

Country session: Saint Vincent and the Grenadines

Date: 74th session - 26 and 27 January 2017

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	Combined second and third periodic reports	No. of report	First report	No. of report	First report
Due date	24 November 2002	Due date	29 Apr 2013	Due date	15 Oct 2007
Submission	02 December 2013	Submission	Not submitted	Submission	Not submitted

[Written replies to List of Issues](#)

Due date	1 June 2016
Submission	25 January 2017

Public reports from children's rights defenders

No reports were submitted by NGOs or NHRIs

State delegation

Small high level delegation led by Frederick Stephenson, Minister of National Mobilization, Social Development, Family, Gender Affairs, Persons with Disabilities and Youth. He was supported by the Director of Social Services from the Child Development Division at the Ministry, department in charge of implementing and monitoring the Convention.

Committee's Task Force members

Name & Last name	Country
Jorge CARDONA	Spain
Jose Angel RODRIGUEZ REYES	Venezuela

Dialogue description:

i. Character of the dialogue

The atmosphere during the session was cooperative and constructive. The answers of the State to the Committee's questions were focused on technical programs, activities and actions implementing the CRC.

ii. General assessment made by the Committee:

The Committee welcomed the accession to the two Optional Protocols to the CRC and the legislative progress made in some areas, however noted with concern that not all relevant laws for children are fully in line with the CRC. Committee members highlighted the absence of specific budgetary lines for children's rights implementation.

iii. Main issues raised:

- **Legislation:** The Committee was concerned that national law was not yet fully harmonized with the CRC, particularly in regards to the definition of the child, the principle of non-discrimination and the minimum age for marriage and death penalty. The State party replied that a legislative process revision will take place during 2017, and the harmonization of laws is currently on public debate.
- **Policy:** Committee members were concerned about the lack of a comprehensive policy to implement and promote children's rights rather than only focusing on child protection strategies. The delegation stated that due to lack of resources it is not possible to establish a division for human rights promotion. However, as part of the activities of the child protection strategy they conduct awareness-raising campaigns promoting children's rights.
- **Non-discrimination:** Committee members were concerned about discrimination against children with disabilities and children with HIV/AIDS. They emphasized the widespread discrimination against LGTBI children, and the criminalization of homosexuality for boys under 16 years old. The State replied that no change of laws was planned to decriminalize homosexuality, and explained that homosexual children are brought to psychosocial programs to express their views and give them support and treatment.
- **Sexual abuse and exploitation:** The Committee pointed out the high rates of sexual abuse, as result of a prevalent acceptance of violence against children and the low number of prosecutions and convictions. Committee members raised their deep concerns about the widespread occurrence of incest and sexual exploitation of children. The State party acknowledged that incest, sexual abuse and exploitation were big concerns for the islands, and once the cases were reported they were brought to justice. However, there is a high rate of unreported cases.
- **Child labor:** The Committee raised in various occasions its concerns about children engaged in hazardous work, particularly in agriculture, tourism and illicit drug trading. Committee members were concerned about the lack of reliable data on this issue, and the gap between the minimum age of employment at 14 years and the age of compulsory school at 16. The State did not provide information on this matter since the delegation did not have available data, but stated that the minimum age of work will be discussed during the law harmonization process.

Recommendations of the Committee

In its [Concluding Observations](#), the Committee recommended, *inter alia*:



child rights connect

- **Legislation and policy:** The State should speed up the harmonization of its national laws with the CRC, in close collaboration with civil society and seeking technical assistance from OHCHR and UNICEF. It should also design and implement a comprehensive national policy focusing in promoting children's rights.
- **Non-discrimination:** The State should ensure the effective protection of children with physical, intellectual, sensory and psycho-social disabilities, provide them with access to adequate services, and conduct awareness raising campaigns to destigmatize children living with HIV/AIDS. In addition, the Committee urged to abrogate the criminalization of homosexuality and fully respect sexual orientation and gender diversity. Awareness-raising campaigns on equity and non-discrimination against LGBTI children must be conducted.
- **Sexual abuse and exploitation:** The State should design and effectively implement a comprehensive public policy for preventing sexual exploitation of children considering its root causes, while strengthening child protection systems and complaints mechanisms. Thorough investigations, prosecutions and convictions must be guaranteed as well as effective support and reintegration programs for child victims and their families. Finally, the State should conduct awareness-raising programs with parents on alternative methods of discipline and on the risk of sexual exploitation of children.
- **Child labor:** The State should undertake a study to assess the causes and the scope of child labor in the islands, and raise the minimum age of employment to 16 years to harmonizing it with mandatory age for education. In addition, it should establish a list of hazardous works, amend the law accordingly and criminalize their practice for children.

Next State report

CRC	
No. of report	Fourth to fifth periodic report
Due date	24 May 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.