

Convention on the Rights of the Child

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Committee on the Rights of the Child

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

I. Introduction

1. The Committee considered the combined fifth and sixth periodic reports of Israel¹ at its 2830th and 2831st meetings,² held on 3 and 4 September 2024, and adopted the present concluding observations at its 2846th meeting, held on 13 September 2024.

2. The Committee welcomes the submission of the combined fifth and sixth periodic reports of the State party and the written replies to the list of issues³ and the addendum to the list of issues,⁴ which allowed for a better understanding of the situation of children's rights in the State party. The Committee expresses its appreciation for the dialogue held with the delegation of the State party.

3. Nonetheless, the Committee deeply regrets the State party's repeated denial of its legal obligations under the Convention in the Occupied Palestinian Territory (OPT) based on its position that the Convention "does not apply... to areas beyond a State's national territory" and "was not designed to apply in situations of armed conflict"⁵, and that international humanitarian law is the relevant and specific applicable body of law in the Gaza Strip and the West Bank. The Committee also regrets the limited information it received on the situation of children living in the OPT due to such a position. The Committee is of the view that the State party's denial of the application of the Convention cannot be used to justify its grave and persistent violations of international human rights and humanitarian law. In this regard, the Committee recalls the jurisprudence of the International Court of Justice (ICJ), including its advisory opinion (AO) of 19 July 2024 on the legal consequences arising from the policies and practices of Israel in the OPT, including East Jerusalem, that "international human rights instruments are applicable 'in respect of acts done by a State in the exercise of its jurisdiction outside its own territory', particularly in occupied territories", that the protection offered by human rights conventions does not cease in case of armed conflict or of occupation, and that the State party remains bound by the international human rights treaties which the State party is party to in respect of its conduct with regard to the OPT. The Committee, aligning its position with the position of the ICJ, reiterates that the Convention applies to all children at all times and is directly applicable in all territories over which the State party exercises effective control, and reminds the State party of its legal obligations both under the Convention and international humanitarian law concerning children in the OPT.

* Adopted by the Committee at its ninety-seventh session (26 August – 13 September 2024).

¹ CRC/C/ISR/5-6.

² See CRC/C/SR.2798 and CRC/C/SR.2799.

³ CRC/C/ISR/RQ/5-6.

⁴ CRC/C/ISR/RQ/5-6/Add.1.

⁵ CRC/C/ISR/5-6, para. 9; CRC/C/ISR/RQ/5-6, para. 18.

II. Follow-up measures taken and progress achieved by the State party

4. The Committee welcomes the various measures taken by the State party to implement the Convention, including the Evidence Privilege Law (Mental Treatment in Criminal Proceedings Concerning Sexual Offences or Severe Domestic Violence Offences), Social Services for Persons with Disabilities Law, Authorities for Prevention of Internet Use for the Commission of Offenses Law, Early Childhood Council Law, Children Foster Care Law, Amended Pupil Rights Law, Amended Women's Employment Law, Amended Prohibition of Discrimination in Products, Services and in Entry into Places of Entertainment and Public Places Law, Amended *Penal Law*, Amended *Legal Aid Law*, Supervision of Toddler's Day Care Centers Law, Government Resolution No. 550 establishing a five-year plan (2022-2026) entitled "Tkadum – Progress", amended Youth Employment Regulations, and Government Resolution No. 2487 on providing additional childcare support services in Tel Aviv-Jaffa for infants and toddlers of parents without legal status.

III. Factors and difficulties impeding the implementation of the Convention

5. The Committee notes the particularly severe effects of the terrorist attack committed by Hamas and other Palestinian militant groups on 7 October 2023 and the ongoing armed conflict, which have led to serious violations of children's rights and constitute a considerable obstacle to the implementation of the rights enshrined in the Convention. The Committee emphasizes that the State party's continuing occupation of, and further expansion of illegal settlements in the OPT and the Occupied Syrian Golan Heights, constitute serious violations of the rights of children living in those areas and their families, and hinder the enjoyment of their rights under the Convention. In this regard, the Committee reminds the State party of the continuity of international human rights obligations and that the rights under the Convention and its Optional Protocols apply to all children at all times. The Committee also reminds the State party of its responsibility to protect the populations under its jurisdiction and in territories over which the State party exercises effective control, and to take immediate measures to stop the use of excessive and lethal force against civilians and to prevent further violence against children, including killing, injury, torture and ill-treatment.

IV. Main areas of concern and recommendations

6. The Committee reminds the State party of the indivisibility and interdependence of all the rights enshrined in the Convention and emphasizes the importance of all the recommendations contained in the present concluding observations. The Committee draws the State party's attention to the recommendations concerning the following areas, regarding which urgent measures must be taken: non-discrimination (para. 18), right to life, survival and development (para. 21), torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment (para. 30), mental health (para. 38), administration of child justice (para. 49) and violations of children's rights in the OPT, including the Gaza Strip and the West Bank (paras. 51, 53 and 55).

A. General measures of implementation (arts. 1, 4, 42 and 44 (6))

Legal status of the Convention

7. The Committee urges the State party to ensure the full application of the Convention in the OPT – the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and the Gaza Strip – and ensure that all children under its jurisdiction and effective control are afforded the full enjoyment of the rights enshrined in the Convention.

Legislation

8. The Committee recalls its previous recommendations⁶ and further recommends that the State party:

(a) Fully incorporate the Convention into national legislation, and conduct a comprehensive review of all legislation to align it with the Convention and address any inconsistencies;

(b) Ensure the effective implementation of the guidelines for the implementation of the Rights of the Child Law, including assessing the impact of government bills on children's rights during the preparation phase, and developing mandatory child-rights impact assessment procedures for policies relevant to children;

(c) Ensure that all children in the OPT are treated as children and receive protection under the Convention.

Comprehensive policy and strategy

9. Recalling its previous recommendations,⁷ the Committee recommends that the State party develop and adopt a comprehensive policy and action plan on children's rights covering all areas of the Convention and its Optional Protocols, with the participation of children, that encompasses all areas covered by the Convention and its Optional Protocols and includes specific, time-bound and measurable goals.

Coordination

10. The Committee welcomes the establishment of the Government Unit for Coordination for the Rights of Children and Youth and the Director General's Committee on the rights of children and youth, and recommends that the State party ensure that they have the sufficient authority and resources to coordinate all activities regarding the implementation of the Convention across all sectors and at all levels.

Allocation of resources

11. Deeply concerned about the profound impact of the armed conflict on the resources available for children, the Committee recalls its previous recommendations⁸ and recommends that the State party incorporate a child rights-based approach into the State budgeting process and:

(a) Implement a tracking system for the allocation, use and monitoring of resources for children, with a view to eliminating disparities and ensuring equitability, and assess how investments in all sectors serve children's rights;

(b) Define budgetary lines for all children, paying special attention to those in disadvantaged situations who may require affirmative social measures, and ensure that those budgetary lines are protected even in situations of crisis.

Data collection

12. Recalling its general comment No. 5 (2003), the Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) Develop a central data collection system encompassing all areas of the Convention and disaggregated by age, sex, disability, geographical location, ethnic origin, nationality and socioeconomic background;

(b) Improve the collection, analysis and sharing of data on mental health, child justice and the situation of asylum-seeking and migrant children, children in the

⁶ CRC/C/ISR/CO/2-4, para. 11.

⁷ CRC/C/ISR/CO/2-4, para. 10; CRC/C/15/Add.195, para. 13(b).

⁸ CRC/C/ISR/CO/2-4, para. 14.

OPT and other groups of children in disadvantaged situations, to strengthen the implementation of the Convention.

Access to justice and effective remedies

13. The Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) Continue to ensure that all children have access to: (i) confidential, child-friendly and independent complaint mechanisms in all settings including schools, religious schools, military schools, alternative care and detention, for reporting all forms of violence, abuse, discrimination and other violations of their rights; and (ii) legal support and representation, age-appropriate counselling and remedies, including compensation and rehabilitation;

(b) Widely disseminate information about existing mechanisms for reporting violations, violence, abuse and all forms of discrimination, and provide sustainable funding to ensure such services are accessible, confidential, child-friendly and effective;

(c) Ensure systematic and mandatory training of all relevant professionals working with children on child-friendly procedures and remedies, children's rights and the Convention.

Independent monitoring

14. Deeply concerned about the absence of a national human rights institution meeting the requirements outlined in the Paris Principles, and the lack of independent investigations into allegations of human rights violations and war crimes perpetrated by the armed and security forces, the Committee urges the State party to:

(a) Establish an independent institution for children, in full compliance with the Paris Principles, with the mandate to monitor and evaluate progress in the implementation of the Convention at the national and local levels and to receive, investigate and address complaints from children in a child-sensitive manner;

(b) Investigate allegations of human rights violations and war crimes perpetrated by the armed and security forces.

Dissemination of the Convention and awareness-raising

15. The Committee recommends that the State party strengthen its awareness-raising programmes, including campaigns, in cooperation with civil society organizations, to ensure that the Convention and the Optional Protocols are available in Hebrew, Arabic and accessible formats and widely known by children, parents and the general public.

Cooperation with civil society

16. The Committee is deeply concerned about legislation which reduces and restricts the activities of civil society working on children's rights, and harassment of and attacks against such organizations, thus contributing to family fragmentation, psychological trauma and suppression of children's rights to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly. Recalling its previous recommendations,⁹ the Committee further urges the State party to:

(a) Repeal laws and legal provisions that obstruct the work of civil society on children's rights, including the Budgets Foundations Law, the anti-boycott law, the Law of Associations, the Counter-Terrorism Law and the law on entry into Israel;

(b) Ensure that anti-terrorism legislation is not used to suppress children's right of expression and assembly and to privacy, and that anti-terrorism measures are proportionate and in line with the rule of law, human rights and fundamental freedoms;

⁹ CRC/C/ISR/CO/2-4, para. 18.

(c) Cease practices that amount to the intimidation, silencing or violation of the rights of child human rights defenders and civil society working on children's rights, including harassment, arbitrary arrest, detention, criminalization and their being labelled as "terrorists";

(d) Investigate promptly and independently all reported attacks and allegations of restrictions, intimidation, threats and harassment of non-governmental organizations, human rights defenders, including child human rights defenders, and civil society activists working in the field of human rights, and ensure that they have adequate access to justice and effective remedies, and that those responsible are held accountable;

(e) Ensure that civil society and human rights defenders, including child human rights defenders, are able to promote children's rights without being subjected to harassment;

(f) Increase resources provided to non-governmental organizations to monitor and promote children's rights, and systematically involve all non-governmental organizations working on children's rights, including those which monitor the situation of children's rights in the OPT, in the development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of laws, policies and programmes relating to children.

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

Non-discrimination

17. The Committee notes the establishment of the Unit for the Coordination of the Fight Against Racism and the action plan to deal with racism against persons of Ethiopian origin, but remains deeply concerned about:

(a) Persistent discrimination in law, including the Basic Law: Nation-State of the Jewish People, and in practice against non-Jewish children, particularly Palestinian, Bedouin, asylum-seeking children, children of migrant workers, and children in the OPT;

(b) Racist and negative stereotyping of such groups of children that has a discriminatory effect on their access to birth registration, education, health and other essential services.

18. The Committee recalls the findings of the ICJ AO of 19 July 2024 that the State party's legislation and measures imposing and serving to maintain a near-complete separation in the West Bank and East Jerusalem between the settler and Palestinian communities constitute a breach of article 3 of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, which refers to particularly severe forms of racial discrimination including apartheid. The Committee reiterates its previous recommendations¹⁰ and further urges the State party to bring an end to such legislation and measures that amount to racial segregation or apartheid, and in particular to:

(a) Include the prohibition of discrimination and the principle of equality in its Basic Laws, and undertake a comprehensive review of its legislation and policies, including the Basic Law: Nation-State of the Jewish People, to ensure that laws that discriminate against non-Jewish children are repealed without delay;

(b) Prohibit and eradicate policies and practices which disproportionately affect Palestinian children and children in the OPT, and ensure that all such children enjoy their rights under the Convention without discrimination;

(c) Ensure that measures to address violence against children devote particular attention to the racist and gender dimensions of violence;

¹⁰ CRC/C/ISR/CO/2-4, para. 22.

(d) **Implement targeted policies and programmes to combat racist and xenophobic policies and practices, and to eliminate discrimination against children in disadvantaged situations, including children of Ethiopian descent and Palestinian, Bedouin, asylum-seeking, migrant and socioeconomically disadvantaged children;**

(e) **Conduct media campaigns to combat racist and negative stereotyping of children in disadvantaged situations, to change social norms and behaviours that contribute to discrimination and to promote tolerance and respect for diversity.**

Best interests of the child

19. **Recalling its general comment No. 14 (2013), the Committee reiterates its previous recommendations¹¹ to ensure that the right of the child to have their best interests taken as a primary consideration is consistently interpreted and applied in all policies, programmes and legislative, administrative and judicial proceedings affecting children, including in relation to placement in care, adoption, custody, mental health, child justice, asylum, and in its military governance of the OPT.**

Right to life, survival and development

20. **The Committee is alarmed about the impact of the armed conflict on the right to life, survival and development of children, including:**

(a) **The killing and injuring of children as a result of the long-term conflict, including the attack of 7 October 2023;**

(b) **The safety and well-being of the children who have been affected by the attack of 7 October 2023, including the 45 children who were abducted and returned and the two who remains as hostages, as well as the tens of thousands of children who have been evacuated from their homes, injured, lost family members and/or have family members still in captivity.**

21. **The Committee urges the State party to take effective measures to ensure continued access to healthcare, trauma-focused mental health services and housing for children and families affected by the attack of 7 October 2023.**

Respect for the views of the child

22. **Recalling its general comment No. 12 (2009), the Committee recommends that the State party:**

(a) **Promote the meaningful and empowered participation of all children within the family, communities and school settings and in policymaking at the local and national levels, such as by developing toolkits for consulting children on national policy issues and establishing mechanisms to ensure that children's views are systematically fed into public decision-making;**

(b) **Continue to ensure the right of all children, including younger children, children deprived of a family environment, children with mental health issues, and asylum-seeking and migrant children, to express their views and to have them taken into account in all decisions affecting them, including in courts and relevant administrative and judicial proceedings and regarding foster care, adoption, custody, asylum and admission in mental health facilities.**

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

Nationality and birth registration

23. **The Committee notes with concern the lack of progress in implementing the Committee's previous recommendations¹² to ensure access to birth certificates for non-**

¹¹ CRC/C/ISR/CO/2-4, para. 24.

¹² CRC/C/ISR/CO/2-4, para. 30.

Israeli, asylum-seeking and migrant children and Israeli nationality to children born to an Israeli parent and a parent from the OPT, and the system of issuing documents, passports and residence permits that establishes categories that violate fundamental rights, prevent family reunification and severely restrict the movement of children. The Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) Repeal all legal provisions which result in denying the right of Palestinian children and children in the OPT to be registered immediately after birth, to acquire a nationality and to be cared for by their parents, regardless of where they were born, and address the discriminatory effect of notifications of live birth on non-Israeli children;

(b) Ensure the registration at birth and issuance of birth certificates for all children born in its territory, including Palestinian, asylum-seeking and migrant children, and their access to essential services, such as by including such children in the national identification system or issuing them with visas to ensure their inclusion into a common system of registration granting them access to health, welfare, education and other services;

(c) Ensure legal pathways for all children, including children of asylum-seekers without a regular residence status, to acquire residence status and nationality;

(d) Ensure that Israeli parents with a spouse from the OPT can confer Israeli nationality on their children.

Freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly

24. Noting with deep concern the ongoing repression of children's freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly, particularly since 7 October 2023, the Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) Ensure the right of all children to freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly, including by lifting the ban on demonstrations and protests, including in the OPT, and that children are able to express opinions that are critical of the State party without harassment, arrest or prosecution;

(b) Ensure that children are supported and encouraged to form their own associations and initiatives.

Access to appropriate information

25. Noting with appreciation the legal provisions protecting children in the digital environment and the establishment of the National Child Online Protection Bureau, the Committee recalls its general comment No. 25 (2021) and recommends that the State party:

(a) Ensure that laws and policies on access to information and the digital environment protect children from harmful content and online risks and respect their privacy;

(b) Improve digital inclusion for children in disadvantaged situations, in particular Palestinian and Bedouin children, and promote the equitability and affordability of online services and connectivity for such children;

(c) Continue to strengthen the digital literacy and skills of children, parents, caregivers and teachers.

D. Violence against children (arts. 19, 24 (3), 28 (2), 34, 35, 37 (a) and 39 of the Convention and the Optional Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography)

Abuse, neglect, sexual exploitation and abuse

26. Noting with appreciation the measures taken to support child victims of violence or crimes, including through specialized support for child victims with disabilities, the Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) Strengthen the capacities of relevant professionals to prevent, report and respond to cases of violence;

(b) Promptly and effectively investigate and intervene in all cases of violence against children, including domestic violence and the sexual abuse and exploitation of children in and outside the home, in the digital environment, in alternative care settings and in schools, particularly in religious schools; ensure that perpetrators are brought to justice; and strengthen the mechanisms for monitoring cases;

(c) Strengthen measures to ensure that all children who are victims of or witnesses to violence have prompt access to child-sensitive, multisectoral and comprehensive interventions, services and support, including forensic interviews, medical evaluation, counselling and psychosocial support, aimed at preventing the secondary victimization of those children.

Corporal punishment

27. The Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) Continue to enforce the prohibition of corporal punishment in all settings;

(b) Strengthen public awareness-raising campaigns to promote positive, non-violent and participatory forms of child-rearing.

Harmful practices

28. The Committee notes that the age of marriage has been raised from 17 to 18 years of age, but is concerned that marriages above the age of 16 may be granted by a Family Matters Court. Recalling joint CEDAW general recommendation No. 31 /CRC general comment No. 18 (2019) and its previous recommendations,¹³ the Committee recommends that the State party further amend the Marital Age Law to prohibit all marriages under 18 years of age, without exception, and conduct awareness-raising campaigns and programmes on the harmful effects of child marriage on the physical and mental health and well-being of children.

Torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment

29. The Committee notes the information provided by the State party that all detainees undergoing interrogation by the Israel Security Agency “receive all the rights to which they are entitled according to the applicable law and international conventions to which Israel is a party” and that children receive special protection under the agency’s operative guidelines.¹⁴ Nonetheless, the Committee remains gravely concerned about reports of the torture and ill-treatment of Palestinian children and children in the OPT during arrest and in detention, in violation of the State party’s international human rights obligations, including, *inter alia*, solitary confinement; the use of electric shocks, hand-ties and/or leg-ties; denial of food, water or access to toilets; exposure to elements; verbal and physical violence, including beatings, stripping, sexual violence and psychological intimidation; and attempted recruitment of child detainees as informants for the security forces.

30. The Committee is of the view that no national security concern or situation of armed conflict can justify the torture and ill-treatment of children and reminds the

¹³ CRC/C/ISR/CO/2-4, para. 47.

¹⁴ CRC/C/ISR/5-6, paras. 77-78.

State party that such practices are a serious violation of the human rights treaties which the State party has ratified, including article 37(a) of the Convention, and a grave breach of article 32 of the Fourth Geneva Convention. The Committee further reminds the State party of its human rights obligations to prevent and eradicate the torture and ill-treatment of all children in the OPT, where it exercises territorial jurisdiction as the occupying power. The Committee reiterates its previous recommendations¹⁵ and strongly urges the State party to:

(a) Take all measures to end all forms of torture and ill-treatment, including sexual violence, against Palestinian children and children in the OPT; remove all children from solitary confinement; and halt and prohibit recruitment of child detainees as informants for the security forces;

(b) Monitor the implementation of the operative guidelines of the Israeli Security Agency providing for special protection to children; and provide unequivocal instructions to all branches of the armed and security forces on the prohibition of torture and ill-treatment, with a view to ensuring respect for international human rights and humanitarian law;

(c) End the practice of traumatizing Palestinian children, children in the OPT and their families with night raids and excessive and forcible home invasions by the armed and security forces, and ensure that searches in homes are conducted only according to judicial warrant;

(d) Ensure prompt, thorough, independent, impartial and transparent investigations into all incidents by the armed and security forces resulting in serious violations of international law; that perpetrators are held accountable; and that all victims and their families are provided with remedies and reparations;

(e) Ensure that children have access to confidential, child-friendly complaint mechanisms for the reporting of violations of their rights during their arrest and detention;

(f) Ensure that child victims receive appropriate assistance for their full physical and psychological recovery and social reintegration.

Optional Protocol on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography

31. Recalling its previous recommendations,¹⁶ the Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) Define and criminalize the sale of children in accordance with article 3 of the Optional Protocol as a crime separate from the crime of trafficking in persons;

(b) Ensure that all child victims, including victims of prostitution and regardless of age, receive equal protection under the Penal Code, are treated as victims and have access to adequate referral and community-based support services;

(c) Continue to ensure the early identification of children who are victims of offences under the Optional Protocol, referral to adequate services and support for social reintegration and physical and psychological recovery, and provision of remedies.

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

Family environment

32. The Committee notes the measures to encourage the use of paternity leave and provide childcare support, particularly for socioeconomically disadvantaged parents, but remains concerned about insufficient access of Palestinian, Bedouin and asylum-

¹⁵ CRC/C/ISR/CO/2-4, para. 36.

¹⁶ CRC/C/OPSC/ISR/CO/1.

seeking and migrant children to childcare facilities and after-school care. Recalling its previous recommendations,¹⁷ the Committee recommends that the State party:

- (a) Strengthen measures, including through sufficient resources, to ensure access to affordable childcare options for children of asylum-seekers, refugees, migrant workers and parents in socioeconomically disadvantaged situations;
- (b) Ensure that all childcare facilities are registered and the quality of care monitored, including their adherence to the Supervision over the Operation of Afternoon Child Care Centers Law, with a view to replacing all unregistered facilities such as “babysitters” and “children’s warehouses” with quality childcare;
- (c) Increase the number of social workers, develop creative incentives for the profession, and ensure that they receive continuous capacity-building, including on mental health;
- (d) Strengthen services for children at risk of separation from their family, including through family counselling, therapy and parenting education;
- (e) Provide appropriate assistance and support to caregivers of children whose parents have been called for reserve duty in the military and ensure that such children have access to community-based psychosocial support.

Children deprived of a family environment

33. Recalling the Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children, the Committee recommends that the State party:

- (a) Strengthen monitoring of the quality of care in alternative care facilities, including through sufficient human and financial resources, and conduct regular and substantive reviews of placements in care to facilitate the integration of children into their families and communities whenever possible;
- (b) Continue its efforts to prioritize and ensure family-based and community-based care options for children who cannot stay with their families, including through capacity-building of relevant professionals on ensuring family-based and community-based care responses, the allocation of sufficient resources for foster care and adoption, and adequate training and support for foster and adoptive parents;
- (c) Take effective measures to reduce the number of children under 6 years of age in residential care, and strengthen the foster care system, including by providing training and in-service support for foster parents and strengthening *kafalah* placement for Palestinian and Bedouin children;
- (d) Adopt guidelines for determining the best interests of the child in adoption proceedings, in line with the recommendations of the Gross Committee, and ensure the provision of pre-adoption and post-adoption services and monitoring.

34. Noting with deep concern the disproportionate and adverse restrictions imposed by the Citizenship and Entry into Israel Law (Temporary Provision), and the impact of the family reunification ban on the rights of Palestinian children and children in the OPT, including their right to a family environment, education, health and other essential services, the Committee reiterates its previous recommendations¹⁸ and strongly urges the State party to:

- (a) Revoke its Citizenship and Entry into Israel Law (Temporary Provision), in line with recommendations consistently made by other treaty bodies,¹⁹ and all policies and practices which prevent family reunification and are in breach of articles 9 and 10 of the Convention;

¹⁷ CRC/C/ISR/CO/2-4, para. 46.

¹⁸ CRC/C/ISR/CO/2-4, para. 50.

¹⁹ CCPR/C/ISR/CO/5, para. 45; E/C.12/ISR/CO/4, para. 41; CEDAW/C/ISR/CO/6, para. 41; CERD/C/ISR/CO/17-19, para. 25.

(b) Take immediate measures to ensure that all separated children of an Israeli parent and a parent from the OPT are reunited with both of their parents and siblings, and that all family members obtain proper registration to avoid further risk of separation;

(c) Review its system of family reunification involving unaccompanied or separated children, with a view to ensuring that all separated children have an unqualified right to apply for family reunification, based on the principles of equality and non-discrimination; that residency applications are considered with a consistent, expeditious and child rights-based approach; and that the best interests of the child are a primary consideration in all related decisions.

F. Children with disabilities (art. 23)

35. Noting with appreciation the measures taken to expand the scope and eligibility criteria for disability benefits, the Committee recommends that the State party continue to strengthen support for the social integration and individual development of children with disabilities, including children with autism and development disorders, and to enhance the access of such children to early childhood development programmes, personal assistance, rehabilitation and reasonable accommodation for their full inclusion in all areas of public life, including education, play and cultural activities.

G. Health (arts. 6, 24 and 33)

Health and health services

36. The Committee notes the National Child Safety Program and other measures taken to address child mortality, including due to accidents. Recalling its general comment No. 15 (2013), the Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) Ensure that children in disadvantaged situations, including Palestinian, Bedouin, asylum-seeking and migrant children and children without a regular residence status, have access to primary and mental health services, and that asylum-seeking mothers have access to prenatal health and postnatal services and facilities, including by addressing the financial, administrative and other barriers;

(b) Take effective measures to strengthen efforts to reduce infant and child mortality rates, particularly in Bedouin and Palestinian communities;

(c) Revise the 2017 circular on approved procedures regarding intersex to ensure that the performance of unnecessary medical or surgical treatment on intersex children is safely deferred until children are able to provide their informed consent, that incidents of unnecessary medical or surgical treatment are investigated, and that victims receive redress and psychosocial support;

(d) Strengthen measures to promote exclusive breastfeeding and implement the International Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes.

Mental health

37. The Committee is deeply concerned about:

(a) The negative impact of the attack of 7 October 2023 and the ongoing armed conflict on the mental health and well-being of children;

(b) The large number of children requiring mental health support, including children at risk of suicide;

(c) The long waiting lists for children seeking mental health services and the severe shortage of mental health professionals;

(d) Insufficient capacities of health professionals to provide trauma-focused care to children.

38. The Committee urges the State party to:

(a) Strengthen the availability, accessibility and range of community-based, child-sensitive therapeutic and trauma-focused mental health services, including by expanding the coverage of public mental health clinics, particularly in non-Jewish communities, and providing incentives for mental health professionals to work in communities in need;

(b) Urgently address the long waiting times for accessing mental health services, and ensure that the number of qualified medical professionals, including child and adolescent psychologists and psychiatrists, is sufficient to meet the mental health needs of children in a timely manner and close to where they live;

(c) Ensure sufficient screening for mental health issues and early prevention services in schools, including by expanding the mandatory coverage of educational psychological services to all children from ages from 3 to 18 and increasing the number of educational counselling hours;

(d) Provide training on identifying and addressing trauma and anxiety among children for relevant professionals including paediatricians, psychologists, care professionals and teachers;

(e) Establish an inter-ministerial and multisectoral body, as well as a dedicated position across relevant ministries, dedicated to addressing children's mental health needs;

(f) Continue to invest in preventive measures and address the underlying causes of suicide, self-harming behaviour and mental health issues among children, and ensure that children's perspectives are taken into account in the development of services available to them.

H. Standard of living (arts. 18 (3), 26 and 27 (1)–(3))

39. Noting with deep concern the large number of children living in extreme poverty, and the particular vulnerability of children living in ultra-orthodox communities, Palestinian, Bedouin and asylum-seeking children and children in the OPT, the Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) Strengthen measures to end child poverty for all and ensure the right of all children to an adequate standard of living, including by ensuring equitability of resources allocated to food security initiatives, providing financial support to parents of asylum-seeking, migrant, Palestinian and Bedouin children and children living in ultra-orthodox communities, and ensuring their access to food, social security, housing, family benefits and child allowance, including by revoking the proposed bill to amend the National Insurance Law;

(b) Restore confiscated land to Palestinian and Bedouin families and families in the OPT; ensure that they are not deprived of access to safe drinking water, sanitation and food; and allow humanitarian agencies unimpeded access to families and children;

(c) Ensure that measures to combat poverty comply with a child rights-based approach and are in line with the Convention, including with regard to the principles of non-discrimination and best interests of the child, and have a particular focus on Palestinian, internally displaced and asylum-seeking children and children with disabilities.

I. Children's rights and the environment (arts. 2, 3, 6, 12, 13, 15, 17, 19, 24 and 26–31)

40. The Committee is deeply concerned about the environmental damage and carbon emissions generated by the State party's military actions in Gaza and the

insufficient measures to address the negative impact of climate change on children's rights. Recalling its general comment No. 26 (2023), the Committee recommends that the State party:

- (a) Expediently adopt the climate bill and allocate sufficient resources for climate change mitigation and adaptation measures, including by unfreezing the resources earmarked by the Environmental Protection Ministry for climate change adaptation;
- (b) Strengthen measures to mitigate greenhouse gas emissions to ensure a pathway to net-zero carbon emissions by 2050 at the latest;
- (c) Ensure that national legislations, policies and programmes addressing environmental protection and climate change, including the update to its nationally determined contribution, are developed and implemented with child rights impact assessments and taking into account the principles of the Convention and the needs and views of children;
- (d) Put in place age-appropriate, safe and accessible mechanisms for children's views to be heard regularly and at all stages of environmental decision-making processes affecting them;
- (e) Incorporate rights-based environmental education into school curricula at all levels and into the training of teachers;
- (f) Assess the extent of the environmental degradation caused by the State party's military actions in Gaza, including soil, water and air pollution and damage to ecosystems, and develop remediation options, including safe removal of unexploded ordnances and the restoration of contaminated land and relevant infrastructure, in consultation with UN entities, relevant professionals, civil society and children.

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

Education: aims and coverage

41. Noting with concern the continued militarization of the educational system, the Committee recalls its general comment No. 1 (2009) and recommends that the State party:

- (a) Ensure that implementation of amendment No. 17 to the National Education Law regarding “educating for significant service in the Israeli Defense Forces and for national-civil service” is in line with article 29(d) of the Convention, and that the education curriculum is aimed at the preparation of the child for a responsible life in a free society in a spirit of understanding, peace, tolerance, equality of the sexes and friendship among all peoples, ethnic, national and religious groups and persons of Indigenous origin;
- (b) Allocate sufficient resources for the implementation of the recommendations made by the Committee on Living in Partnership established by the State party;
- (c) Address the segregation of students on racial or ethnic grounds and disparities in access to quality education in enrolment, in completion rates and in performance between children from different socioeconomic or ethnic backgrounds, in particular Palestinian, Bedouin, asylum-seeking and refugee children;
- (d) Ensure the right of Palestinian children and children in the OPT to education that develops respect for their own cultural identity, language and values, including by eliminating educational policies that discriminate against Palestinian children, cancelling the prohibitions of using Palestinian textbooks and curricula and withdrawing the ban on education providers who do not recognize the Jewish character of the State and/or commemorate the *Nakba*;

(e) Facilitate the reconstruction of schools that have been destroyed or demolished in the OPT, and ensure that all schools, in particular in Bedouin communities, are equipped with air raid shelters.

Inclusive education

42. Noting with deep concern the barriers faced by children in disadvantaged situations in accessing inclusive education, often due to resistance by parents and public authorities, and the persistent practice of special schools for children with disabilities and segregated schools for Palestinian and asylum-seeking children, the Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) Strengthen measures, including through sufficient resources, to ensure inclusive education in mainstream schools for all children with disabilities at all levels, including by revising the policy on the placement of children with disabilities and guaranteeing reasonable accommodation regarding accessible infrastructure, adapted curricula and specialized teachers in integrated classes;

(b) Ensure the equal access of Palestinian, Bedouin, asylum-seeking, migrant children and socioeconomically disadvantaged children to quality education at all levels, without discrimination, including by ensuring equitability of the distribution of resources allocated to education and providing support for transportation to schools;

(c) Conduct awareness-raising activities for civil servants, local and central authorities, teachers and parents on the right and importance of all children to receive inclusive education in mainstream and integrated schools, and on their responsibilities in that regard.

Human rights education

43. Recalling its previous recommendations,²⁰ the Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) Develop educative materials, with the participation of both Israeli and Palestinian children, that foster respect for and the appreciation of racial, ethnic, cultural, gender and other diversities;

(b) Strengthen the teaching of children's rights, the principles of the Convention and peace education within the mandatory school curricula in all educational settings in both Israeli and Palestinian schools and in the training of teachers and education professionals, in line with article 29 of the Convention and taking into account the World Programme for Human Rights Education.

Rest, leisure, recreation and cultural and artistic activities

44. Recalling its general comment No. 17 (2013), the Committee recommends that the State party ensure that children affected by the ongoing conflict have access to after-school programs and inclusive sporting, recreational, leisure, cultural and artistic activities appropriate to their age.

K. Special protection measures arts. 22, 30, 32, 33, 35, 36, 37 (b)–(d) and 38–40 of the Convention and the Optional Protocol on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict)

Internally displaced children

45. While commending the State party for its efforts to support the large number of children who have been displaced as a result of the attack of 7 October 2023, the Committee recommends that the State party continue to ensure that such children receive the necessary support to access primary and mental health care, education and

²⁰ CRC/C/ISR/CO/2-4, para. 66; CRC/C/OPAC/ISR/CO/1, para. 27.

social protection services, and facilitate their resettlement in their original place of residence while guaranteeing their safety.

Asylum-seeking and migrant children

46. The Committee remains deeply concerned about asylum-seeking and migrant children who do not have access to basic services including childcare, education, health services and social security, often due to their pending refugee status, and about the detention and ill-treatment of such children. Recalling its previous recommendations²¹ and joint CMW/CRC general comments No. 3 and No. 4 /No. 22 and No. 23 (2017), the Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) Strengthen and ensure the effective implementation of its refugee determination procedure, including by ensuring that it complies with international refugee and human rights law, including expeditiously processing asylum applications and identifying durable solutions for asylum-seeking children;

(b) Remove the barriers faced by asylum-seeking children in accessing education, health-care services, housing, psychosocial support and social protection, and ensure that they have prompt access to such services without discrimination;

(c) Ensure that asylum-seeking children are not detained on the basis of their or their parents' migration status, including by repealing legal provisions that allow for the prolonged detention of children, and that there are alternatives to detention with the timely provision of safe and dignified accommodation.

Economic exploitation, including child labour

47. Noting with concern reports of children working in hazardous conditions in Israeli settlement farms, the Committee recommends that the State party improve the monitoring and enforcement of laws and policies on child labour, including in the informal and agricultural sectors and in territories over which the State party exercises effective control.

Administration of child justice

48. The Committee notes with appreciation the measures taken to bring the child justice system in line with the Convention, in particular to promote diversion and restorative justice and support the reintegration of children leaving the justice system. Nonetheless, the Committee regrets the State party's complete disregard of its recommendations made in 2002, 2010 and 2013 in relation to the arrest and detention of Palestinian children and children in the OPT and its persistent failure to end these practices, despite its obligations under international human rights and humanitarian law and repeated calls from treaty bodies, special procedures mandate-holders and United Nations entities. The Committee expresses its deepest concerns about:

(a) The continued abduction, arbitrary arrest, often during the night, and prolonged detention of large numbers of Palestinian children and children in the OPT by the armed and security forces, including as administrative detainees or "unlawful combatants," mostly without charge, trial or access to legal representation or contact with family members;

(b) Amendments to the Unlawful Combatants Law and Youth Law that violate children's rights;

(c) Reports of thousands of Palestinian children and children in the OPT who have been arrested often on an arbitrary basis or for allegedly throwing stones during the reporting period;

(d) The State party's refusal to provide information on the fate or whereabouts of the reportedly thousands of Palestinians, including children, held in Israel or the West Bank, amounting to enforced disappearances;

²¹ CRC/C/ISR/CO/2-4, para. 70.

(e) The detention in some cases of children forcibly transferred from Gaza and the West Bank to Israel;

(f) Trials of Palestinian children and children in the OPT in military courts.

49. Recalling its general comment No. 24 (2019) and the global study on children deprived of liberty,²² the Committee reiterates its previous recommendations²³ and strongly urges the State party to:

(a) Immediately end the arbitrary and administrative detention of children and release all Palestinian children and children in the OPT who have been arbitrarily detained;

(b) Urgently repeal legislative measures that are contrary to international human rights law, including: (i) amendments to the Unlawful Combatants Law allowing for detention without an arrest warrant for up to 20 days and denial of detainees' access to legal counsel for up to 75 days; and (ii) bills to amend the Youth Law to allow for the imprisonment of children from 12 years of age if convicted of an act of terror and to exclude children suspected of security offenses from the right to legal representation;

(c) Review all legislation, policies and practices, including the Incarceration of Unlawful Combatants Law and Military Order 1651, to comply with the State party's obligations under the Convention;

(d) End the arbitrary arrest and detention of children, and guarantee non-discrimination in the application of child justice standards to all Palestinian children and children in the OPT;

(e) Abolish the institutionalized system of detention and the use of torture and ill-treatment of Palestinian children and children in the OPT at all stages of the judicial procedure, including by: (i) preventing and investigating allegations of enforced disappearances; (ii) ending all forms of arbitrary detention and the forcible transfer of detained children; and (iii) ensuring that detention is used only as a measure of last resort and for the shortest appropriate period of time and is reviewed on a regular basis with a view to its withdrawal;

(f) Ensure that the child justice system is applied to all Palestinian children and children in the OPT, including children who are above 14 years of age, that they are not tried in military courts, that they are not treated as adults because they are of so-called "fighting age" and that the principle of the benefit of the doubt is applied in cases where the child's age is unknown;

(g) For the few situations where deprivation of liberty is justified as a measure of last resort: (i) ensure that children are not detained together with adults and detention conditions strictly comply with international standards, including with regard to the prohibition of torture and ill-treatment and access to education, health services and visits by the ICRC; and (ii) provide such children with fundamental legal and procedural safeguards, including information on the reasons for their arrest and detention, access to specialized legal assistance, independent interpretation, prompt appearance before a judge, and opportunities to maintain contact with their families;

(h) Establish an independent mechanism to monitor detention facilities, including through regular visits;

(i) Collect data and provide information on the precise number of Palestinian children and children in the OPT arrested and in detention and ensure that families are promptly informed about the fate and whereabouts of their detained family members, including through coordination with the ICRC;

²² A/74/136.

²³ CRC/C/ISR/CO/2-4, para. 74.

(j) **Designate a child protection focal point to handle all cases of children detained during security operations, particularly in the OPT;**

(k) **Continue to actively promote non-judicial measures, including diversion and mediation, for children in the justice system and, wherever possible, the use of non-custodial measures such as probation or community service, and ensure that health and psychosocial services are provided;**

(l) **Strengthen rehabilitation and reintegration support for children leaving the justice system.**

Violations of children's rights under the Convention in the OPT

50. The Committee notes that the State party "remains committed to doing its utmost to minimize harm to civilians" and "to facilitating humanitarian access to the civilian population of Gaza."²⁴ Nonetheless, the Committee condemns in the strongest terms the severe violations of rights under the Convention in the OPT, including the tremendous loss of life as a result of the State party's military actions. In particular, the Committee is gravely concerned about:

(a) Over 28,000 grave violations against children perpetrated by the Israeli armed and security forces between 2016 and 2023 verified by the United Nations, including the killing and maiming of over 10,000 children, 880 attacks on schools and hospitals, and 16,800 denials of humanitarian access;

(b) The catastrophic consequences to the right to life, survival and development of children as a result of the State party's military actions, including through military attacks and even by snipers and drones, and that women and children constitute most of the total fatalities since 7 October 2023;

(c) Denial of humanitarian access by armed and security forces, including denied coordination of humanitarian aid missions and prevention of access to medical care, and reports that thousands of permit applications made by children seeking access to specialized medical treatment were either denied or not approved on time;

(d) The resurgence of polio and medical complication, arising from inadequate medical care and rehabilitation following amputations and other surgeries, and the deaths and long-term health risks to babies born under such conditions;

(e) Impunity for armed and security forces responsible for children's deaths and injuries, and the lack of information on the number of investigations, indictments and convictions related to such cases since 7 October 2023;

(f) The lack of measures taken to compensate families of Palestinian children who were unlawfully killed by security forces in law enforcement operations;

(g) The negative impact of the State party's military presence and occupational policies and practices on the safety, well-being and rights of Palestinian children to housing, an adequate standard of living, food, water, sanitation and health care;

(h) The pervasive discriminatory effect of the State party's occupational policies on Palestinian girls, and the particular vulnerability of Palestinian girls to violence committed by both military officers and settlers.

51. **Drawing attention to the AO of 19 July 2024 and the Orders of 26 January 2024 and 24 May 2024 of the ICJ on the application of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide in the Gaza Strip (South Africa v. Israel), the Committee urges the State party to:**

(a) **Urgently take measures to ensure that children and civilian infrastructure are not targeted; that incidental loss of children's lives, injury to children and damage to civilian objects are not caused in violation of international humanitarian law; and immediately comply with the orders and advisory opinions of the ICJ;**

²⁴ CRC/C/ISR/RQ/5-6/Add.1, para. 80.

(b) Ensure that the armed and security forces abide by their obligations under international humanitarian and human rights law, including by providing clear instructions to protect children in all circumstances and to prevent any possible killing and injuring of children, in line with the international humanitarian law principles of distinction, proportionality and precaution;

(c) Guarantee safe, unobstructed and unconditional access to health services, including emergency medical care, life-saving treatment, adequate medical supplies and trained personnel for all pregnant women and children in the OPT, with a view to ensuring that children's health and well-being do not suffer the consequences of the occupation, by, *inter alia*, (i) ensuring the timely transfer at checkpoints of pregnant mothers and children with their caregivers in need of medical care; (ii) removing restrictions or sanctions imposed on children who need to travel to receive medical care, allowing them to attend hospital appointments as often as needed and as scheduled by their physicians, and ensuring that they are accompanied by at least one parent; and (iii) granting long-term permits for children who are cancer patients or suffering from other serious illnesses;

(d) Carry out prompt, independent, effective and transparent investigations into the violations of international human rights and humanitarian law committed by the armed and security forces since 7 October 2023 and before that date, in cooperation with international fact-finding missions and the International Criminal Court to ensure accountability;

(e) Bring perpetrators of human rights violations to justice and provide compensation, recovery and social integration services for all child victims;

(f) Sign an action plan with the United Nations to end and prevent the killing and maiming of children and attacks on schools and hospitals, and work with the Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict to urgently put in place measures to better protect children;

(g) Cooperate with, and support the work of, UNRWA in providing education and health services to Palestinian children; halt the demolition of and strikes against UNRWA-operated schools in Gaza; and ensure the safety of UNRWA operations throughout the OPT, including in East Jerusalem;

(h) Assess the impact of the State party's military presence and occupational policies on children in the OPT, including its movement restrictions, and ensure that children's best interests are fully considered in its military governance of the OPT;

(i) Collect data to track civilian casualties, disaggregated by type of weapon used, age, sex, disability and other relevant characteristics, to assess the intersectional harm to children caused by the use of explosive weapons in populated areas;

(j) Review policies implemented in the OPT that have a discriminatory effect on Palestinian girls, and revise them to ensure full protection from discrimination and gender-based violence.

Violations of children's rights under the Convention in the Gaza Strip

52. The Committee condemns, in the strongest terms, the State party's attacks against civilian targets in the Gaza Strip, which resulted in the deaths of more than 16,756 children and injuries of at least 6,168 children in Gaza between 7 October 2023 and 10 September 2024, with thousands more presumed dead under rubble. The Committee is gravely concerned about:

(a) The outrageously high number of children in Gaza who continue to be killed, maimed, injured, missing, displaced, orphaned and subjected to famine, malnutrition and disease, as well as the multiple displacements of the Gazan population, as a result of the State party's indiscriminate and disproportionate attacks on Gaza using explosive weapons with wide-area effects in densely populated areas and its denial of humanitarian access, with at least 1 million children displaced, 21,000 children reported missing, 20,000 children who have lost one or both parents, 17,000 children unaccompanied or separated from their

families in Gaza, dozens of child deaths due to malnutrition and 3,500 children at risk of death due to malnutrition and lack of food;

(b) Attacks on and destruction of hospitals, schools, residential buildings, refugee camps and essential infrastructure, including power facilities and water tanks, by the armed forces, restricting access to health services, education and housing for the nearly 1 million children living in Gaza.

53. **Drawing attention to resolutions 2712 (2023), 2720 (2023), 2728 (2024) and 2735 (2024) of the United Nations Security Council, the Committee reiterates its previous recommendations²⁵ and further urges the State party to:**

(a) **Ensure the right of all Palestinian children to life, survival and development, including by immediately ceasing the killing and injuring of Palestinian children in Gaza, ensuring safe and unrestricted humanitarian access to and within the Gaza Strip, and allowing entry of all construction materials necessary for Palestinian families to rebuild homes and civilian and public infrastructure;**

(b) **Exercise maximum restraint and use of intentional lethal force only when it is strictly unavoidable in order to protect life and apply preventive and protective measures to minimize damage and injury affecting children;**

(c) **Provide urgent assistance to the thousands of children who have been injured or maimed as a result of the military attacks, by providing the necessary equipment and specialized medical assistance to meet their needs, and provide support to orphans of war;**

(d) **Address and combat severe malnutrition among children, prevent malnutrition-related deaths, and ensure access to food and medical care for all affected children.**

(e) **Immediately cease all attacks against schools, hospitals and medical facilities, including ambulances and protected persons, in line with its obligations under international humanitarian and human rights law; facilitate the reconstruction of those that have been attacked; and take all necessary measures to prevent future attacks on hospitals and schools and ensure the safety of children in such environments; and endorse the Safe Schools Declaration;**

(f) **Ensure safe, rapid and unimpeded access for humanitarian aid and humanitarian workers throughout the Gaza Strip, and respect the humanitarian notification system with a view to maximizing the safety of aid operations and humanitarian workers;**

(g) **Ensure the delivery of fuel and other essential supplies to healthcare facilities and that hospitals are able to deliver necessary medical care and nutrition to children and other patients;**

(h) **Lift the ban on medical evacuations from Gaza, with a view to ensuring that all affected children can receive appropriate medical care;**

(i) **Ensure the right of Palestinian children displaced from their homes in Gaza to family reunification, and that unaccompanied and separated children and their parents have information concerning the whereabouts of their family members;**

(j) **Take targeted measures to ensure that children born in Gaza are registered immediately after birth and to prevent the loss of identity for children separated from their parents, including wounded children without surviving family members.**

²⁵ CRC/C/ISR/CO/2-4, para. 26; CRC/OPAC/ISR/CO/1, para. 11(a); CRC/C/15/Add.195, para. 32(c) and (d).

Violations of children's rights under the Convention in the occupied West Bank, including East Jerusalem

54. The Committee is deeply concerned about:

(a) The rise in the number of children who have been subjected to unnecessary and disproportionate lethal force by Israeli security forces, including as a result of the increased militarization of operations and use of airstrikes and heavy weaponry, in the West Bank including East Jerusalem and in the refugee camps in Jenin, Tulkarm and Nablus; the killing of 147 Palestinian children by Israeli security forces since October 2023; and in some cases the withholding of their bodies by the armed forces;

(b) The rise in killings of and violence against Palestinian children committed by settlers, particularly in the context of settlement expansion; the persistent failure of Israeli security forces to prevent and protect children from settler attacks; and impunity for perpetrators;

(c) The displacement of more than 1,000 children due to military operations, settler violence and punitive demolitions;

(d) Children residing in unsafe emergency shelters, with no measures in place to ensure their best interests or to prevent violence, including gender-based violence;

(e) Reports of harassment of and violence against children, including girls, by Israeli armed forces and settlers;

(f) The complete closure or restricted working hours of most checkpoints between the West Bank and East Jerusalem, and the discriminatory nature and disproportionate impact of movement restrictions on the rights of children, including incidents where movement restrictions have led to harm or loss of life;

(g) Threats to the right of education for children in the West Bank due to insufficient funding, shortage of schools, security concerns and school closures due to the State party's military operations.

55. **The Committee urges the State party to consider the impact of its military actions and discriminatory policies and practices in the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, on the human rights of Palestinian children, and in particular, to:**

(a) **Cease its military raids and attacks on Palestinian cities, villages and refugee camps, prevent incidents of the excessive use of force and ensure compliance with international human rights law and protection of children during security operations in the West Bank;**

(b) **Immediately return the bodies of killed Palestinian children and put an end to restrictions on Palestinian funerals and rituals of mourning;**

(c) **Ensure public order, put an end to the attacks on children and their families by settlers, and immediately halt the practice of providing them with weapons and enlisting them in the reserves of the Israeli security forces;**

(d) **Investigate and ensure accountability for all acts of violence committed by settlers against Palestinian children;**

(e) **Prevent the forced displacement of Palestinian children and ensure compliance with international law in protecting these children from such displacements;**

(f) **Ensure the safety and protection of children residing in shelters and other temporary accommodations, including by taking targeted measures to prevent violence and addressing safety concerns related to lack of privacy, overcrowding and insufficient night lighting;**

(g) **Fully and independently investigate all cases of violence, including harassment and gender-based violence, against children perpetrated by armed forces and settlers; bring the perpetrators to justice; and provide compensation, recovery and social integration services for victims;**

(h) Prevent violations of the right to life as a result of movement restrictions, particularly the use of live ammunition by Israeli security forces, and promptly investigate and hold accountable those responsible for incidents where movement restrictions have led to harm or loss of life for children;

(i) Abolish movement restrictions which hinder children's access to education, health and other essential services, and strengthen transparency and communication regarding the operational practices of security forces at checkpoints and roadblocks to prevent discriminatory enforcement;

(j) Strengthen measures to address the school shortage in East Jerusalem and remove all restrictions on freedom of movement which prevent Palestinian children and teachers from accessing schools;

(k) Ensure that children can attend school without harassment, intimidation or violence, including by ceasing settler attacks against schools and the use of schools as outputs and detention centres, and ensuring that the settlers and security forces responsible for violence are held accountable.

Follow-up to the Optional Protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict

56. Noting with deep concern the continuous use of children as human shields and informants, as detailed in the 2023 report of the Secretary-General on children and armed conflict, and that conscientious objectors seeking exemption must do so while still a child, the Committee recalls its previous recommendations²⁶ and recommends that the State party:

(a) Prevent and effectively enforce the prohibition of the use of children as human shields and informants, and ensure that perpetrators are brought to justice and punished with sanctions commensurate with the gravity of their crimes;

(b) Ensure that its policy on compulsory recruitment is consistent with the provisions of the Optional Protocol, including article 2, and consider raising the minimum age for voluntary recruitment into the armed forces to 18 years;

(c) Ensure that any military education is conducted in line with human rights values and article 29 of the Convention and that the educational content of such programmes continues to be monitored by the Ministry of Education;

(d) Endorse the Paris Principles and Commitments on Children Associated with Armed Forces or Armed Groups;

(e) Continue to cooperate with the Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict;

(f) Ensure that the special military committee that assesses applications for exemption from military service on the grounds of conscientious objection includes at least one person with expertise in children's rights and child psychology.

L. Ratification of the Optional Protocol on a communications procedure

57. The Committee recommends that the State party accede to the Optional Protocol on a communications procedure.

M. Ratification of international human rights instruments

58. The Committee recommends that the State party, in order to further strengthen the fulfilment of children's rights, consider ratifying the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance, the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of

²⁶ CRC/C/OPAC/ISR/CO/1.

Their Families, and the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights aiming to the abolition of the death penalty.

V. Implementation and reporting

A. Follow-up and dissemination

59. The Committee recommends that the State party take all appropriate measures to ensure that the recommendations contained in the present concluding observations are fully implemented and that a child-friendly version is disseminated to, and made widely accessible for, children, including those in the most disadvantaged situations. The Committee also recommends that the combined sixth and seventh periodic reports and the present concluding observations be made widely available in the languages of the country.

B. Next report

60. The Committee will establish and communicate the due date of the eighth periodic report of the State party in due course, in line with the envisaged predictable reporting calendar based on an eight-year review cycle and following the adoption of a list of issues and questions prior to reporting, if applicable, for the State party. The report should comply with the Committee's harmonized treaty-specific reporting guidelines²⁷ and should not exceed 21,200 words.²⁸ In the event that a report exceeding the established word limit is submitted, the State party will be asked to shorten the report. If the State party is not in a position to review and resubmit the report, translation thereof for the purposes of consideration by the Committee cannot be guaranteed.

²⁷ [CRC/C/58/Rev.3](#).

²⁸ General Assembly resolution 68/268, para. 16.