



Convention on the Rights of the Child

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Committee on the Rights of the Child Fifty-eighth session

Summary record (partial)* of the 1640th meeting

Held at the Palais Wilson, Geneva, on Monday, 19 September 2011, at 10 a.m.

Chairperson: Mr. Zermatten

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* No summary record was prepared for the rest of the meeting.

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The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Opening of the session

1. **The Chairperson** declared open the fifty-eighth session of the Committee on the Rights of the Child.

Statement by the Representative of the Secretary-General

2. **Ms. Edelenbos** (Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)) said that, following the adoption by the Human Rights Council, during its seventeenth session, of a resolution concerning the proposed optional protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on a communications procedure, the proposed text of the optional protocol would be put before the General Assembly for adoption at its sixty-sixth session. The protocol would bring children into the ranks of fully fledged rights-holders and would enable them to bring complaints about violations of their rights to an international body.

3. The fifty-eighth session of the Committee would be the last one before the High Commissioner for Human Rights presented her proposals for treaty-body strengthening in early 2012 and was therefore the last opportunity to discuss further contributions to that process. Ongoing consultations with civil society organizations had made it clear that one key demand was that all treaty bodies should align their engagement procedures; the same request had been made by national human rights institutions. On the other hand, the key message from States parties was one of austerity and self-discipline, particularly in respect of the non-mandated activities undertaken by nearly all treaty bodies, such as follow-up procedures and the formulation of general comments. States parties found themselves continuously confronted with ad hoc requests for additional resources from individual treaty bodies, among them the request of the Committee for a double-chamber session each year on a permanent basis, and they were becoming increasingly aware that, in the absence of a comprehensive solution for the treaty body system, such requests would become a perennial feature of that system.

4. Regarding activities relating to children, OHCHR, the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on violence against children, the Inter-Parliamentary Union and the International NGO Advisory Council for Follow-up to the Secretary-General's Study on Violence Against Children had organized an expert meeting on the legal framework required to prohibit, prevent and respond to all forms of violence against children. The expert meeting, which had benefited from the participation of Mr. Kotrane of the Committee, had led to the formulation of a number of practical recommendations for accelerating the adoption of effective legislation to protect all children from violence. Those recommendations had subsequently been presented to the General Assembly.

5. Additionally, OHCHR, with the support of AVIVA, the Consortium for Street Children and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), was organizing a meeting on the promotion and protection of the rights of children living and/or working on the street. The meeting would provide input for the report that the High Commissioner for Human Rights would present on the subject to the Human Rights Council at its nineteenth session.

6. An expert meeting on violence in the juvenile justice system would be held in 2012 in Vienna by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, OHCHR and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on violence against children. The Special Representative had sent a survey to Member States to assess progress in the follow-up to the recommendations made in the report of the independent expert for the United Nations study on violence against children (A/61/299). The findings from the survey would inform

a report to the General Assembly in 2012, during which the mandate of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General would be reviewed.

7. During its annual open debate on children and armed conflict, the Security Council had adopted resolution 1998 (2011), which dealt with criteria for listing parties to armed conflict in the annexes of the Secretary-General's annual report on children and armed conflict. Under that resolution, the criteria had been expanded to include parties that attacked schools and hospitals.

8. A more dramatic reduction than had been anticipated was foreseen in the budget of the Secretariat, and the Committee had already begun to feel the negative impact of that situation in terms of the timely availability of translations of essential documents, especially replies to lists of issues. She was grateful to colleagues at UNICEF who had once again helped with the informal translation of documents for the session, but the Committee was clearly facing a serious problem that should be brought to the attention of all States and counterparts. As had been highlighted during the consultations on treaty-body strengthening, an effective treaty body system required sufficient resources to allow it to function properly.

9. **The Chairperson** joined **Ms. Edelenbos** in thanking those at UNICEF for their assistance and noted that translation was a fundamental, long-term issue for the Committee.

Adoption of the agenda (CRC/C/58/1)

10. *The agenda was adopted.*

The discussion covered in the summary record ended at 10.40 a.m.