion been subjected to violence from adults in schools, investigate the occurrence of violence and threats by teaching and school staff and develop and implement a zero-tolerance policy with a view to ensuring that each allegation of violence is duly investigated;**

(d) **Ensure that child victims of violence and abuse are provided with adequate support at the municipal level and strengthen the capacities of municipalities in that regard.**

Sexual exploitation and abuse

17. The Committee notes with appreciation the measures taken by the State party to prevent and combat the sexual exploitation and abuse of children, including by strengthening the legal regime on child sexual abuse and exploitation in the new Penal Code. The Committee is concerned, however, that current plans of action are not sufficiently focused on the dangers arising online to children. It is especially concerned about:

(a) The particular vulnerability of girls to sexual abuse and exploitation, which is further exacerbated in the case of Sami girls, girls with disabilities, unaccompanied children, children belonging to minorities and children living in poor households and households in which there is a high level of alcohol consumption;

(b) The lack of free consent not being at the centre of the definition of rape in section 291 of the Penal Code, which applies to children above 14 years of age, regarding which the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women and the Human Rights Committee have already raised concerns (CEDAW/C/NOR/CO/9, para. 24 (g), and CCPR/C/NOR/CO/7, para. 15 (b));

(c) The reported increase of online child sexual abuse and exploitation, including grooming cases, online child sexual extortion and child pornography;

(d) The reported trend of underreporting the sexual abuse of children, in particular when the victim is a boy;

(e) Cases of sexual abuse and exploitation of children committed by persons under the age of 18;

(f) The lack of disaggregated data on the different forms of sexual abuse and exploitation of children.

18. **The Committee recommends that the State party increase its efforts to prevent the sexual abuse and exploitation of children and support the recovery and social reintegration of child victims and that it:**

(a) **Adopt a specific plan of action to combat violence against women and girls that focuses on the elimination of rape and other forms of sexual violence, including in the Sami community and includes specific components on preventing and combating sexual abuse and exploitation that occur or are initiated online, and increase efforts to prevent and combat grooming, sexual extortion and child pornography;**

(b) **Increase the allocation of human, technical and financial resources, including to the National Criminal Investigation Service (Kripos), to improve the**

protection of children who are particularly vulnerable to sexual abuse and exploitation;

(c) Amend section 291 of the Penal Code to ensure that the lack of free consent is at the centre of the definition of rape;

(d) Undertake awareness-raising campaigns to encourage reporting, with specific components targeted at boy victims, and ensure accessible, confidential, child-friendly and effective reporting channels;

(e) Undertake research and develop specific measures to prevent sexual abuse and exploitation of children by other children and ensure that perpetrators are provided with specific treatment;

(f) Ensure that data collected on sexual abuse and exploitation of children are disaggregated by age, sex, disability, geographical location, ethnic and national origin and socioeconomic background, and improve policies on the basis of the results of those data;

(g) Accelerate its efforts to ratify the Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse.

Harmful practices

19. While welcoming the efforts undertaken by the State party to prevent harmful practices, including through the adoption of the Action Plan to Combat Negative Social Control, Forced Marriage and Female Genital Mutilation (2017–2020), the Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) Develop awareness-raising campaigns and programmes targeted at religious communities that conduct child marriages on the harmful effects of child marriage on the physical and mental health and well-being of girls;

(b) Conduct awareness-raising campaigns targeted at children on how to seek help if they fear being sent abroad to be subjected to female genital mutilation or child marriage and how they can attract the attention of border personnel.

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

Children deprived of a family environment

20. The Committee, while noting with appreciation the efforts made by the State party, in particular through its child welfare services, to ensure that each child grows up in an environment that is safe and conducive to healthy development, is concerned about:

(a) Reported separations of children from their families that may not have always been in the children's best interests;

(b) The use of coercion in some cases of separation of children from their families;

(c) The significant disparities among counties regarding the number of out-of-home placements;

(d) Siblings being separated when placed in alternative care;

(e) The insufficient monitoring of the situation of children placed in alternative care;

(f) Children belonging to minority populations who are placed in alternative care being at risk of losing their connection with their native culture and language;

(g) Insufficient communication and information exchange between child welfare services and families, in particular migrant families;

(h) Insufficient support provided to children of incarcerated parents.

21. Drawing the State party's attention to the Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children, the Committee emphasizes that financial and material poverty — or conditions directly and uniquely attributable to such poverty — should never be the sole justification for removing a child from parental care, for receiving a child into alternative care or for preventing a child's social reintegration. In this regard, the Committee recommends that the State party:

- (a) Ensure that all forms of separation of children from their parents are always in the best interests of the child, including by:
 - (i) Reviewing the current practices relating to out-of-home placements, deprivation of parental rights and limitation of contact rights with a view to ensuring that such drastic steps are only used as measures of last resort, are based on the needs and best interests of the child and are subject to adequate safeguards, with a particular emphasis on children of Roma families, who, it seems, are being separated from their families with disproportionate frequency;
 - (ii) Ensuring that all municipalities follow the same criteria regarding out-of-home placements;
 - (iii) Providing parents with the necessary support to avoid separation from their children;
- (b) Review the procedures for removing children in emergency cases and provide for a more sensitive approach, ensure that no form of coercion is used and provide regular training to relevant professionals in that regard;
- (c) Conduct research on the reasons behind the significant disparities among counties regarding children subjected to alternative care measures and emergency placements;
- (d) Ensure that siblings are not separated when placed in alternative care;
- (e) Ensure periodic review of the placement of children in foster care and institutions, and monitor the quality of care therein, including by providing accessible channels for reporting and remedying maltreatment of children;
- (f) Take the measures necessary, including adequate training of personnel, to ensure that children belonging to an indigenous or national minority group who are placed in alternative care learn about and maintain their connection to their native culture;
- (g) Improve communication and information exchange between child welfare services and families, in particular migrant families.

Children of incarcerated parents

22. The Committee recommends that the State party ensure that children of incarcerated parents are provided with adequate psychological treatment and social support.

F. Disability, basic health and welfare (arts. 6, 18 (3), 23, 24, 26, 27 (1)–(3) and 33)

Children with disabilities

23. The Committee welcomes the efforts made by the State party to adopt a human rights approach to disability and to strengthen the social inclusion of children with disabilities, including through the clause in the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Act to expand the universal design obligation to information and communications technology in the education sector. With reference to its general comment No. 9 (2006) on the rights of children with disabilities, the Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) Further increase its efforts to combat violence against and abuse and neglect of children with disabilities, including through research on the forms and frequency of violence that children with disabilities are subjected to, and ensure that children with disabilities, in particular those with intellectual disabilities, have accessible and suitable reporting channels at their disposal;

(b) Ensure that all cases of violence, including sexual violence, against children with disabilities, are systematically registered by the authorities, and that child victims have adequate access to redress and rehabilitation measures and support services;

(c) Further strengthen efforts to prevent institutionalization and eliminate the possibility of institutionalization without the consent of the child and/or the child's parents;

(d) Ensure, in the light of the outcome of the report of 1 April 2018 on inclusive education by the expert group for children and young people who need special adaptation, that inclusive education becomes more inclusive, more adapted to the needs of children with disabilities and obtains better results, with higher quality;

(e) Ensure that inclusion is given priority over placement in special education institutions or classes, increase the training and assignment of specialized teachers and professionals providing individual support in inclusive classes and improve the physical accessibility of schools;

(f) Further increase the support provided to parents of children with disabilities and remove obstacles to accessing support, which, reportedly, affect in particular children from families of ethnic minority groups, and eliminate the disparities among municipalities with regard to the provision of personal assistance.

Health and health services

24. The Committee notes with appreciation the increase in funds for health centres and school health services. With reference to its general comment No. 15 (2013) on the right of the child to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health, the Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) Ensure that municipalities are allocated sufficient funds for health services for children, on the basis of the individual needs of the municipalities;

(b) Ensure that reception facilities for child victims of violence and sexual abuse have a clearly defined organizational structure in order to guarantee that child victims receive prompt attention;

(c) Provide children who have irregular residence status with immediate access to health-care institutions so that they can receive the necessary treatment, independently of considerations regarding their departure date.

Mental health

25. The Committee notes with concern that:

(a) Resources allocated to the mental health sector are insufficient, in particular in the light of the reported increase in the number of children in need of such services;

(b) Some transgender children and some children in migration reception centres exhibit suicidal tendencies;

(c) Despite improvements in this regard, the number of children diagnosed with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) remains relatively high, in particular among boys.

26. The Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) Allocate sufficient resources to the mental health sector, both in general and according to the individual needs of each municipality;

(b) Investigate the causes of suicidal tendencies, particularly among transgender children and children in migration reception centres, and ensure that measures are developed to prevent such tendencies and that health personnel are adequately trained in that regard;

(c) Improve the diagnosis of mental health problems among children and ensure that any initial diagnosis of ADHD is reassessed, that appropriate non-medical, scientifically based psychiatric counselling and specialist support for children, their parents and teachers are given priority over the prescription of drugs in addressing ADHD and other behavioural specificities, with particular attention given to boys, and that parents and children are informed about the negative side effects of treatments with psychostimulants and are provided with information on non-medical treatments.

Environmental health

27. In the light of the State party's exploitation of fossil fuels, the Committee recommends that it increase its focus on alternative energy and establish safeguards to protect children, both in the State party as well as abroad, from the negative impacts of fossil fuels.

Standard of living

28. While noting the introduction of the strategy "Children Living in Poverty (2015–2017)", the Committee, in the light of ongoing child poverty, draws the State party's attention to target 1.3 of the Sustainable Development Goals on implementing nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures for all, and recommends that the State party increase the resources allocated to combating child poverty, including by increasing child benefit rates and by adjusting them in accordance with wage inflation.

G. Education, leisure and cultural activities (arts. 28–31)

Education, including vocational training and guidance

29. In the light of the Committee's general comment No. 1 (2001) on the aims of education, and target 4.7 of the Sustainable Development Goals on ensuring that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, the Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) Increase its efforts to implement a zero-tolerance approach to discrimination on the grounds of race, migration status, sexual orientation or gender identity in the school context and expand the scope of that approach to include private schools and by ensuring recurrent training for all school staff members on equality and gender identity and addressing all forms of discrimination, as well as civic instruction for students on the importance and methods of combating and reporting instances of discrimination. The State party should also develop a new plan of action for promoting gender equality and preventing discrimination on the ground of ethnicity;

(b) Continue its efforts to combat bullying and raise awareness of its harmful effects, with particular emphasis on the prevention of cyberbullying and on how children can defend themselves against cyberbullying, introduce mandatory elements into school curricula at all education levels on tolerance for diversity, non-violent conflict resolution skills and the judicious and safe use of the Internet, further build the capacity of teachers and school personnel in that regard and ensure that schools conduct special information sessions for parents on those issues.

Rest, leisure, recreation and cultural and artistic activities

30. The Committee welcomes the Fritidserklæringen declaration, which enables Norwegian children to participate free of charge in an activity in their spare time. It draws the State party's attention to its general comment No. 17 (2013) on the right of

the child to rest, leisure, play, recreational activities, cultural life and the arts, and recommends that the State party increase opportunities for children with limited financial means, those with disabilities, those with a minority ethnic background and those from an isolated religious community to benefit from access to safe, accessible, inclusive spaces for play and recreational activities.

H. Special protection measures (arts. 22, 30, 32, 33, 35, 36, 37 (b)–(d) and 38–40)

Asylum-seeking and refugee children and children in migration situations

31. The Committee welcomes the State party's integration efforts with regard to refugee children and their families, such as those relating to access to education. The Committee is concerned, however, about:

(a) The increase in the use of temporary residence permits for unaccompanied asylum-seeking children and the absence of any system to automatically reassess cases involving unaccompanied children with temporary residence permits, leading such children to fear that their applications for permanent residency will be denied, which is a significant reason for the relatively large number of children disappearing from reception centres;

(b) Children who have disappeared from reception centres being particularly vulnerable to becoming victims of trafficking in persons and prostitution;

(c) Children being sent back to countries where their rights are at high risk of being violated, which contravenes the principle of non-refoulement;

(d) Significant variations among reception centres in terms of living conditions, such as access to adequate food and nutrition;

(e) Reports of children in reception centres being frequently absent from school and often suffering from mental health issues resulting in self-inflicted harm;

(f) The possibility that children may be detained for up to nine days prior to their deportation;

(g) The insufficient care provided to unaccompanied children in some municipalities, and children 15 years of age and older not receiving the same quality of care as those under 15 years of age.

32. **In the light of its general comment No. 6 (2005) on the treatment of unaccompanied and separated children outside their country of origin, and joint general comment No. 3 (2017) of the Committee on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families and No. 22 (2017) of the Committee on the Rights of the Child on the general principles regarding the human rights of children in the context of international migration, the Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Consider establishing a system to automatically reassess temporary residency permits of unaccompanied children and issuing residence permits of a longer duration;**

(b) **Address additional root causes of the disappearance of children from reception centres;**

(c) **Increase its efforts to search for missing children, provide them with the necessary protection, redress and rehabilitation and ensure that, if they have fallen victim to crimes, the perpetrators are brought to justice;**

(d) **Under no circumstances deport children and their families back to countries where there is a risk of irreparable harm to the children such as, but by no means limited to, those contemplated under articles 6 (1) and 37 of the Convention;**

(e) **Place children and their families in reception centres only for the shortest time possible, and increase the human, technical and financial resources**

allocated to reception centres with a view to ensuring adequate conditions for children during their residency therein and to ensuring in particular that they are protected from violence, that their mental health needs are assessed and that they have access to nutritious food;

(f) Ensure that under no circumstances are children placed in detention on the basis of their immigration status;

(g) Ensure that unaccompanied children in all municipalities, including those above 15 years of age, receive good-quality care.

Children belonging to minority groups and indigenous children

33. With reference to its general comment No. 11 (2009) on indigenous children and their rights under the Convention, the Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) Enforce the right of all Sami children of school age to Sami-language education and ensure that the new Education Act significantly strengthens their rights, regardless of their residency status;

(b) Undertake research on violence against and sexual abuse of children among the Sami population, develop specific intervention measures and ensure that the perpetrators of such crimes against Sami children are brought to justice;

(c) Increase its efforts to combat discrimination, hate speech and violence against Sami children, Roma children and children from other minority groups, including specific measures to combat the intersecting and multiple forms of gender-based discrimination that affect girls from minority groups and take measures to increase knowledge about indigenous and minority groups and their rights among the general public.

Sale, trafficking and abduction

34. The Committee welcomes the efforts undertaken by the State party to combat trafficking in children, including by strengthening the relevant legal regime in the Penal Code, and the plan of action to prevent and combat human trafficking (2016). It recommends that the State party increase its efforts to combat trafficking in children by vigorously tackling the demand for such trafficking, and that it:

(a) Strengthen effective policies and procedures to identify and support child victims of trafficking and sexual exploitation, as well as children who are at particular risk of falling victim to such crimes, and protect children from additional factors that may increase their vulnerability to trafficking, such as unsupervised exposure to the Internet;

(b) Undertake specific efforts to eliminate discrepancies in the application of the definition of trafficking by municipalities, which is particularly necessary with respect to children who are not yet residents;

(c) Allocate additional resources to identify perpetrators of such crimes and bring them to justice;

(d) Improve coordination in providing assistance to child victims of trafficking;

(e) Conduct research to better assess the scope of trafficking in the State party.

Administration of juvenile justice

35. The Committee welcomes the amendments to the Execution of Sentences Act abolishing the possibility of using isolation as a disciplinary measure. With reference to its general comment No. 10 (2007) on children's rights in juvenile justice, the Committee urges the State party to bring its juvenile justice system fully into line with

the Convention and other relevant standards. In particular, the Committee recommends that the State party:

- (a) Discontinue preventive detention for children;
- (b) Where detention is unavoidable, ensure that children are not detained together with adults, both in pretrial detention and after being sentenced, and, in line with the Committee's previous recommendations, withdraw the reservation to article 10 (2) (b) and (3), of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, "with regard to the obligation to keep accused juvenile persons and juvenile offenders segregated from adults" (CRC/C/NOR/CO/4, para. 7);
- (c) Strengthen safeguards to ensure that isolation as a preventive measure is avoided to the greatest extent possible;
- (d) Make the necessary legislative amendments to extend the application of the alternative form of sanction, the so-called juvenile sanction, to asylum-seeking children.

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

36. While noting with appreciation the State party's efforts to implement the Committee's recommendations from 2005 on the State party's report under the Optional Protocol on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography (09378), the Committee recommends that the State party:

- (a) Bring its Penal Code fully into line with the Optional Protocol, including by ensuring that it explicitly prohibits the sale of children;
- (b) Apply sanctions to the purchase of sexual services from children and for activities involving child pornography that take into account the grave nature of those offences;
- (c) Adopt specific legislation on the obligations of Internet service providers in relation to child pornography on the Internet;
- (d) Abolish the requirement of double criminality regarding extraterritorial jurisdiction for offences related to the Optional Protocol;
- (e) Make the necessary legislative amendments to ensure that children who are victims of sexual exploitation abroad and in the context of travel and tourism can also bring claims under the Tort Liability Act;

Follow-up to the Committee's previous concluding observations and recommendations on the Optional Protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict

37. While noting with appreciation the State party's efforts to implement the Committee's recommendations from 2007 on the State party's report under the Optional Protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict (CRC/C/OPAC/NOR/CO/1), the Committee recommends that the State party:

- (a) Raise the minimum age of volunteers joining the Home Guard from 16 years of age to 18 years of age;
- (b) Provide systematic and recurrent training on the Optional Protocol for all relevant professional groups working with and for children;
- (c) Take appropriate bilateral measures to follow up on asylum-seeking children who have been recruited or used in hostilities and returned from Norway to their home countries;
- (d) Identify children who have been recruited or used in hostilities who are residing in the State party and provide them with adequate support and supervision, as well as adequate psychological and psychiatric care.

I. Ratification of the Optional Protocol on a communications procedure

38. The Committee recommends that the State party, in order to further strengthen the fulfilment of children's rights, ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on a communications procedure.

J. Ratification of international human rights instruments

39. 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 to which it is not yet a party:

(a) International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance;

(b) International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families.

K. Cooperation with regional bodies

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

IV. Implementation and reporting

A. Follow-up and dissemination

41. 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. The Committee also recommends that the combined fifth and sixth 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

42. The Committee recommends that the State party establish and/or strengthen a national mechanism for reporting and follow-up as a standing government structure that is mandated to coordinate and prepare reports to and engage with international and regional human rights mechanisms, as well as with coordinating and tracking national follow-up to and implementation of the treaty obligations and the recommendations and decisions emanating from such mechanisms. 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 national human rights institution and civil society.

C. Next report

43. The Committee invites the State party to submit its seventh periodic report by 6 February 2023 and to include therein information on the follow-up to the present concluding observations. The report should be in compliance with the Committee's harmonized treaty-specific reporting guidelines adopted on 31 January 2014 (CRC/C/58/Rev.3) and should not exceed 21,200 words (see General Assembly resolution 68/268, para. 16). In the event that a report exceeding the established word limit is submitted, the State party will be asked to shorten the report in accordance with the above-mentioned resolution. If the State party is not in a position to review

and resubmit the report, translation thereof for the purposes of consideration by the treaty body cannot be guaranteed.

44. The Committee also invites the State party to submit an updated core document, not exceeding 42,400 words, in accordance with the requirements for the common core document contained in the harmonized guidelines on reporting under the international human rights treaties, including guidelines on a common core document and treaty-specific documents (see HRI/GEN/2/Rev.6, chap. I) and paragraph 16 of General Assembly resolution 68/268.
