



**Convention on the
Rights of the Child**

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COMMITTEE ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

Forty-ninth session

SUMMARY RECORD (PARTIAL)* OF THE 1343rd MEETING

Held at the Palais Wilson, Geneva,
on Monday, 15 September 2008, at 10 a.m.

Chairperson: Ms. LEE

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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 a.m.

OPENING OF THE SESSION

1. The CHAIRPERSON declared open the forty-ninth session of the Committee on the Rights of the Child.

STATEMENT BY THE UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

2. Ms. PILLAY (United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights) said that treaty bodies were the custodians of human rights norms, and their work was one of the main pillars of the human rights system. She intended to use the influence of her Office to promote the implementation of human rights treaties at the national level and to encourage universal ratification of those treaties.

3. The Committee on the Rights of the Child was unique in that it monitored a convention that encompassed a broad spectrum of rights and enjoyed almost universal acceptance; it also monitored the two Optional Protocols to the Convention. She noted that the reporting obligations under those three instruments had created a workload that required additional meeting time, and that the Committee was once again seeking to meet in two parallel chambers. While she hoped that States would approve the Committee's request, she urged the Committee to consider longer-term solutions, including in the context of the harmonization of treaty bodies' working methods.

4. She looked forward to learning more about the Committee's work in general, and about its consideration of reports under the Optional Protocols in particular. As a former international judge, she was particularly interested in the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict, which represented a novel combination of human rights law, humanitarian law and international criminal law. In her view, the interplay between those branches of law was of the utmost importance.

5. She looked forward to learning more about how the Committee could interact with other entities that shared the same concerns as the Committee, including the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for children and armed conflict, and the International Criminal Court. The latter had raised charges concerning the war crime of using children under the age of 15 to participate actively in hostilities, which was punishable under the Rome Statute; some of those charges were relevant for States whose reports would be considered by the Committee in the near future.

6. She affirmed the importance of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, particularly given the serious nature of the violations of that Protocol and the secrecy in which they often took place. Both Protocols underscored the importance of protecting the most vulnerable of all victims, namely children. In addition, both Protocols required legislative amendments in order to break the pervasive cycle of impunity, and she strongly endorsed the Committee's efforts to encourage States to make such amendments through the recommendations contained in its concluding observations.

The public part of the meeting was suspended at 10.10 a.m. and resumed at 10.50 a.m.

SUBMISSION OF REPORTS BY STATES PARTIES (agenda item 3)

7. Ms. ANDRIJASEVIC-BOKO (Secretary of the Committee) said that, since its previous session, the Committee had received second periodic reports from Grenada and Burundi, combined second, third, fourth periodic reports from Angola, a third periodic report from Tunisia, combined third and fourth periodic reports from Spain, the Sudan and Belgium, and fourth periodic reports from Nicaragua and Denmark. As at 1 September 2008, the Committee had received 122 ratifications of the Optional Protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict, under which it had received initial reports from Sri Lanka, Nicaragua, Ukraine, the Sudan and Bosnia and Herzegovina. Also as at 1 September 2008, the Committee had received 126 ratifications of the Optional Protocol on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, under which it had received initial reports from Nicaragua, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Colombia.

METHODS OF WORK OF THE COMMITTEE (agenda item 6)

8. Ms. MORALES (Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights) said that, in its decision of 6 June 2008 annexed to the report of the Secretary-General on the status of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (A/63/160), the Committee requested the General Assembly at its sixty-third session to approve its request for eight additional weeks of sessional meetings and four weeks of pre-sessional meetings between October 2009 and January 2011. At the time of adoption of its decision, the Committee had been informally advised by the Secretariat of the financial implications of that decision; however, owing to time constraints, no official statement had been made, or documentation provided, in support of the estimated costs.

9. She confirmed that the additional meeting time required would allow the Committee to consider reports in two parallel chambers, consisting of nine members each, during its regular sessions, thereby increasing the number of reports of States parties to be examined from 10 to 16 a session, which would result in an increase in the number of reports considered from 40 to 64.

10. The activities to be carried out related to programme 1 (General Assembly and Economic and Social Council affairs and conference management); programme 19 (Human rights), subprogramme 2 (Supporting human rights bodies and organs); and programme 24 (Management and support services), subprogramme 4 (Support services), of the biennial programme plan and priorities for the period 2008-2009 (A/61/6/Rev.1). The activities also fell under section 2 (General Assembly and Economic and Social Council affairs and conference management); section 23 (Human rights); and section 28E (Administration, Geneva), of the programme budget for the biennium 2008-2009.

11. Provisions had been made in the 2008-2009 programme budget for travel and per diem costs of the 18 members of the Committee to attend its three annual regular sessions in Geneva of 15 working days each, and three regular pre-sessional working groups of five working days each, as well as for conference services for the Committee.

12. If the General Assembly approved the Committee's request, provisions for a total of 80 additional sessional meetings (in 2010 and 2011) would be required, as well as a total of 40 additional pre-sessional meetings (10 in 2009 and 30 in 2010). The additional meetings of the Committee would require interpretation services in the three official languages (exceptionally four). Summary records would be provided for the 80 additional sessional Committee meetings, while no summary records would be required for the 40 pre-sessional working group meetings. The additional meetings would require an additional 2,520 pages of pre-session and 1,248 pages of post-session documentation in the three (exceptionally four) official languages.

13. If the General Assembly approved the Committee's request, no additional resources would be required for Committee members' travel or per diem costs in relation to the additional meetings.

14. Approval of the request was expected to give rise to additional staffing requirements to provide for general temporary assistance: (a) 2 staff at the P-3 level for 6 work months each in 2009 (from July 2009), 12 work months each in 2010 and 2 work months each in 2011; and (b) one General Service level assistant for 6 work months in 2009, 12 work months in 2010 and 2 work months in 2011.

15. The additional meetings of the Committee would require an additional \$725,200 for 2009; \$3,612,800 for 2010; and \$592,000 for 2011. In connection with the estimated additional requirement of \$725,200 for 2009, she said that all efforts would be made to meet that requirement within the provisions under (a) section 2 (General Assembly and Economic and Social Council affairs and conference management), \$513,100; (b) section 23 (Human rights), \$208,300; and section 28E (Administration, Geneva), \$3,800, of the programme budget for the biennium 2008-2009. The requirements of \$3,612,800 and \$592,000 for the biennium 2010-2011 would be considered in the context of the proposed programme budget for 2010-2011.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA (agenda item 1) (CRC/C/49/1)

16. The agenda was adopted.

The discussion covered in the summary record ended at 11.05 a.m.