



**Convention on the  
Rights of the Child**

Distr.  
GENERAL

CRC/C/SR.1321  
5 June 2008

Original: ENGLISH

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COMMITTEE ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

Forty-eighth session

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 1321st MEETING

Held at the Palais Wilson, Geneva,  
on Thursday, 22 May 2008, at 3 p.m.

Chairperson: Ms. LEE

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The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

CONSIDERATION OF REPORTS OF STATES PARTIES (continued)

Initial report of the United States of America under the Optional Protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict (CRC/C/OPAC/USA/1, CRC/C/OPAC/USA/Q/1 and Add.1, written replies by the United States of America, document without a symbol distributed in English only) (continued)

1. At the invitation of the Chairperson, the members of the delegation of the United States of America resumed places at the Committee table.
2. Mr. FILALI (Country Rapporteur) said that the comments made by the delegation had helped the Committee understand how the United States was implementing the Optional Protocol. The United States was known for its commitment in favour of human rights, and its ratification of the two Optional Protocols to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, as well as the International Labour Organization (ILO) Convention concerning the worst forms of child labour, were positive measures.
3. Paragraphs 7 to 9 of the report (CRC/C/OPAC/USA/1), relating to article 1 of the Optional Protocol on direct participation in hostilities, referred to the United States' understanding of certain terminology. However, the reference to "feasible" measures appeared to suggest that preference was given to unilateral military considerations over the best interest of the child; while the notion of "direct part in hostilities" excluded children who gathered information or carried arms and ammunition, which were very dangerous activities and made children enemy targets. That interpretation weakened the protection of children; furthermore, it was difficult to draw the boundary between direct and indirect participation.
4. The United States legislation prohibited the recruitment of children under 18 years of age; it would be useful to know whether any provisions of the criminal code prevented forcible recruitment, whether there had been any such cases and, if so, what action had been taken. In the case of voluntary recruitment, the Committee would appreciate clarification of information it had received that children belonging to ethnic minorities and vulnerable groups were targeted. It also wished to know whether the No Child Left Behind Act respected the privacy of the child and parental consent.
5. The Committee was concerned about reported misconduct by recruiters and would welcome information on the instructions they were given, the limitations placed on them, and the sanctions applied if they violated those limitations.
6. Concerns had also been expressed that new enlistees were not fully informed of the duties involved in military service. They were made to sign a contract before their training programmes started and it would be useful to know whether they were able to review their situation while in training and withdraw from military service. If they did decide to withdraw, what would the consequences be: would they be liable to court martial?
7. Mr. CITARELLA (Country Rapporteur) asked how the Optional Protocol was being disseminated, whether any special training was being provided, and whether professionals

working in the relevant area were aware of it. It would be useful to know whether any special attention was paid to it in military academies and by the Department of Defense. Did commanding officers receive precise instruction on how to implement the Optional Protocol so as to avoid risks to children?

8. The Committee would be interested to hear how the United States forces reacted when confronted by children in the course of an armed conflict. Furthermore, the delegation had previously mentioned that when children were taken prisoner they were treated as adults. According to the laws of the United States, the detention of prisoners of war ended only when the war was over. However, currently, there was no open war, but rather conflict on several fronts; therefore what would be the time limit for the detention of child prisoners who had subsequently become adults?

9. Private security agencies in countries such as Iraq enrolled individuals to assist both civilians and the military, and he would like to know whether the United States took any precautions to ensure that children were not enrolled in such organizations.

10. Ms. SMITH said that the Optional Protocol was about preventing children from becoming child soldiers and taking care of children who had been child soldiers; the United States had been a leader in the reinsertion and rehabilitation of child soldiers. Regarding the child soldiers detained in Iraq, the Committee had been informed that, although some received education, they did not receive adequate health services and were not brought before a judge; she would appreciate further information on those points.

11. Clarification of what was meant by the term “recruitment” would be useful, since it was used to describe military service and also the act of seeking recruits. She would like to know how the Department of Defense viewed the very aggressive recruiting tactics used in schools, even in the case of young children, and whether students who signed up for the delayed entry programme were made fully aware of what it implied, since it appeared that, each year, several thousand complaints were received on the special hotline.

12. Ms. KHATTAB, referring to the statement made by Mr. Lagon, asked why the United States considered that it still had to maintain certain understandings, even though it had participated actively in the drafting of the Optional Protocol.

13. Given the extensive media coverage of the human rights abuse of prisoners in Iraq, she asked what type of training military personnel received on human rights and the rights of the child. It would also be useful to know how the United States ensured the safety of non-combatant children in zones of conflict, such as in Iraq and Afghanistan.

14. Human Rights Watch had reported that, since 2003, the United States had detained 2,400 children in Iraq, some as young as 10 years of age, and that some had been kept for more than a year without being charged. Furthermore, they were not provided with lawyers and their detention was not reviewed. Children received their first lessons in terrorism in detention centres and she asked if their cases were investigated before they were deprived of liberty.

15. The United States had reported that only two juveniles were being held in Guantanamo, but the Committee has recently learned of a third person, who was now 21 years of age, but had been held since the age of 15.

16. Mr. PARFITT said that there were two individuals at Guantanamo who had been detained when they were under the age of 18 years and, instead of receiving the services outlined in article 6 (3) of the Optional Protocol, they were being charged under the 2006 Military Commissions Act. He was concerned because, as the United States had not ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Committee was unable to refer to its recommendations concerning juvenile justice. However, it would be useful to know whether the Military Commissions Act contained any provisions to ensure that juveniles were treated differently from adults.

17. It appeared that asylum-seeking child soldiers were considered a security risk rather than children in need of protection and he asked what procedures were followed to assess their individual needs and background when they were received in refugee centres.

18. The written response to question 13 regarding the sale of arms to countries that might recruit child soldiers referred only to official arms sales; however, the Committee wished to know if there was any legislation regarding the sale of arms by private manufacturers and what kind of vigilance was exercised.

19. The Committee was also concerned about recruitment for the junior officer training programme, because many high school students were targeted, some as young as 11 or 12 years of age. It would like to know how much military training students received, as it appeared that the education system was being used to promote the military agenda, which ran counter to the spirit of the Optional Protocol.

20. Mr. KOTRANE said that the United States was considering a draft Child Soldier Prevention Act and a draft Child Soldier Accountability Act (question 3). It would be useful to know the status of that legislation, because the former allowed military assistance to countries to be conditioned by their respect for the rights of the child, and the latter established that offenders could be prosecuted. He enquired whether the United States legal system permitted the prosecution of individuals responsible for war crimes outside the United States, or of United States citizens who recruited children outside United States territory. In that regard, would the United States ratify the Statute of Rome?

21. Lastly, he asked whether children in the United States studied concepts related to human rights, peace and the rights of the child, especially children undergoing military training.

22. Mr. KRAPPMANN said that the aggressive recruitment techniques used seemed to undermine the voluntary quality of military service. Also, it appeared that parents were involved only at the end of the process, rather than from the outset. Regarding the junior officer training programme, he asked whether activities were carried out during school hours, whether such activities were supervised by the principle or the school board, and whether other organizations were allowed to conduct activities in schools. He hoped that, in addition to providing time for military information, schools also assigned time to providing information on peace and human rights.

23. Ms. ORTIZ, referring to recruitment, asked what complaint mechanisms existed to ensure punishment of abusive recruitment. In the case of child detainees, she enquired how their age was determined in case of doubt, and whether that was done immediately after detention. She also wished to know whether child detainees were separated from adults, whether they were provided with independent legal assistance and allowed visits by the family, UNICEF and the Red Cross, and whether educational and recreational activities were made available to them.

24. Mr. ZERMATTEN asked whether young people in military service were subject to the same disciplinary sanctions as adults and whether the death penalty would be applicable to someone under 18 years of age. He also wished to know if the United States would sign and ratify the 1997 Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction.

25. Mr. POLLAR asked whether child soldiers who were detained had access to independent legal advice, whether their cases were reviewed by an independent judicial body, and whether UNICEF and other agencies of the United Nations were allowed access to them.

26. Ms. AIDOO, referring to the activities of the junior officer training programmes, asked whether the Government provided any financial incentives that might attract poorly-funded schools to participate in such programmes and to collaborate in the efforts to interest students in the military.

27. The CHAIRPERSON said that she would like the delegation to comment on the over-representation of children, particularly girls, in the most vulnerable groups of the population.

The meeting was suspended at 3.52 p.m. and resumed at 4.20 p.m.

28. Mr. LAGON (United States of America) thanked the Committee for their questions and said that the delegation would first address the issues specifically related to the provisions of the Optional Protocol.

29. Mr. HARRIS (United States of America) said that, while answering some of the questions on legal issues, he would also try to explain why the United States considered that some of the questions raised were marginal to the Optional Protocol, in order to reveal how the United States understood that instrument.

30. The United States had used the terms “feasible” measures and “direct part” in its report, because those expressions were used in article 1 of the Optional Protocol and had been carefully chosen by the negotiators, owing to their clear meaning under international humanitarian law. The terminology had led to intense discussion during the negotiation of the Optional Protocol, in which the United States had participated, and resulted from a compromise to reach consensus. “Direct part in hostilities” did not mean indirect participation in hostilities including forward deployment. Nevertheless, the United States military had adopted a number of internal policies on forward deployment that went beyond article 1, and he would be happy to provide further information if necessary.

31. There were two types of military recruitment: compulsory and voluntary. In both cases, in the legal sense, the term “recruitment” designated the moment that an individual entered the armed forces and not the process of attempting to attract new recruits. He referred the Committee to the periodic report for details of the strict procedures in place for checking that voluntary recruits were truly being recruited voluntarily, that their parents’ informed consent had been obtained, that recruits were aware of the duties involved and that proof of age had been provided.

32. In response to the question on the meaning of article 6, paragraph 3, of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict (OPAC), he said that that provision had been used to suggest that OPAC restricted the longstanding rule that countries could detain combatants, including those under the age of 18 years, which would constitute a radical new development in international humanitarian law. Juvenile combatants could be detained and prosecuted for war crimes, as suggested by the two Protocols Additional to the Geneva Conventions.

33. The United States did not plan to ratify the Ottawa Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction or the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court.

34. The CHAIRPERSON asked whether the United States had ratified the two Protocols Additional to the Geneva Conventions.

35. Mr. PADMANABHAN (United States of America) said that the United States was a signatory to Protocol II, but had no plans to ratify it or Protocol I.

36. In response to a question about the sale of arms to other countries, he said that the Arms Export Control Act controlled the sale of arms, the provision of foreign military financing and foreign military sales from the United States. Each case was carefully vetted and a rigorous human-rights review was carried out prior to any sale of arms, covering the issue of child soldiers. There was a specific provision in relation to Sri Lanka which restricted sales unless the Secretary of State certified to Congress that the Sri Lankan Government was bringing to justice members of the Sri Lankan military who had been complicit in using child soldiers.

37. In response to a question about universal jurisdiction, he assured the Committee members that the United States was not a haven for war criminals. The War Crimes Statute provided for the prosecution of American citizens who committed war crimes in the United States or elsewhere and of those who committed war crimes against an American citizen anywhere in the world. There was also the possibility to extradite individuals that were not covered by the War Crimes Statute, and immigration removal statutes applied to individuals involved in genocide, extrajudicial killings and torture. All cases that fell within the jurisdiction of the United States were therefore dealt with appropriately.

38. Security contractors were not authorized to participate in offensive combat operations. It was recognized that in an active area of combat, they would occasionally come under fire and need to respond appropriately. Security contractors were required to be at least 21 years old and to undergo a strict vetting procedure.

39. Mr. LAGON (United States of America) referred the Committee to a speech given a month previously by Mr. Bellinger, legal adviser to the State Department, which was the most recent expression of United States views on the Rome Statute.
40. Mr. KOTRANE, recalling that Mr. Padmanabhan had said that United States legislation allowed for prosecution of those who had committed war crimes against American citizens abroad, asked whether it also allowed for prosecution of American citizens or those with some link to the United States, such as permanent residence, who had committed war crimes abroad against children of any nationality, not necessarily children who were American citizens.
41. Mr. PADMANABHAN (United States of America) said that any war crime committed by an American citizen in the United States or abroad could be prosecuted under the War Crimes Statute. Non-American citizens who committed war crimes abroad against non-American citizens were not covered by the Statute, but such individuals could be extradited.
42. Ms. MANDELKER (United States of America) said that an amendment to the genocide statute provided that an individual present in the United States who had previously committed genocide could be prosecuted by the United States.
43. Ms. FRY (United States of America) said that any individual who requested refugee status or asylum in the United States or abroad and who claimed to be a former child soldier was interviewed by an asylum officer who was specially trained to deal with children. The aim of the interview was to establish the circumstances and the reasons for the child's recruitment as a soldier and whether the child had come to any harm during service. Following the interview, the officer would make a decision as to whether the child was eligible for asylum. If the officer believed that the former child soldier had participated in persecutory acts or had been voluntarily and knowingly involved with a terrorist group, asylum might not be granted. The case would then be transferred to an immigration court, whose decision could be appealed to a board of immigration appeals and then to two further courts, and finally the individual would be eligible to apply for protection under the Convention against Torture.
44. Mr. CITARELLA (Country Rapporteur) asked what kind of assistance was provided to children during the asylum procedure to enable them to present their case as well as possible.
45. Mr. FILALI (Country Rapporteur) asked whether children were detained during the procedure, especially if they were in the United States illegally.
46. Ms. FRY (United States of America) said that former child soldiers who did not have legal status in the United States were held in custody. The relevant Government departments cooperated to ensure that such children were detained separately from adults and that they continued to receive an education. Pro bono legal assistance was available to them, and she would look into whether there were other forms of assistance available.
47. Mr. ARENDT (United States of America) said that although there was pressure on recruiters, checks and balances were in place to ensure that recruitment was carried out appropriately. The primary market for the military's marketing campaign was persons aged 18 to 24 years, not those aged 17 years. However, since students graduating from high school were aged between 17 and 19 years and although the majority were aged over 18 years, a small

minority were aged 17 years. The Hutchinson Amendment outlined the military's rights and restrictions in terms of recruitment, including the requirement for parental consent and for verification that applicants were in fact at least 17 years of age through presentation of at least two official forms of identification, such as a birth certificate or passport.

48. Mr. CITARELLA (Country Rapporteur) asked whether recruiters were members of the armed forces, and whether they received any special training on appropriate recruiter behaviour during the recruitment process up to the point that a child signed a contract. He asked for confirmation that in some parts of the country recruiters began actively trying to recruit children aged 14 years and pursued at school and at home those who seemed interested in being recruited at the age of 18 years.

49. Mr. ARENDT (United States of America) said that the No Child Left Behind Act (2001) and the Hutchinson Amendment required school districts to provide military recruiters with a directory containing the names, home addresses and telephone numbers of students and to provide access to students to the same extent as other employers or educational institutions. Some schools provided greater access than others. School districts were required to inform parents of their right to opt out of being included in the recruiters' directory, and all schools complied with that obligation.

50. In response to the question on aggressive recruiting, he expressed regret that the Committee had received information that was not in line with the State party's policy. The Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps (JROTC) programme was not a recruiting programme, but was a voluntary programme aimed at building citizenship and a sense of responsibility and increasing the number of children completing high school. It was part of the curriculum in participating schools, developing both life skills and academic skills and thereby promoting success. The programme did include information on respect for diversity, concerning people both in the United States itself and all over the world.

51. Ms. AIDOO asked what incentives the schools received to participate and what the children were required to pay back.

52. Mr. PARFITT asked why the programme was taught by the military and not by the schools system.

53. Mr. ARENDT (United States of America) said that the programme was completely voluntary. Participating schools were required to provide funding for half of the programme's implementation, the majority of which went towards the salaries of the two military retirees running the programme in the school, and the military provided the rest of the funding. The military retirees were qualified by the military to instruct, but since the instructors were hired by the school, the school had control over the programme's execution. Although the instructors were former members of the military, they were therefore fully integrated into the school system.

54. All applicants to the military were given a card on their rights as applicants, including a free telephone number to call with any complaints about the recruitment procedure. The offending recruiters could be disciplined under the Uniform Code of Military Justice.

55. Regarding the delayed-entry programme, he said that every effort was made to ensure that applicants were aware of all aspects involved in a military career. Once applicants decided that they wanted to pursue a military career, they could sign a contract, but they were free to opt out at any point before they began basic training. They would probably be encouraged by recruiters to change their decision to opt out, but if they felt they were being coerced, they could file a complaint using the free telephone number.
56. Ms. ORTIZ, noting that many parents of recruited children did not speak English, asked whether such parents received information in their own language on the conditions and consequences of their children's recruitment and on the right to opt out of the school directory.
57. Mr. ARENDT (United States of America) said that all communication from schools to parents, including the directory opt-out form, was translated into the parents' first languages.
58. Mr. FILALI (Country Rapporteur) asked whether children who decided to opt out of the delayed-entry programme were required to reimburse any money paid to them and what those children's status was between their opting out and their request being granted.
59. Mr. ARENDT (United States of America) said that monetary incentives were disbursed upon completion of the training programme, so that reimbursement was not required, nor were penalties imposed on potential recruits who decided to withdraw from the programme. That policy also applied to the generous in-service education benefits. If a recruit decided not to enter military service, a code stating that the person in question was not suitable or capable for military service was issued upon his or her discharge. In the event that the former recruit decided to be reinstated, there was a procedure for identifying the reason for the assignment of a code, with a view to obtaining a waiver of recruitment policy in order to allow that person to re-enter the service.
60. The CHAIRPERSON stressed the importance for families of potential recruits to fully understand their rights, and the terms and consequences of such recruitment. It was all the more important for non-English speaking families to be provided with informational material in a language that they could understand.
61. Ms. ORTIZ asked why former recruits were punished for making a voluntary decision to opt out of military service. She said the system of assigning a code, declaring them unfit for military service, amounted to a form of penalty.
62. Mr. CITARELLA (Country Rapporteur) asked whether non-citizens could be recruited, or whether there was a facility for granting citizenship after recruitment.
63. Mr. ARENDT (United States of America), referring to the question on the assignment of a code to designate the status of applicants, said that the procedure was not meant to harm them in any way, but rather to confirm the seriousness of their intention to embark on a military career. He further clarified that only citizens or permanent residents of the United States were eligible for recruitment.

64. Mr. FILALI (Country Rapporteur) asked for an explanation of the term “grave breach” of humanitarian law within the meaning of the US war crime statute. He wished to know whether that concept covered the recruitment of children.

65. Ms. MANDELKER (United States of America) confirmed that the war statute did not include child recruitment as a grave breach.

66. Mr. FILALI (Country Rapporteur) said that, on the basis of that response, it was not clear how a person in the United States who had recruited child soldiers elsewhere could be prosecuted.

67. Mr. LAGON (United States of America) said that there was a range of criminal laws, including municipal laws on abduction, that could be implicated in child recruitment, so that although there was not a per se crime described as child recruitment, it could fall within the fuller range of criminal laws.

68. Ms. MANDELKER (United States of America) said that the nature of the recruitment would influence the determination of what might constitute a federal crime.

69. Mr. PADMANABHAN (United States of America) referred to the description of “grave breach” under article 147 of the Fourth Geneva Convention, illustrating that provisions on grave breaches would embrace the type of conduct applicable to child recruitment.

70. Ms. HODGKINSON (United States of America), responding to the question on the applicability of the Supreme Court decision on the imposition of the death penalty with respect to persons under 18 years of age in a court martial, confirmed that the decision was indeed applicable, in other words, the death penalty could not be imposed.

71. With reference to the determination of the age of detainees, she said that the process had become increasingly difficult, despite the series of screening procedures and extensive measures adopted on the battlefield and in all detention facilities. In extremely difficult cases the assistance of highly specialized medical practitioners was needed to ascertain the age of detainees. The vast majority of persons detained were released before transfer to an internment facility because of the layers of thorough screening.

72. In Iraq, a magistrate cell review was conducted within seven days of detention to determine whether detainees were in fact combatants or posed an “imperative threat to security”. Additional screening was carried out by a combined review and release board, comprised of United States military personnel and Iraqi government officials. The review board process was continued within six months of detention. Juveniles were held for a maximum period of 365 days, separate from adult detainees, with the benefit of special protective measures that included a wide range of educational and recreational opportunities, personal legal representation and medical care. The United States military attached great importance to the role of families in the process of rehabilitation of juveniles and their successful reintegration into society.

73. She confirmed that the figure reported by Human Rights Watch on the number of children detained was accurate, and that her authorities had been frank and open about statistics, but she took the opportunity to add that their records did not list the particular Guantanamo Bay detainee, cited earlier, as a juvenile at the time he was transferred there.
74. Ms. ORTIZ said that it seemed inconsistent that the United States military was so concerned about the determination of age, yet lacked the ability to determine who were minors and not.
75. Ms. HODGKINSON (United States of America) said candidly that juveniles were held in detention, and it was troubling that children had been recruited to perform barbaric acts in the first place.
76. Mr. KOTRANE said that the Committee was aware of the predicament regarding the determination of age, and had in fact prepared a general comment on that subject. He asked the delegation whether the military would not consider giving minors the benefit of the doubt or presumption of innocence with respect of their age claims.
77. Ms. HODGKINSON (United States of America) believed that it was possible to do so, and that in the past it had been customary to act along those lines. However, the specific instance of the Guantanamo Bay detainee in question posed a new situation, and her Government was willing to investigate the matter further, in line with its objective to provide appropriate guarantees to juveniles.
78. In that connection, she detailed the specific aspects that was peculiar to the treatment of juveniles, and elaborated on the numerous counselling, educational, and recreational services made available to them. In addition, she stressed that the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and family members were granted regular access to juveniles. There was also a robust involvement of the Iraqi Government and tribal leaders in the rehabilitation and reintegration process, in order to ensure a successful transition for the juveniles when they returned to their localities. In the case of Afghanistan, she said that an effort was made to incorporate the best practices from the experience in Iraq. Juvenile detainees were held with the youngest members of the population of detainees, while the added feature of videoconferencing facilitated contact with families who could not safely travel to visit their relatives in detention.
79. The CHAIRPERSON asked whether the families in remote areas had the necessary technology to benefit from the videoconferencing facility.
80. Ms. SMITH asked the delegation to comment on reports that not all juvenile detainees in Iraq benefited from the educational programme.
81. Ms. HODGKINSON (United States of America) said that the military worked in cooperation with the ICRC, which invited families to attend the Red Cross offices in remote areas that were equipped for videoconferencing.
82. The education programme went into operation in 2007, so that coverage had not yet reached all detainees, as was the intended objective. There had been exceptional cases in which juveniles had been removed from the educational centres following incidents of violence.

83. Ms. KHATTAB asked how the Government of the United States assessed the mood of the juveniles subjected to detention, given the notion that the detention of young persons created a hotbed of terrorism.

84. Ms. HODGKINSON (United States of America) said that follow-up checks had shown that the rate of recidivism had largely declined since the launching of the education programme and involvement of the Iraqi Government.

85. Mr. CITARELLA (Country Rapporteur) enquired about the procedure for deciding whether a juvenile had committed a crime or not.

86. Ms. HODGKINSON (United States of America) said that detainees were not detained because they had committed a crime, but because they were engaged in armed hostilities, in much the same way that enemy prisoners had been held throughout history. In many cases the juveniles were not criminally prosecuted. Most of them were not charged and were released in less than a year. A number of mechanisms had been established to ensure that they were not unduly detained.

87. She took the opportunity to describe the special facilities provided for the few juveniles in Guantanamo Bay for education, worship, physical fitness, recreation, medical and dental care, as well as psychological support. Courses had been offered to the detainees in their own language or language of choice.

88. With regard to Mr. Parfitt's query on the Act pertaining to military commissions, she said that she could neither comment nor speculate on the specifics of the cases concerning the two juveniles facing trial, since the decisions taken lay solely within the realm of the prosecutor in question. However, she could assert that neither case had been referred as a capital punishment or death penalty case, taking the age of the defendants into account.

89. Following a request by Ms. KHATTAB for a comment on understandings, Mr. HARRIS (United States of America) explained that, as distinct from reservations, understandings described what elements of a treaty were deemed important to the State party involved. There was no practice in international law for a State party to take steps to change its understanding as it implemented a treaty, because understandings simply tried to describe the treaty in question.

90. Mr. FILALI (Country Rapporteur), thanking the members of the United States delegation for their participation in a frank and constructive dialogue, said that the Committee had obtained a more precise idea of the will, effort and achievement of the United States Government to adopt new steps, which would be acknowledged in the concluding observations. The recommendations to the Government would focus on the remaining topics of concern to the Committee, including the meaning of article 1 of the Convention, asylum for child soldiers, voluntary recruitment and misconduct of recruiters, detention of juveniles in Iraq and Afghanistan, military programmes, military commissions and the applicability of international standards on juvenile protection.

91. Mr. CITARELLA (Country Rapporteur) joined Mr. Filali in expressing his appreciation for the input of the delegation, and said that the discussions had provided in-depth and specific information on the implementation of the Optional Protocols by the United States Government.

The meeting rose at 6 p.m.