



General Assembly

Distr.: General
6 January 2022

Seventy-sixth session

Agenda item 70 (a)

Promotion and protection of the rights of children: promotion and protection of the rights of children

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 16 December 2021

[on the report of the Third Committee ([A/76/458](#), para. 15)]

76/147. Rights of the child

The General Assembly,

Reaffirming the importance of its resolution [44/25](#) of 20 November 1989, by which it adopted the Convention on the Rights of the Child,¹ which constitutes the standard in the promotion and protection of the rights of the child,

Reaffirming also that States parties to the Convention on the Rights of the Child shall undertake all appropriate measures for the implementation of the rights recognized therein, while bearing in mind the importance of the Optional Protocols to the Convention² and calling for their universal ratification and effective implementation, as well as that of other human rights instruments,

Reaffirming further that the general principles of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, including the best interests of the child, non-discrimination, participation and survival and development, provide the framework for actions concerning children,

Reaffirming resolution [70/1](#), adopted by the General Assembly on 25 September 2015, entitled “Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”, while taking note of the interconnectedness of the Sustainable Development Goals set in the 2030 Agenda and the rights proclaimed in the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and reaffirming the commitment at the very heart of the 2030 Agenda to leave no one behind, including children,

Underscoring the importance of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda in ensuring the enjoyment of the rights of the child and their well-being,

¹ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1577, No. 27531.

² Ibid., vols. 2171, 2173 and 2983, No. 27531.



Reaffirming the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,³ which proclaims that all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights and that everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set out therein, without distinction of any kind,

Recalling the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,⁴ the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights,⁵ the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination,⁶ the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities,⁷ the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance,⁸ the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees⁹ and the 1967 Protocol thereto,¹⁰ the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime¹¹ and the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime,¹² the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women¹³ and the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment,¹⁴ as well as relevant International Labour Organization conventions on children including the Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138)¹⁵ and the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182),¹⁶

Recalling also all of its previous resolutions on the rights of the child, the most recent of which was resolution [74/133](#) of 18 December 2019, and recalling further all other relevant resolutions on this matter, including resolution [75/166](#) of 16 December 2020 on protecting children from bullying, resolution [73/327](#) of 25 July 2019, by which it declared 2021 the International Year for the Elimination of Child Labour, resolution [75/167](#) of 16 December 2020 on child, early and forced marriage and resolution [74/134](#) of 18 December 2019 on the girl child,

Reaffirming the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action,¹⁷ the United Nations Millennium Declaration¹⁸ and the outcome document of the twenty-seventh special session of the General Assembly on children, entitled “A world fit for children”,¹⁹ recalling the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action,²⁰ the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development²¹ and the outcome documents of their review conferences, the Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development and the Programme of Action of the World Summit for Social Development,²² the United Nations Declaration on the

³ Resolution [217 A \(III\)](#).

⁴ See resolution [2200 A \(XXI\)](#), annex.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 660, No. 9464.

⁷ Ibid., vol. 2515, No. 44910.

⁸ Ibid., vol. 2716, No. 48088.

⁹ Ibid., vol. 189, No. 2545.

¹⁰ Ibid., vol. 606, No. 8791.

¹¹ Ibid., vol. 2225, No. 39574.

¹² Ibid., vol. 2237, No. 39574.

¹³ Ibid., vol. 1249, No. 20378.

¹⁴ Ibid., vol. 1465, No. 24841.

¹⁵ Ibid., vol. 1015, No. 14862.

¹⁶ Ibid., vol. 2133, No. 37245.

¹⁷ [A/CONF.157/24 \(Part I\)](#), chap. III.

¹⁸ Resolution [55/2](#).

¹⁹ Resolution [S-27/2](#), annex.

²⁰ *Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4–15 September 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.13), chap. I, resolution 1, annexes I and II.

²¹ *Report of the International Conference on Population and Development, Cairo, 5–13 September 1994* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.95.XIII.18), chap. I, resolution 1, annex.

²² *Report of the World Summit for Social Development, Copenhagen, 6–12 March 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.8), chap. I, resolution 1, annexes I and II.

Rights of Indigenous Peoples²³ and the outcome document of the high-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly known as the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples,²⁴ the Declaration on the Right to Development,²⁵ the Declaration of the commemorative high-level plenary meeting devoted to the follow-up to the outcome of the special session on children, held in New York from 11 to 13 December 2007,²⁶ the outcome document of the fourth Global Conference on the Sustained Eradication of Child Labour, held in Buenos Aires from 14 to 16 November 2017 and the outcome documents of previous Global Conferences, and the political declaration of the high-level meeting on universal health coverage,²⁷

Taking note of all relevant international instruments on the rights of migrants and refugees, and recalling the importance of protecting the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all refugee and migrant children, including girls, including those unaccompanied or separated from their caregivers, with the best interests of the child as a primary consideration,

Taking note also of the reports of the Secretary-General on progress made towards achieving the commitments set out in the outcome document of the twenty-seventh special session of the General Assembly²⁸ and on the status of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the issues addressed in resolution 74/133,²⁹ as well as the report of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children,³⁰ the report of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict,³¹ the report of the Special Rapporteur of the Human Rights Council on the sale and sexual exploitation of children, including child prostitution, child pornography and other child sexual abuse material,³² and the report of the Special Rapporteur of the Council on trafficking in persons, especially women and children,³³ whose recommendations should be carefully studied, taking fully into account the views of Member States,

Reaffirming that States have the primary responsibility to promote, respect, protect and fulfil all human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the rights of the child, and acknowledging the important role played by national governmental and local structures for children, including, where they exist, ministries and institutions in charge of child, family and youth issues and independent ombudspersons for children or other national institutions, including national human rights institutions, where they exist, for the promotion and protection of the rights of the child,

Recognizing that the family has the primary responsibility for the nurturing and protection of children, in the best interests of the child, and that children, for the full and harmonious development of their personality, should grow up in a family environment and in an atmosphere of happiness, love and understanding,

Recognizing also the State responsibility to ensure children's protection and care as is necessary for their well-being, taking into account the rights and duties of their parents, legal guardians or other individuals legally responsible for them, and, to this end, to take all appropriate and legislative and administrative measures,

²³ Resolution 61/295, annex.

²⁴ Resolution 69/2.

²⁵ Resolution 41/128, annex.

²⁶ Resolution 62/88.

²⁷ Resolution 74/2.

²⁸ A/75/286.

²⁹ A/76/305.

³⁰ A/76/224.

³¹ A/76/231.

³² A/75/210.

³³ A/76/263.

Noting with appreciation the work to promote and protect the rights of the child carried out by all relevant organs, bodies, entities and organizations of the United Nations system, within their respective mandates, by relevant mandate holders and special procedures of the United Nations and by relevant regional organizations, where appropriate, and intergovernmental organizations, and recognizing the valuable role of national human rights institutions and civil society, including non-governmental organizations,

Recognizing the importance of international, regional and bilateral multi-stakeholder partnerships and initiatives to advance the effective protection and promotion of the rights of the child and the elimination of all forms of violence against children, including all violent punishment of children,

Recognizing also that violence against children undermines efforts to implement the 2030 Agenda and hinders progress towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, and that the negative and long-term impact of violence on the development of children stifles their potential to become active participants in society,

Encouraging all States to strengthen efforts to prevent the military use of schools in contravention of international law and to promote and protect the right to education, to make it accessible, inclusive, quality and non-discriminatory and to facilitate the continuation of education in situations of armed conflict, and encouraging all States to strengthen efforts to protect children affected by armed conflict, including from the recruitment or use by armed forces or armed groups and by supporting long-term and sustainable reintegration and rehabilitation for these children,

Urging all States to promote, respect, protect and fulfil the right of children, including children with disabilities and children in vulnerable situations, to express themselves freely and their right to be heard, to ensure that they have access to quality education and information in child-friendly formats, that their views are given due weight and that they are included in decision-making processes, in accordance with their evolving capacities or age and maturity, in all matters affecting them, including those relating to relevant aspects of the 2030 Agenda, while recognizing also the importance of involving children's organizations and child-led initiatives,

Concerned about the occurrence of bullying, including cyberbullying, in all parts of the world and the fact that children who are victimized by such practices may be at heightened risk of compromising their health, emotional well-being, academic work and education and for a wide range of physical and/or mental health conditions, as well as potential long-term effects on individuals' ability to realize their own potential,

Deeply concerned that children disproportionately suffer the consequences of discrimination, exclusion and inequality and that the situation of children in many parts of the world remains negatively affected by the prolonged effects of poverty and inequality, reaffirming that eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions is one of the greatest global challenges and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development, recognizing the impact of poverty beyond the socioeconomic context and the intrinsic interlinkage between poverty eradication and the promotion of sustainable development, and in this regard underlining the importance of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and recognizing that a strong focus is needed on poverty, deprivation and inequality to prevent and protect children from all forms of violence and to promote the resilience of children, their families and their communities,

Recognizing that the girl child is often at greater risk of being exposed to and encountering various forms of discrimination and violence, including sexual and

gender-based violence, and harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and child labour, which, among other things, would hinder the realization of her rights and efforts towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly those Goals that are relevant to gender equality and the empowerment of girls, and reaffirming the need to achieve gender equality to ensure a just and equitable world for girls, including by partnering with men and boys, as an important strategy for advancing the rights of the girl child,

Recognizing also that the empowerment of and investment in girls, which is critical for economic growth, and the achievement of all Sustainable Development Goals, including the eradication of poverty and extreme poverty, as well as the full, equal and meaningful participation of girls in decision-making that affects them, are key in breaking the cycle of all forms of discrimination and violence and in promoting and protecting the full and effective enjoyment of their human rights, and recognizing further that empowering girls requires their active participation in decision-making processes in accordance with their evolving capacities or age and maturity and as agents of change in their own lives and communities,

Expressing serious concern that children with disabilities, particularly girls, face stigmatization, discrimination or exclusion and are disproportionately subjected to mental and physical violence and sexual abuse in all settings,

Expressing further concern that children often face persecution, including abuse and violence, stigmatization, discrimination, bullying and exclusion from education and training, as well as a lack of family and social support, access to relevant health-care services and information, and, in extreme cases, sexual assault, rape and death,

Recalling that the Convention on the Rights of the Child requires States parties to pursue the full implementation of the right of the child to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health by taking measures to, inter alia, combat disease and malnutrition, including through ensuring access to health-care services, provision of adequate nutritious foods and clean drinking water, hygiene and sanitation, and reducing exposure to harmful substances or environmental conditions that directly or indirectly affect their health,

Reaffirming the need to end preventable deaths of newborns and children under 5 years of age, and recognizing that infectious diseases, including pneumonia, diarrhoea and malaria, remain a leading cause of deaths of children under 5, along with pre-term birth and intrapartum-related complications,

Recognizing that the risk of maternal mortality is highest for girls under 15 years of age and that complications in pregnancy and childbirth are a leading cause of death among girls under 15 years of age in many countries,

Recognizing also that there are large disparities in maternal mortality and morbidity rates between developed and developing countries as well as within and among countries, particularly in rural and remote areas and the poorest urban areas,

Profoundly concerned that children, particularly in early childhood, in many parts of the world remain negatively affected by the adverse impacts of climate change and environmental degradation, including natural disasters, persistent drought, extreme weather events, land degradation, sea level rise, coastal erosion and ocean acidification, loss of biodiversity and pollution, which further threaten health, food security and efforts to eradicate poverty and achieve sustainable development, and in this regard calling for the strengthened implementation of the Paris Agreement adopted under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change,³⁴

³⁴ See [FCCC/CP/2015/10/Add.1](#), decision 1/CP.21, annex.

Reaffirming that States have the obligation to promote, respect, protect and fulfil human rights, including in actions undertaken to address environmental harm, such as loss of biodiversity, climate change, pollution and exposure to hazardous substances and wastes, and to take appropriate measures to protect the rights of the child, and that additional measures for those who are particularly vulnerable to the effects of environmental harm should be taken,

Recalling the importance of promoting and protecting the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all migrant children, regardless of their migration status, with the best interests of the child as a primary consideration; reaffirming all latest international policy developments and relevant United Nations agreements in this regard; and strengthening international and regional cooperation, within the framework of the United Nations and relevant regional forums,

Recognizing that the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic is one of the greatest global challenges in the history of the United Nations, and noting with deep concern its disproportionately heavy impact, inter alia on children, and its impact on health and the loss of life, mental health and well-being, as well as the negative impact on global humanitarian needs and the enjoyment of human rights and across all spheres of society, including on livelihoods, food security and nutrition, and education, the exacerbation of poverty and hunger, disruption to economies, trade, societies and environments, and the exacerbation of economic and social inequalities within and among countries, which is reversing hard-won development gains and hampering progress towards achieving the 2030 Agenda and all its Goals and targets,

Deeply concerned about the disproportionate impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on children, especially girls, including on their access to essential health-care services, and about the reported surge in sexual and gender-based violence, including domestic violence and violence in digital contexts, during confinement,

Deeply concerned also about the disproportionate effect of the COVID-19 pandemic on children from developing countries due to existing inequalities and digital divides, both among and within countries, and that the loss of learning during the pandemic, compounded by the risk of many girls not returning to school after the pandemic, will have serious long-term effects on literacy rates as well as the overall development of developing countries,

Recognizing that there is increased reliance on virtual learning, with more than 90 per cent of governments enacting policies to provide digital or broadcast learning, and that while meaningful access to digital technologies can support children to realize the full range of their rights, challenges faced by children in accessing the Internet and digital devices can limit the enjoyment of their right to education and increase inequalities among and within countries, with children living in rural areas, children living with disabilities and from the poorest households being the most affected,

Stressing that information and communications technologies and applications can create new ways to enhance education and foster learning and teaching on the rights of the child and can be useful tools to promote the enjoyment of children's rights and their protection, and in that regard stressing the need for enhanced efforts to expand connectivity, affordability, digital learning and associated skills bridging the digital divides, including the gender digital divides, while protecting children from violence in the digital environment,

Deeply concerned that increased unsupervised use of the Internet, inter alia during the COVID-19 pandemic, has exacerbated children's exposure to the risk of all forms of violence, including in the digital context, inter alia sexual harassment, peer-to-peer sexual harassment and cyberbullying, child sexual exploitation and

abuse, child grooming, trafficking in persons, hate speech, stigmatization, racism, xenophobia and discrimination,

1. *Recognizes* that the Convention on the Rights of the Child is the human rights treaty with the largest number of ratifications, and acknowledges that the Convention and the Optional Protocols thereto contain a comprehensive set of international legal standards for the protection and well-being of children;

2. *Calls upon* States parties to increase their efforts for the full implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child;

3. *Reaffirms* paragraphs 1, 4 and 5 of its resolution [71/177](#) of 19 December 2016 and that the general principles of, *inter alia*, the best interests of the child, non-discrimination, participation and survival and development provide the framework for all actions concerning children;

4. *Urges* States that have not yet done so to consider becoming parties to the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Optional Protocols thereto as a matter of priority and to implement them effectively, and encourages further efforts by the Secretary-General in this regard;

5. *Urges* States parties to withdraw reservations that are incompatible with the object and purpose of the Convention or the Optional Protocols thereto and to consider reviewing regularly other reservations with a view to withdrawing them in accordance with the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action;

6. *Takes note* of the work of the Special Representatives of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children and for Children and Armed Conflict, the Special Rapporteur of the Human Rights Council on the sale and sexual exploitation of children, including child prostitution, child pornography and other sexual abuse material, and the Committee on the Rights of the Child, and, in this regard, their contribution to the progress achieved in the promotion and protection of the rights of children;

7. *Reaffirms* section I of its resolution [74/133](#), entitled “Children without parental care”, which addresses, among other things, the economic and social well-being of children; the right to education; promoting and protecting the rights of children, including children in particularly difficult situations, including children with disabilities; migrant children; children affected by armed conflict; children facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination; the human rights of children in alternative care; the importance of mainstreaming a gender perspective; and children who are victims of trafficking; children in vulnerable situations children with HIV/AIDS and other serious illnesses;

8. *Calls upon* States to ensure the enjoyment by all children of all their civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights without discrimination of any kind;

9. *Notes with concern* the large number of children belonging to national, ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities, migrant children, refugee or asylum-seeking children, internally displaced children, children with disabilities, children of African descent and indigenous children who are victims of discrimination, including racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, stresses the need to incorporate gender-sensitive and special measures, into education programmes and programmes to combat these practices, in accordance with the principle of the best interests of the child and respect for their views, including children with disabilities, and calls upon States to provide special support and to ensure equal access to services for those children and their effective protection;

10. *Encourages* States to promote the rights of the child in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,³⁵ in accordance with their obligations under international law and in the best interests of the child;

11. *Recalls* every child's right to be registered immediately after birth, to a name, to acquire a nationality and to recognition everywhere as a person before the law, as set out in the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, respectively, reminds States of their obligation to ensure the registration of the birth of all children without discrimination of any kind, including in the case of late birth registration, calls upon States to ensure that birth registration procedures are universal, accessible, simple, expeditious and effective and provided at minimal or no cost, and recognizes the importance of birth registration as a critical means of preventing statelessness;

12. *Urges* States to improve the situation of children living in poverty, in particular extreme poverty, deprived of adequate nutritious food, clean drinking water and sanitation facilities, with limited or no access to basic physical and mental health-care services, shelter, education, participation and protection, taking into account that, while a severe lack of goods and services hurts every human being, it is particularly threatening and harmful to children, leaving them unable to enjoy their rights, to reach their full potential and to participate as full members of society, and exposed to conditions that lead to increased violence;

13. *Calls upon* all States and the international community to cooperate, support and participate in the global efforts for poverty eradication, to invest in children and mobilize all necessary resources and support in that regard, according to national plans and strategies, including through an integrated and multifaceted approach based on the well-being of children, and to accelerate their efforts to realize the internationally agreed development and poverty eradication goals, including the Sustainable Development Goals, within their time framework, and reaffirms that investments in children and the realization of their rights are among the most effective ways to eradicate poverty;

14. *Calls upon* States to scale up scientifically accurate and age-appropriate comprehensive education, relevant to cultural contexts, that provides adolescent girls and boys and young women and men, in and out of school, consistent with their evolving capacities, and with appropriate direction and guidance from parents and legal guardians, with the best interests of the child as their basic concern, with information on sexual and reproductive health and HIV prevention, gender equality and women's empowerment, human rights, physical, psychological and pubertal development and power in relationships between women and men, to enable them to build self-esteem and foster informed decision-making, communication and risk reduction skills and to develop respectful relationships, in full partnership with young people, parents, legal guardians, caregivers, educators and health-care providers, in order to, *inter alia*, enable them protect themselves from HIV infection and other risks;

15. *Reaffirms* the right to education on the basis of equal opportunity and non-discrimination, and calls upon States to make primary education compulsory, inclusive and available free to all children, ensuring that all children have equal access to education of good quality, making secondary education generally available and accessible to all, in particular through the progressive introduction of free education, bearing in mind that special measures to ensure equal access, including affirmative action, contribute to achieving equal opportunity and combating exclusion by eliminating social, economic and gender disparities in education and ensuring school

³⁵ Resolution 70/1.

attendance, in particular for girls, children with disabilities, pregnant adolescent girls, children living in poverty, indigenous children, children of African descent, persons belonging to ethnic or religious minorities and children in vulnerable or marginalized situations;

16. *Urges* Member States to ensure that all schools are safe and free from violence, such as bullying, including cyberbullying, sexual harassment, including peer-to-peer sexual harassment, online and offline, and that they address all forms of violence against children, with particular attention to girls and children with disabilities and in vulnerable situations;

17. *Calls upon* States to accelerate efforts to eliminate gender-specific barriers to the equal enjoyment by girls of their right to education, to address gender-based discrimination, negative social norms and gender stereotypes in education systems, including in curricula, textbooks and teaching methodologies, and to fight all forms of violence, including sexual harassment and school-related sexual and gender-based violence, in and out of schools and other educational settings;

18. *Urges* States to take immediate and effective measures to secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour and to end child labour in all its forms, by 2025 at the latest;

19. *Strongly condemns* all forms of violence, harassment and abuse against children in all settings, including physical, psychological and sexual violence, torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment, child abuse and exploitation, hostage-taking, domestic violence, incest, trafficking in or sale of children and their organs, paedophilia, child prostitution, child pornography and other child sexual abuse material, child sex tourism, gang and armed violence, sexual exploitation of children online and offline, bullying, including cyberbullying, and harmful practices, including female genital mutilation and child, early and forced marriage, and urges States to strengthen efforts to prevent and protect children from all such violence through a comprehensive, gender-responsive and age-appropriate approach and to develop an inclusive multifaceted and systematic framework, which is integrated into national planning processes, to respond effectively to violence against children and to provide for safe and child-sensitive counselling, complaint and reporting mechanisms and safeguards for the rights of affected children;

20. *Calls upon* Member States to ensure that child protection, including social protection and mental health services, is recognized as essential and that it continues to be provided and be accessible and available to all children at all times, including during lockdowns, quarantines and other types of confinement and public health measures;

21. *Calls upon* all States to protect the human rights of all children and to ensure, for children belonging to minorities in vulnerable situations, including migrant children, indigenous children, children of African descent, internally displaced children and children with disabilities, the enjoyment of all human rights as well as access to health care, social services, social protection and accessible and inclusive education on an equal basis with others, and to ensure that all such children, in particular unaccompanied migrant children, internally displaced children and those who are victims of violence and exploitation, receive special protection and assistance and that the best interests of the child are a primary consideration in their policies of integration, return and family reunification;

22. *Condemns in the strongest terms* all violations and abuses committed against children in armed conflict, and in this regard urges all States and other parties to armed conflict that are engaged, in contravention of applicable international law, in the recruitment and use of children, in patterns of killing and maiming of children

and/or rape and other sexual violence against children, acknowledging that sexual violence in these situations disproportionately affects girls, but that boys are also targets, in recurrent attacks on schools and/or hospitals and related personnel and in patterns of abduction of children, as well as in all other violations and abuses against children, to take time-bound and effective measures to end and prevent them and to encourage age- and gender-specific support services, including psychological, social and sexual and reproductive health-care services, and education, social protection and reintegration programmes;

23. *Calls upon* all Member States to ensure that children associated or allegedly associated with armed groups should be treated primarily as victims and in line with the best interests of the child, and to consider non-judicial measures as alternatives to prosecution and detention and take measures that focus on rehabilitation and reintegration in an environment that fosters the health, self-respect and dignity of the child, in accordance with relevant provisions of international humanitarian law, as well as international human rights law, in particular the Convention on the Rights of the Child;

24. *Calls upon* States to protect children affected by armed conflict, in particular from violations of international humanitarian law and international human rights law, and to ensure that they receive timely, effective humanitarian assistance, noting the efforts taken to end impunity by ensuring accountability and punishing perpetrators, and calls upon the international community to hold those responsible for violations accountable, *inter alia*, through the International Criminal Court;

25. *Calls upon* Member States to prevent the harmful effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on children by mitigating the damaging socioeconomic impacts, including by ensuring the continuity of child-centred services and policies on an equal and attainable access basis, upholding the right of the child to quality education on the basis of equal opportunity and non-discrimination and supporting education that is inclusive, equitable and accessible by implementing appropriate measures to ensure supporting families in the return of children, particularly girls and children in vulnerable situations, to school, when it is safe to do so, and access to opportunities to catch up on lost learning and while in confinement, to support school systems, teachers and families in ensuring a reliable source of daily nutrition and using accessible and inclusive distance-learning solutions to close the digital divides, while protecting children from violence, abuse and exploitation, online and offline, and recalling that no child shall be subjected to arbitrary or unlawful interference with his or her privacy and family;

26. *Encourages* States to make efforts towards putting children's needs at the centre of digital policy, and public and private investment, providing all children with equal and effective access to age-appropriate information, and information on their rights, and to high-quality online resources, including on digital skills and literacy, and protecting children from online risks and harm, as well as arbitrary or unlawful interference with their privacy on social media, as well as preventing children's exposure to violent and sexual content, gambling, exploitation and abuse, and the promotion of or incitement to life-threatening activities;

27. *Calls upon* States, with the collaboration of relevant stakeholders, to ensure that COVID-19 response and recovery policies take into account the specific needs of children and in this regard are transformative, age-sensitive and gender-responsive, participatory and adequately funded, promote inclusive, equal and sustainable economies and societies, and address inequalities and exclusion and poverty, in order to achieve the targets and goals of the 2030 Agenda;

I**Children and the Sustainable Development Goals**

28. *Reaffirms* that children's rights and the 2030 Agenda are linked and that all the Goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda directly and indirectly impact the lives and rights of children, and, in this regard, calls upon States to invest in and prioritize the promotion, protection, respect and fulfilment of the rights of children, through their legislation, policies, programmes and budgets, as appropriate, in accordance with their obligations under international law;

29. *Notes* the importance of promoting safe and enabling conditions for children facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination, such as children belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities, as well as migrant children, refugee or asylum-seeking children, internally displaced children, children of African descent and indigenous children;

30. *Recognizes* that the right of the child to education can be severely hampered as a result of physical, psychological and sexual violence, as well as bullying, in school, outside school and on the way to school, as well as online, which compromises learning outcomes and may lead to school dropout, and therefore calls upon States to prevent and protect children, including migrant children and children in vulnerable situations, from bullying, including cyberbullying and other online risks, such as sexual violence and online exploitation, by generating statistical information, promptly and adequately responding to such acts and providing appropriate support and counselling to children affected by and involved in bullying;

31. *Urges* States to take all actions to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals for all children, including by:

(a) Prioritizing the promotion, respect, protection and fulfilment of the rights of the child in budgetary allocation and fiscal measures, where appropriate, including in preparedness, prevention and response measures to emergencies, including by allocating and distributing sufficient and equitable public resources to sectors and services that are critical for children, with special focus on children in the most vulnerable and disadvantaged situations and those living in extreme poverty;

(b) Promoting and prioritizing investment in universal social protection systems, including child-centred policies and measures, intensifying efforts to improve the standard of living of all children as a matter of priority, paying particular attention to those children who are most disadvantaged and discriminated against;

(c) Prioritizing the establishment and strengthening of national and subnational systems to protect children from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, as well as the implementation of increased targeted prevention and response services, particularly for those in vulnerable situations;

(d) Prioritizing investment in multisectoral collaboration, strengthening social services for child protection and making systems inclusive to respond to the needs of all children, with a focus on both primary violence prevention for all children as well as more targeted prevention and response services, particularly for children in vulnerable situations;

(e) Scaling up, as appropriate, cash transfer programmes for the benefit of children, strengthening public finance response and expanding shock-responsive social protection programmes and systems geared towards children in the medium and longer term;

- (f) Promoting inclusive and responsive family-oriented policies, including those designed to strengthen parents' and caregivers' ability to care for children and support social policies that address gender stereotypes and negative social norms that impact equal access to quality education, and prevent and eliminate child labour;
- (g) Improving children's health through the strengthening of public health-care systems by actions such as ensuring universal health coverage, increasing accessibility, sufficiency, acceptability, affordability and quality of health care, improving access for children to safely managed drinking water, sanitation and hygiene services, adequate nutritious food programmes and healthy food environments, and education on HIV prevention and treatment programmes as well as ensuring access to specific support services, in line with the Sustainable Development Goals and targets;
- (h) Designing and implementing programmes to provide pregnant adolescents and adolescent mothers with education, including access to quality education, social services and support, to enable them to continue and complete their education, care for their children and protect them from discrimination, as well as to ensure healthy and safe pregnancy;
- (i) Ensuring that COVID-19 vaccines, diagnostics and therapeutics are available equitably and universally, and contribute to the global immunization strategy against COVID-19, particularly for developing countries;
- (j) Increasing cooperation to address the effects of environmental harm on the rights of the child by taking appropriate measures to put children at the centre of climate change strategies and response plans, where applicable, and support climate change and environmental education while providing a safe and empowering context for children;
- (k) Minimizing the impacts of climate change on children to the greatest extent possible by developing and implementing ambitious mitigation measures and adaptation plans in accordance with the commitments undertaken under the Paris Agreement and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change,³⁶ and to consider States' obligations regarding the rights of the child;
- (l) Encouraging that the private sector carries out environmental and human rights impact assessments, as appropriate, to identify, prevent, mitigate and account for the adverse impacts business activities have on the rights of the child, and in that regard taking note of the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights;³⁷
- (m) Ensuring that all children have equitable access to quality learning and education, by taking appropriate actions towards eliminating undue barriers to education, and ensuring that schools adapt to and accommodate all children, regardless of their physical, intellectual, social, emotional, linguistic or other personal circumstances, and prioritize foundational learning for all, during school closures, through alternative learning opportunities and, when they open, through catch-up opportunities;
- (n) Addressing the learning crisis exacerbated by COVID-19 by ensuring the quality, availability, affordability, inclusivity and accessibility of early childhood development and learning programmes, including pre-primary, primary and secondary education, as well as taking necessary steps to guarantee access to

³⁶ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1771, No. 30822.

³⁷ Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights: Implementing the United Nations "Protect, Respect and Remedy" Framework ([A/HRC/17/31](#), annex).

education without discrimination and harassment to those children in particularly vulnerable situations;

(o) Reaffirming the commitments made by Member States to take immediate and effective measures to eradicate forced labour and trafficking in persons, secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour and by 2025 end child labour in all its forms;

(p) Recognizing the importance of revitalized global partnerships to ensure the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, including the implementation of the Goals and targets related to the elimination of child labour;

32. *Also urges* States to ensure that legal frameworks, policies and programmes provide all children with equal protection and preserve the principle of non-discrimination, including by:

(a) Adopting measures to reduce children's contact with the criminal justice system by making use of diversion measures and restorative justice, including in humanitarian situations, while ensuring equal access to justice, protection and support for children, including access to legal aid when needed;

(b) Reaffirming that children shall not be deprived of their liberty unlawfully or arbitrarily and that the arrest, detention or imprisonment of a child shall be in conformity with the law, including international human rights law, respecting due process, and shall be used only as a measure of last resort and for the shortest appropriate period of time;

(c) Promoting alternatives to detention for children, and taking steps to minimize the risk of violence against children in detention, as well as encouraging and facilitating frequent family visits and regular contact and communication between children and their family members unless it is in the child's best interest not to do so, as well as with the outside world, and to ensure that no child is subjected to torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment or that disciplinary sanctions for detained children do not include a prohibition of contact with family members;

(d) Taking measures to ensure that all children who are separated from their parents in accordance with applicable law and procedures, and where such separation is necessary for the best interests of the child, are promptly referred to child protection authorities and provided with appropriate and quality alternative care, *inter alia*, family and community-based care;

(e) Ensuring that children with disabilities and their families, as appropriate, have an active role in the development and implementation of all policy planning, and have access to a range of support services, information in accessible formats and education, including on how to prevent, recognize and report instances of exploitation, violence and abuse, how to ensure that children with disabilities have a safe and supportive family environment as well as are involved in the realization of their rights, including during humanitarian response efforts;

(f) Mainstreaming a gender perspective across programmes, policies and budgets in all sectors and implementing gender-responsive measures that address the specific needs of girls in policies and programmes related to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda;

(g) Scaling up programming for girls, including: education and skills development training for adolescent girls; to address gender-specific barriers to the equal enjoyment by girls of their right to education and access to quality education; to ensure access to gender-specific support services, including psychological, social

and sexual and reproductive health-care services, and education, including in emergencies; and to ensure that girls' opinions are heard, and that measures are taken to enable young women and girls to successfully grow into leadership positions in public and private spheres by ensuring their full and equal access to education, technology and skills development, leadership and mentorship programmes, increased technical and financial support, and protection from violence and discrimination;

(h) Protecting, with the support of other relevant actors, the human rights of children without discrimination of any kind, including migration status, and ensuring that they receive appropriate protection, assistance and access to services included in health, education, social and child protection systems; and taking proactive steps to ensure their inclusion in addressing the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly through mitigation efforts, recovery plans and COVID-19 vaccine roll-out shall evidence confirm their need;

(i) Ensuring, with the collaboration of relevant stakeholders, that COVID-19 response measures targeting children are transformative, participatory and adequately funded, promote inclusive, gender-equal and sustainable economies and societies, and address gender inequality, exclusion and poverty, and that proactive steps are taken to ensure their inclusion in COVID-19 recovery plans;

(j) Taking appropriate measures to mitigate the mass disruption to education systems across the world caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, continue with the provision of subsidized school meals and ensure that all children, in particular girls, return to school as soon as possible when it is safe to do so;

(k) Strengthening their national legal and policy frameworks to ensure that children who are capable of forming their own views have the right to express their views freely in all matters affecting them;

(l) Improving and securing a comprehensive approach to data collection, compilation and storage methods; strengthening child age-sensitive indicators; increasing the disaggregation of data and strengthening multi-stakeholder partnerships between national statistical offices, national human rights institutions, where they exist, and local civil society organizations; allocating adequate resources to national statistical offices and appointing child rights focal points in these institutions; ensuring adequate investments in community and national data ecosystems; and providing the necessary political and institutional support to data collection, processing, analysis, dissemination and use;

33. *Calls upon* States, in their response to the COVID-19 pandemic, to prioritize the restoration of interrupted child services, including education, nutrition, maternal and newborn health, immunization and sexual and reproductive health-care services, HIV treatment, mental health and psychosocial support, and child social and protection services, ensuring that targeted approaches are in place to reduce gender inequality and protect children from discrimination and from violence, including sexual and gender-based violence;

34. *Calls upon* all parties to armed conflict to ensure the full, safe and unhindered access of humanitarian personnel and the delivery of humanitarian assistance to all children affected by armed conflict;

II

Follow-up

35. *Expresses support* for the work of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children, and recognizes the progress

achieved since the establishment of her mandate in promoting the prevention and elimination of all forms of violence against children in all regions and in advancing the implementation of the recommendations of the United Nations study on violence against children,³⁸ including through partnerships with regional organizations, as well as advocacy through thematic consultations, field missions and thematic reports addressing emerging concerns, including on violence prevention in early childhood;

36. *Requests* all relevant organs, bodies, entities, organizations and mechanisms of the United Nations system to mainstream the promotion, respect, protection and fulfilment of the rights of the child throughout their activities, in accordance with their respective mandates, as well as to ensure that their staff are trained in child rights matters, and take further steps to increase system-wide coordination and inter-agency cooperation for the promotion and protection of the rights of the child;

37. *Takes note with appreciation* of the United Nations global study on children deprived of liberty³⁹ and the leadership of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children in the follow-up to the study in cooperation with the other entities in the United Nations inter-agency task force, the non-governmental organization panel and other relevant stakeholders, and encourages the Special Representative to continue her work in this regard;

38. *Recommends* that the Secretary-General extend the mandate of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children, as established in paragraphs 58 and 59 of its resolution [62/141](#) of 18 December 2007, for a further four years, and maintain support for the effective and independent performance and sustainability of the mandate of the Special Representative, funded from the regular budget;

39. *Urges* all States, requests United Nations agencies, funds and programmes and invites regional organizations and civil society, including non-governmental organizations, to cooperate with the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children in promoting the further implementation of the recommendations of the United Nations study on violence against children and in supporting Member States in the context of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, encourages States to provide support to the Special Representative, including adequate voluntary financial support for the continued, effective and independent performance of her mandate, and invites organizations, including the private sector, to provide voluntary contributions for that purpose;

40. *Recognizes* the work of the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, its increased level of work and the progress achieved since the establishment of the mandate of the Special Representative, and, bearing in mind its resolution [63/241](#) of 24 December 2008 and paragraphs 35 to 37 of its resolution [51/77](#) of 12 December 1996, as well as paragraph 39 of its resolution [72/245](#) of 24 December 2017, recommends that the Secretary-General extend the mandate of the Special Representative for a further four years;

41. *Recalls* that 2021 marks the twenty-fifth anniversary of the adoption of resolution [51/77](#), by which the mandate of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict was created, welcomes the efforts by the Special Representative to increase public awareness and collect, assess and disseminate best practices and lessons learned, including the “Act to protect children affected by conflict” campaign, the “Practical guidance for mediators to protect

³⁸ [A/61/299](#).

³⁹ [A/74/136](#).

children in situations of armed conflict”, the Global Coalition for Reintegration of Child Soldiers, as well as regional workshops organized with all country task forces on monitoring and reporting, and particularly welcomes in this regard an increased engagement with States, the United Nations Children’s Fund and other United Nations agencies, funds and programmes, regional and subregional organizations and civil society;

42. *Notes with appreciation* the steps taken regarding Security Council resolutions [1539 \(2004\)](#) of 22 April 2004, [1612 \(2005\)](#) of 26 July 2005, [1882 \(2009\)](#) of 4 August 2009, [1998 \(2011\)](#) of 12 July 2011, [2068 \(2012\)](#) of 19 September 2012, [2225 \(2015\)](#) of 18 June 2015, [2286 \(2016\)](#) of 3 May 2016 and [2427 \(2018\)](#) of 9 July 2018 and the efforts of the Secretary-General to implement the monitoring and reporting mechanism on children and armed conflict in accordance with those resolutions, with the participation of and in cooperation with national Governments and relevant United Nations and civil society actors, including at the country level, requests the Secretary-General to ensure that information collected and communicated by the monitoring and reporting mechanism is accurate, objective and verifiable, and in this regard encourages the work and the deployment of United Nations child protection advisers in peacekeeping operations and political and peacebuilding missions;

43. *Decides:*

- (a) To continue its consideration of the question at its seventy-eighth session under the item entitled “Promotion and protection of the rights of children”;
- (b) To request the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its seventy-eighth session a comprehensive report on the rights of the child containing information on the status of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and on the issues addressed in the present resolution, with a focus on the digital environment;
- (c) To request the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict to continue to submit reports to the General Assembly and the Human Rights Council on the activities undertaken in fulfilment of her mandate, including information on her field visits and on the progress achieved and the challenges remaining on the children and armed conflict agenda;
- (d) To request the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, in carrying out her mandate for the protection of children in situations of armed conflict, in accordance with the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly and the Security Council, to continue to engage proactively with relevant United Nations bodies and agencies, Member States, regional and subregional organizations and non-State armed groups, including by negotiating action plans, securing commitments, advocating for appropriate response mechanisms and ensuring attention and follow-up to the conclusions and recommendations of the Security Council Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict, and reaffirms the important role that the Special Representative can play in contributing to conflict prevention;
- (e) To request the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children to continue to submit annual reports to the General Assembly and the Human Rights Council on the activities undertaken in fulfilment of her mandate, consistent with paragraphs 58 and 59 of its resolution [62/141](#), including information on her field visits and on the progress achieved and the challenges remaining on the violence against children agenda;
- (f) To request the Special Rapporteur of the Human Rights Council on the sale and sexual exploitation of children, including child prostitution, child

pornography and other child sexual abuse material, to continue to submit reports to the General Assembly and the Human Rights Council on the activities undertaken in fulfilment of her mandate, including information on her field visits and on the progress achieved and the challenges remaining in the prevention and eradication of the sale of children, child prostitution, child pornography and other child sexual abuse material and the sexual exploitation and abuse of children;

(g) To invite the Chair of the Committee on the Rights of the Child to present an oral report on the work of the Committee and to engage in an interactive dialogue with the General Assembly at its seventy-seventh and seventy-eighth sessions as a way to enhance communication between the Assembly and the Committee;

(h) To request the Secretary-General to submit, on a biennial basis as from the seventy-seventh session of the General Assembly, the report on the follow-up to the outcome of the Special Session of the General Assembly on Children of 2002, to both the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, as mandated by General Assembly resolution [S-27/2](#), focusing on children and the Sustainable Development Goals, in the light of the interrelation between the realization of children's rights and the successful implementation of the Goals.

*53rd plenary meeting
16 December 2021*
