

Country session: Central African Republic

Date: 74th session - 20 January 2017

Context

The Committee noted that political instability, security crisis, serious economic problems, clashes between armed groups in some regions and large movements of refugees and IDP's were serious obstacles to the implementation of the CRC. The Committee also noted that "the situation of instability and insecurity warrants the continuing need for a United Nations peacekeeping presence" in the country.

Background information

[OHCHR press release](#)

[Webcast](#)

[Audio file](#)

Reporting

Reporting methodology

Regular reporting procedure

Simplified reporting procedure

Concluding Observations with urgent measures

State report:

CRC		OPAC		OPSC	
No. of report	Second periodic report	No. of report	Not ratified	No. of report	Initial report
Due date	23 May 1999	Due date	-	Due date	24 October 2014
Submission	13 December 2011	Submission	-	Submission	Not submitted

[Written replies to the List of Issues](#)

Due date	15 October 2016
Submission	6 December 2016

The delegation mentioned during the dialogue that due to the 2012- 2016 crisis the situation of children deteriorated in comparison to what the State had reported in 2011.

Public reports from children's rights defenders:

[Alternative reports](#)

NGOs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Child Soldiers International ▪ Global Initiative against Corporal Punishment
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State delegation

Large high level and Multisectoral delegation led by Ms. Virginie MBaïkoua, the Minister of Social Affairs & National Reconciliation. She was supported by a delegation consisting of the Minister of Justice & Human Rights as well as representatives and experts on Justice, Human Rights, Education and Family Welfare.

List of State delegation representatives on [OHCHR site](#)

Committee's Task Force members

Name & Last Name	Country
Bernard Gastaud	Monaco
Kirsten SANDBERG	Norway
Suzanne AHO ASSOUMA	Togo
Wanderlino NOGUEIRA NETO	Brazil
José A.R. REYES	Venezuela

Dialogue description:

i. Character of the dialogue

The Committee found the dialogue constructive and dynamic. The delegation was open to discuss about political and technical obstacles and opportunities to implement the CRC.

ii. General assessment made by the Committee

The Committee welcomed the adoption of a new Constitution in 2016, the ratification of the OPSC in 2012, and the establishment in 2015 of the Special Criminal Court to investigate and judge the serious human rights violations occurring in the country. However, there are still pressing matters to tackle urgently to fully implement the CRC.

iii. Main issues discussed

- **Coordination and resources allocation:** The Committee pointed out the need to operationalize the National Child Protection Council, the institution in charge of implementing and monitoring the CRC. The Committee also raised its concerns about the lack of public budget for upholding children's rights and the State overreliance on international cooperation. The delegation said the government was willing to allocate budget and personnel to the National Child Protection Council.
- **Harmful practices:** Committee members expressed their serious concerns about the high rate of cases of forced marriage, FGM and corporal punishment, particularly in rural areas. The absence of legal ban and comprehensive prevention programs within communities was regretted. The delegation acknowledged the existence of these practices in the country and replied that during 2017 several campaigns will take place to promote a change in the mindset of the population.
- **Birth registration:** Committee members expressed their concerns regarding the extreme low rate of birth registration, the disparity between rural and urban areas in this regard, and the low awareness



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of population on the importance of registering their children at birth. The State is endeavoring to address this issue as it is a governmental priority enshrined in the Family Code.

- **Education:** The Committee was highly concerned about the flaws of the education system to ensure free and mandatory schooling for every child, including children with mental or physical disabilities, in both urban and rural areas. The head of delegation admitted that education was a fragile sector and presented the programs and activities that will be carried out jointly with UNICEF and the World Bank to address this issue.
- **Children in armed conflict:** Committee members expressed their serious concerns about the ongoing fighting between armed groups and the reported cases of child recruitment during the last outbreak of the war. The delegation highlighted this as a priority topic since the Bangui National Conference took place in 2015, where the government signed peace agreements with ten different armed groups.
- **Child labor:** The Committee was worried about the persistence and prevalence of the worst forms of child labor, especially in the mining and agriculture sectors, as well as the lack of harmonization between the minimum age of work at 14 and the age of compulsory school at 16. The State issued an official list of worst forms of child labor that should prevent exploitation.
- **Conflict-related sexual violence and abuse:** Committee members expressed their serious concerns about sexual violence and abuse cases against children committed by all parties of the conflict, including peacekeepers. The head of delegation stressed this is a high priority issue and stated that the Special Criminal Court was established to prosecute and convict the responsible of human rights violations, including cases of sexual violence and abuse.

Recommendations of the Committee

In its [Concluding Observations](#), the Committee regretted the limited application of its previous recommendations and suggested the State to give special attention to the following topics:

- **Policy and coordination:** The State should design and implement a clear public policy for children's rights as well as ensure sufficient technical, human and financial resources to the National Child Protection Council.
- **Non- discrimination:** The State should eradicate discrimination against children based on religion, gender, against pigmy children, albino children, Fulani children, children with disabilities, orphan children, children with HIW/AIDS, and children accused of witchcraft. A comprehensive awareness-raising program within communities, religious leaders and local chiefs should be conducted by the State to promote a change of mindset within the population.
- **Right to a name and nationality:** The State should ensure accessible and free birth registration to give legal identity to all children across the country, as well as develop awareness-raising campaigns with parents. National legislation should not provide penalties for parents registering children after the allowed one-month period.
- **Health:** The State should tackle the high infant and maternal mortality rate by ensuring access to health care and nutrition services in all regions, while conducting trainings to medical personnel. Mental health programs for children affected by armed conflict must be fostered. More resources are needed to strengthen the capacity of the health system.
- **Standard of living:** The State should undertake poverty reduction strategies for upholding children's rights in cooperation with the World Bank and the European Union.
- **Education:** The State should improve the quality of education and school infrastructure. It should provide free primary education for every child, increase the enrolment rates in primary education, and decrease dropouts at secondary school, especially for girls.



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- **Child labor:** The State should raise the minimum age of work, while ensuring the implementation of labor codes, particularly in the mining and agricultural sector. The reintegration of ex child workers into the school system must be guaranteed.
- **Children in armed conflict:** The State should ratify the OPAC, ensure the effective implementation of the peace agreements and sign new ones with the remaining groups. It should develop and implement a national strategy for the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of children, and should explicitly criminalize the recruitment and use of children in hostilities and bring perpetrators to justice.

Next State report

CRC	
No. of report	Third to seventh periodic report
Due date	23 November 2022

Disclaimer: Child Rights Connect reports are all drafted in English. If the State report and/or the alternative reports were submitted in another UN language (Spanish, French, Arabic, Russian or Chinese) the report will be translated accordingly.