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Promotion and protection of the rights of children

Report of the Third Committee

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I. Introduction

1. At its 2nd plenary meeting, on 17 September 2021, the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the General Committee, decided to include in the agenda of its seventy-sixth session the item entitled:

“Promotion and protection of the rights of children:

“(a) Promotion and protection of the rights of children;

“(b) Follow-up to the outcome of the special session on children”

and to allocate it to the Third Committee.

2. The Committee considered proposals and took action on the item at its 11th and 15th meetings, held on 15 and 18 November. An account of the Committee’s discussion is contained in the relevant summary records.¹ Attention is also drawn to the general debate held by the Committee at its 1st to 6th meetings, on 30 September and on 1, 4 and 7 October.²

3. The Committee, pursuant to the organization of work adopted at its 1st meeting, held on 30 September, and taking into account the prevailing conditions relating to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) on the working arrangements for its seventy-sixth session and the available technological and procedural solutions in the interim period, convened one virtual informal meeting to hear introductory statements and hold interactive dialogues on the item. The proceedings of the virtual informal meetings are reflected in the annex to the present document.

¹ A/C.3/76/SR.11 and A/C.3/76/SR.15.

² See A/C.3/76/SR.1, A/C.3/76/SR.2, A/C.3/76/SR.3, A/C.3/76/SR.4, A/C.3/76/SR.5 and A/C.3/76/SR.6. Pursuant to the organization of work adopted at the 1st meeting, on 30 September, official statements received by the Secretariat for posting on eStatements can be accessed at the following link: <https://journal.un.org/>.



4. Also pursuant to the organization of work adopted at its 1st meeting, and in lieu of the holding of in-person general discussions of agenda items allocated to the Third Committee, official statements received by the Secretariat under the item can be accessed through the Third Committee Place of the e-deleGATE portal.

5. For its consideration of the item, the Committee had before it the following documents:

Item 70 (a)

Promotion and protection of the rights of children

Report of the Secretary-General on the well-being and empowerment of girls living in rural areas ([A/76/204](#))

Report of the Secretary-General on the status of the Convention on the Rights of the Child ([A/76/305](#))

Note by the Secretary-General on the gender dimension of the sexual exploitation of children and the importance of integrating a child-centred and gender-inclusive approach to combating and eradicating it ([A/76/144](#))

Annual report of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children ([A/76/224](#))

Report of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict ([A/76/231](#))

II. Consideration of proposals

A. Draft resolution [A/C.3/76/L.21/Rev.1](#)

6. At its 11th meeting, on 15 November, the Committee had before it a revised draft resolution entitled “The girl child” ([A/C.3/76/L.21/Rev.1](#)), which was submitted by Armenia, the Central African Republic, China, Côte d’Ivoire, Cuba, Equatorial Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Kazakhstan, Malawi (on behalf of the Southern African Development Community), Mali, Nigeria and Sao Tome and Principe. Subsequently, Algeria, Bangladesh, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Brazil, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Congo, Djibouti, Egypt, Eritrea, Guinea, Haiti, Jordan, Kenya, Mongolia, Morocco, Paraguay, Philippines, Sierra Leone, Thailand, Togo, Tunisia, Turkey, the United States of America, Uruguay, and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) joined as sponsors of the draft resolution.

7. At the same meeting, the representative of Malawi, on behalf of the Southern African Development Community, made a statement.

8. Also at the same meeting, the Committee adopted draft resolution [A/C.3/76/L.21/Rev.1](#) (see para. 15, draft resolution I).

9. Before the adoption, the representatives of the Russian Federation and the United States of America made statements.

10. After the adoption, the representatives of Slovenia (on behalf of the European Union and its member States, as well as Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Iceland, Montenegro, North Macedonia, the Republic of Moldova, Serbia and Ukraine), Guatemala, Libya, Bahrain (on behalf of the member States of the Gulf Cooperation Council), the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Senegal and Tunisia, as well as the observer for the Holy See, made statements.

B. Draft resolution [A/C.3/76/L.25/Rev.1](#)

11. At its 15th meeting, on 18 November, the Committee had before it a revised draft resolution entitled “Rights of the child” ([A/C.3/76/L.25/Rev.1](#)), which was submitted by Albania, Armenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cabo Verde, Central African Republic, Côte d'Ivoire, Equatorial Guinea, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Republic of Moldova, Slovenia (on behalf of the European Union), Ukraine and Uruguay (on behalf of the Group of Latin American and Caribbean Countries). Subsequently, Andorra, Australia, Botswana, Canada, the Congo, Iceland, Japan, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liechtenstein, Madagascar, Morocco, New Zealand, Norway, Republic of Korea, San Marino, Sao Tome and Principe, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Switzerland, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Tunisia and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland joined in sponsoring the draft resolution.

12. At the same meeting, the representative of Uruguay, on behalf of the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States and the European Union, made a statement.

13. Also at the same meeting, the Committee adopted draft resolution [A/C.3/76/L.25/Rev.1](#) (see para. 15, draft resolution II).

14. After the adoption, the representatives of Slovenia (on behalf of the European Union and its member States, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Canada, Georgia, Iceland, Montenegro, North Macedonia, the Republic of Moldova and Serbia), the Russian Federation, the United States of America, the Philippines, Egypt, Bahrain (also on behalf of Kuwait, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates), Libya, Singapore, Senegal, Malaysia, Eritrea, Yemen, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Algeria, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Sri Lanka and Turkey, as well as the observer for the Holy See, made statements.

III. Recommendations of the Third Committee

15. The Third Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolutions:

Draft resolution I **The girl child**

The General Assembly,

Reaffirming its resolution [74/134](#) of 18 December 2019 and all relevant resolutions on the girl child, and recalling its resolution [66/170](#) of 19 December 2011 on the International Day of the Girl Child and the agreed conclusions of the Commission on the Status of Women, in particular those relevant to the girl child,

Recalling all human rights and other instruments relevant to the rights of the child, in particular the girl child, including the Convention on the Rights of the Child,¹ the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women,² the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities,³ the Optional Protocols thereto⁴ and the Convention on Consent to Marriage, Minimum Age for Marriage and Registration of Marriages,⁵

Reaffirming its resolution [70/1](#) of 25 September 2015, entitled “Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”, and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development,⁶ and reaffirming also other internationally agreed development goals and commitments relevant to the girl child,

Noting the adoption of the Southern African Development Community Model Law on Eradicating Child Marriage and Protecting Children Already in Marriage,

Reaffirming all relevant outcomes of major United Nations summits and conferences relevant to the girl child, including the outcome document of the twenty-seventh special session of the General Assembly on children, entitled “A world fit for children”,⁷ the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action,⁸ the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, entitled “Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century”,⁹ the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development,¹⁰ the Programme of Action of the World Summit for Social Development,¹¹ the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS adopted at the twenty-sixth special session of the General Assembly on HIV/AIDS, entitled “Global Crisis – Global Action”,¹² and the

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

² *Ibid.*, vol. 1249, No. 20378.

³ *Ibid.*, vol. 2515, No. 44910.

⁴ *Ibid.*, vols. 2171, 2173 and 2983, No. 27531; *ibid.*, vol. 2131, No. 20378; and *ibid.*, vol. 2518, No. 44910.

⁵ *Ibid.*, vol. 521, No. 7525.

⁶ Resolution [69/313](#), annex.

⁷ Resolution [S-27/2](#), annex.

⁸ *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.

⁹ Resolution [S-23/2](#), annex, and resolution [S-23/3](#), annex.

¹⁰ *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.

¹¹ *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, annex II.

¹² Resolution [S-26/2](#), annex.

political declarations on HIV and AIDS adopted by the high-level meetings of the General Assembly held in 2006,¹³ 2011,¹⁴ 2016¹⁵ and 2021,¹⁶ and reiterating that their full and effective implementation is essential to achieving the internationally agreed development goals, including the Sustainable Development Goals,

Recalling the high-level meeting on the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women, held in New York on 1 October 2020, which demonstrated the commitment of the international community to the full, effective and accelerated implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the realization of a gender-responsive implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, for all women and girls, including girls living in rural and remote areas,

Recognizing that chronic poverty remains one of the biggest obstacles to meeting the needs and promoting and protecting the rights of the child, including the girl child, and that girls living in poverty, including those living in rural and remote areas, are more likely to experience harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation, as well as unequal sharing of domestic work and unpaid care work to ease family hardships, often ending education and suffering other harmful consequences, further limiting their opportunities and leaving them entrenched in poverty, and recognizing also that the eradication of poverty in all its forms and dimensions is critical to realizing the rights of girls and must remain a high priority for the international community,

Deeply concerned that the global goal of eradicating poverty by 2030 is slipping from our reach, and recognizing that the multidimensional impacts of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic have exacerbated it, increasing the number of poor by up to 124 million, causing the extreme poverty rate to rise for the first time in a generation, especially in low- and middle-income countries, and, inter alia, among girls, the number of people who are still living in multidimensional poverty is still unacceptably high, the levels of inequality in income, wealth and opportunities remain high or are increasing within and between many countries, and the non-income dimensions of poverty and deprivation, such as access to quality education, social protection and essential health-care services, and relative poverty remain major concerns along with extreme and rural poverty,

Recognizing that urgent national and international action is required to eliminate poverty, including extreme poverty, and noting that the impacts of global financial and economic crises, volatile energy and food prices and continuing food insecurity as a result of various factors are felt directly by households,

Recognizing also that social protection, education, adequate health care, nutrition, full access to clean water, including safe drinking water, sanitation and hygiene, skills development and combating discrimination and violence against girls, among other things, are all necessary for the empowerment of the girl child, and recalling the importance of mainstreaming a gender perspective across the United Nations system in relation to the girl child,

Underscoring that women and girls may be disproportionately affected by and are more vulnerable to the adverse impacts of climate change and are already experiencing an increase in such impacts, including persistent drought and extreme weather events, land degradation, sea level rise, coastal erosion and ocean acidification, which further threaten health, food security and efforts to eradicate poverty and achieve sustainable development, and noting in this regard the

¹³ Resolution 60/262, annex.

¹⁴ Resolution 65/277, annex.

¹⁵ Resolution 70/266, annex.

¹⁶ Resolution 75/284, annex.

implementation of the Paris Agreement adopted under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change,¹⁷

Noting with concern that the COVID-19 pandemic and its consequences, including with regard to the right to education, health and adequate food for the poor, including those who are vulnerable or in vulnerable situations, especially women and girls, who are often left behind in the implementation of social protection programmes aimed at alleviating rural poverty, recognizing also that, even before the COVID-19 pandemic, rural and agricultural development aid included only a small fraction of projects aimed at eliminating gender stereotypes and negative social norms and empowering women and girls in rural and remote areas,

Deeply concerned that the extreme situation of girls in child-headed households, including those living in rural and remote areas, persists and that poverty, armed conflict, climate-related and other hazards, natural disasters, disease outbreaks, including the impact of the HIV and AIDS epidemic, the COVID-19 pandemic and other humanitarian emergencies increase the incidence of child-headed households, forcing children, including girls, to undertake adult responsibilities, including being the main household earner and caring for younger siblings, and making them particularly vulnerable to poverty, violence, including physical, psychological and sexual violence, as well as all forms of discrimination, which seriously inhibits their development and violates and/or impairs the full enjoyment of their human rights,

Deeply concerned also about the continuing lack of recent information and statistics, disaggregated by sex, age, disability, migratory status, geographical location and other characteristics relevant in national contexts, on the status of children, including girls, and their socioeconomic conditions, including those in rural and remote areas, which are necessary to inform appropriate policy responses by Member States and the United Nations system, and recognizing the need to ensure access to high-quality, reliable and timely disaggregated data,

Concerned that, in sub-Saharan Africa, six out of seven new HIV infections among adolescents aged 15 to 19 years are among girls, that adolescent girls and young women aged 15 to 24 years account for 25 per cent of HIV infections despite representing 10 per cent of the population, and that AIDS is the leading cause of death for adolescent girls and women aged between 15 and 49 years in the region, further noting with concern that globally rural/urban disaggregated data relating to HIV incidence are scarce, with little information on girls below the age of 15 years, and in this regard noting the importance of subnational data and welcoming its emerging availability in sub-Saharan Africa,

Recognizing that women and girls are more vulnerable to HIV infection in some regions and that they bear a disproportionate burden of the impact of the HIV and AIDS epidemic, including the unequal sharing of unpaid care and domestic work related to the care of and support for those living with and affected by HIV and AIDS, and that this also negatively affects girls living in rural areas by depriving them of their childhood and diminishing their opportunities to receive an education, often resulting in child, early and forced marriage and/or heading households and increasing their vulnerability to the worst forms of child labour and to sexual exploitation,

Noting with concern that millions of girls are engaged in child labour and its worst forms, including those who have been victims of trafficking in persons and affected by armed conflict and humanitarian emergencies, that children without nationality or birth registration are vulnerable to trafficking in persons and child labour and that many children face the double burden of having to combine economic activities with unpaid care and domestic work, which deprive them of their childhood

¹⁷ See [FCCC/CP/2015/10/Add.1](#), decision 1/CP.21, annex.

and hamper the full enjoyment of their right to education and opportunities for decent employment in the future, and noting in this regard the need to recognize, reduce and redistribute girls' disproportionate share of unpaid care and domestic work,

Recognizing that girl children are often at greater risk of being exposed to and encountering various forms of discrimination and violence and forced labour, which, among other things, would hinder 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 in all its forms and dimensions everywhere, including extreme poverty, as well as the full, equal and meaningful participation of girls in decisions that affect them, in accordance with the age and maturity of the child, including in the context of COVID-19 pandemic response and recovery efforts, are key in breaking the cycle of discrimination and violence and in promoting and protecting the full and effective enjoyment of their human rights and fundamental freedoms, and recognizing further that empowering girls requires their active participation in decision-making processes and as agents of change in their own lives and communities, including through girls' organizations with the active support and engagement of their parents, legal guardians, families and care providers, as well as boys and men, and the wider community as allies and agents of change for the achievement of gender equality,

Deeply concerned about all forms of violence against children, including those that disproportionately affect girls, such as child prostitution, child pornography and other child sexual abuse material, rape, sexual abuse, domestic violence, trafficking in persons and the use of information and communications technology and social media to perpetrate violence against women and girls, and, in addition, about the corresponding impunity and lack of accountability, and that violence against women and girls is underrecognized and underreported, particularly at the community level, which reflects discriminatory norms that reinforce the lower status of girls in society,

Deeply concerned also by the increased violence against women and girls during the COVID-19 pandemic, including in the context of movement restrictions and other public health measures as well as restricted access to safety and other services, and emphasizing the need for strengthened prevention and response mechanisms for addressing the situation of girls in the COVID-19 pandemic recovery efforts,

Deeply concerned further about all forms of discrimination against the girl child and the violation of the rights of the girl child, including girls living in rural and remote areas and those with disabilities, bearing in mind their specific needs, which often result in less access for girls to inclusive and equitable quality education, nutrition, including food allocation, and physical and mental health-care services, in girls enjoying fewer of the rights, opportunities and benefits of childhood and adolescence than boys, and in leaving them more vulnerable than boys to the consequences of unprotected and premature sexual relations, early pregnancies and often being subjected to harmful practices, such as female infanticide, child, early and forced marriage, prenatal sex selection and female genital mutilation, and to various forms of cultural, social, sexual and economic exploitation and violence, abuse, rape, incest and honour-related crimes,

Deeply concerned that, despite its widespread practice, child, early and forced marriage is still underreported, including in rural and remote areas, recognizing that this requires further attention and that child, early and forced marriage exposes the girl

child to greater risk of HIV and sexually transmitted infections, often leads to premature sexual relations, early pregnancy and early childbearing and increases the risk of obstetric fistula and high levels of maternal mortality and morbidity, and furthermore entails complications during pregnancy and childbirth, which often lead to disability, stillbirth and maternal death, particularly for young women and girls, which require appropriate prenatal and postnatal health-care services for mothers, including in the area of skilled birth attendance and emergency obstetric care, and noting with concern that this reduces girls' opportunities to complete their education, gain comprehensive knowledge, participate in the community or develop employable skills and is likely to have a long-term adverse impact on their physical and mental health and well-being, their employment opportunities and their quality of life and that of their children, and violates and/or impairs the full enjoyment of their human rights,

Deeply concerned also that child, early and forced marriage constitutes a violation, abuse or impairment of human rights and a harmful practice that prevents individuals from living their lives free from all forms of discrimination and violence, that it has wide-ranging and adverse consequences for the enjoyment of human rights, that it is linked to and perpetuates other forms of violence against women and girls and other harmful practices and human rights violations and that such violations have a disproportionately negative impact on women and girls, and underscoring the human rights obligations and commitments of States to respect, protect and fulfil the human rights and fundamental freedoms of women and girls, and to prevent and eliminate the practice of child, early and forced marriage,

Deeply concerned further that young women and girls are particularly affected by water scarcity, unsafe water, inadequate sanitation and poor hygiene, and concerned furthermore that girls, especially those in rural areas, are often excluded from full and continued participation in school owing to their burden of water procurement at home, a lack of water and sanitation facilities in schools and inadequate access to effective feminine hygiene products,

Emphasizing that increased and equal access to quality education for young people, especially adolescent girls, including in the areas of sexual and reproductive health, as well as health care, hygiene and sanitation, dramatically lowers their vulnerability to preventable diseases and infections, in particular HIV and other sexually transmitted infections,

Recognizing that, despite gains in providing access to quality education, girls are still more likely than boys to remain excluded from quality education, and learning levels for children in rural and remote areas remain low such that achieving gender equality in access and learning alone is unlikely to significantly improve girls' literacy, and recognizing also that among gendered barriers to girls' equal enjoyment of their right to education are child, early and forced marriage, early pregnancy, sexual and gender-based violence, including in the digital context, the disproportionate share of unpaid care and domestic work, the lack of safe and adequate sanitation facilities, including for menstrual hygiene, and gender stereotypes and negative social norms that lead families and communities to place less value on girls' education when compared with that of boys,

Deeply concerned that school-related violence against girls, including sexual violence and harassment on the way to and from and at school, such as violence perpetrated by teachers, continues to deter girls' education and, in many cases, the transition to and completion of secondary education, and that these risks may influence parents' decision to allow girls to attend school,

Noting that school meals and take-home rations attract and retain children in schools, and recognizing that school feeding is an incentive to enhance enrolment and reduce absenteeism for all girls,

Stressing the need for the international community, the relevant United Nations entities, the specialized agencies, civil society and international financial institutions to continue to actively support, through the allocation of enhanced financial resources and technical assistance, targeted comprehensive programmes that address the needs and priorities of the girl child,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General;¹⁸
2. *Stresses* the need for the full and urgent implementation of the rights of the child, including the girl child, as provided under international human rights instruments, and urges States to consider signing and ratifying or acceding to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Optional Protocols thereto as a matter of priority;
3. *Urges* all States that have not yet ratified or acceded to the Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138),¹⁹ and the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182),²⁰ of the International Labour Organization to consider doing so;
4. *Urges* States to develop or review relevant programmes that promote gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls and equal access to basic social services, such as education, nutrition, water and sanitation, birth registration, health care, vaccinations and protection from diseases representing the major causes of mortality, including non-communicable diseases, and to mainstream a gender perspective into all development policies and programmes, including those specific to the girl child;
5. *Calls upon* all countries to extend coverage of social protection, inter alia, through nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures for all girls, including floors, and, by 2030, achieve substantial coverage of persons living in poverty and in vulnerable situations, while stressing the importance of taking targeted measures to eradicate poverty in all its forms and dimensions everywhere, including extreme poverty, with enhanced international support and strengthened global partnerships, and notes the need for countries, the United Nations development system and all relevant stakeholders to ensure and promote a multidimensional coordinated approach in their work and efforts to eradicate poverty;
6. *Urges* States to improve the situation of girl children living in poverty, including extreme poverty, deprived of adequate food and nutrition, water and sanitation facilities, with limited or no access to basic physical and mental health-care services, shelter, education, participation and protection;
7. *Encourages* States and other relevant actors to implement cross-cutting and integrated gender-responsive policies and programmes that tackle all forms of discrimination, which are often compounded, against girls in rural areas and that respond to the multidimensional aspects of adolescent girls' lives, while taking into account the specific needs and views of girls, including those living in rural and remote areas, in particular with regard to COVID-19 pandemic recovery efforts;
8. *Urges* States and other relevant actors to consider strengthening multisectoral child protection systems, to prevent trafficking in girls and violence in all its forms, and ensure holistic support for girls who are at greater risk of experiencing, or who have experienced, violence, harassment, exploitation and abuse, including online and offline, and harmful practices such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation, while paying special attention to girls with

¹⁸ A/76/204.

¹⁹ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1015, No. 14862.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, vol. 2133, No. 37245.

disabilities and girls in vulnerable situations, including indigenous girls and girls facing social and economic exclusion, including those living in rural and remote areas;

9. *Recognizes* that ensuring equal access to inclusive, equitable and quality education requires transformations in education systems, mainstreaming a gender perspective into educational programmes, infrastructure development and teacher training, and in this regard calls upon States to invest in quality education, including through adequate financing, to ensure that all girls, including those who are marginalized or in vulnerable situations, enjoy their right to education;

10. *Calls upon* Member States to work with relevant stakeholders, including the private sector and civil society, to take steps to bridge the digital divide, including the gender digital divide where it exists, within and among countries as part of the efforts to ensure the empowerment and safety of all young women and girls, including those living in rural and remote areas, including by providing distance learning opportunities, especially in developing countries;

11. *Emphasizes* the importance of the right of girls to education and the continuation of learning, acknowledging that during the COVID-19 pandemic adolescent girls, as well as girls with disabilities, are at particular risk of dropping out and not returning to school even as education facilities reopen, thereby increasing their vulnerability to poverty, child, early and forced marriage, violence and early pregnancy;

12. *Calls upon* Member States, in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, to ensure that school closures are a last resort and are proportionate to wider public health restrictions and that girls are protected and supported in returning to school once it is deemed safe to do so, and in this regard calls upon Member States and other relevant stakeholders to take the appropriate measures in order to ensure proper training of teachers and other educational professionals and the availability of and access to learning materials and remote learning platforms during the pandemic, and to bridge the digital divide, including barriers such as poor access to connectivity, lack of affordability of connection and devices, limited digital skills, absence of locally relevant digital content, and gender stereotypes and negative social norms, in order to provide distance learning opportunities, inter alia, Internet, television and radio teaching alternatives, especially in developing countries;

13. *Notes* the role of the United Nations in supporting national Governments in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development²¹ and in realizing girls' right to education;

14. *Calls upon* States to recognize the right to education on the basis of equal opportunity and non-discrimination by making primary education compulsory and available free to all children, including those living in rural areas, and ensuring that all children have equal access to quality education, as well as making secondary and tertiary education available and accessible to all, in particular through the progressive introduction of free secondary education, bearing in mind that special measures to ensure equal access, including affirmative action, ensuring physical access to education, including by increasing financial incentives to families, improving the safety of girls on the way to and from school, ensuring that all schools are accessible, safe, secure and free from violence and providing hygienic, separate and adequate sanitation facilities, contribute to achieving equal opportunity and combating exclusion and ensuring school attendance, in particular for girls and children from low-income families and children who become heads of households;

²¹ Resolution [70/1](#).

15. *Calls upon* all States to place enhanced emphasis on quality education for the girl child, including catch-up and literacy education for those who did not receive formal education, special initiatives for keeping girls in school through post-primary education, including those who are already married or pregnant, to promote access to skills and entrepreneurship training for young women and to tackle gender stereotypes, in order to ensure that young women entering the labour market have opportunities to obtain full and productive employment and decent work, and equal pay for equal work or work of equal value;

16. *Encourages* States to promote lifelong learning opportunities for all, eliminating female illiteracy and promoting financial and digital literacy, ensuring that girls have equal access to leadership training, career development, scholarships and fellowships, strive to ensure the completion of quality early childhood, primary and secondary education, expand vocational and technical education for all girls and foster, as appropriate, intercultural and multilingual education for all, and address negative social norms and gender stereotypes in education systems;

17. *Also encourages* States to adopt, as appropriate, and implement inclusive policies and programmes to promote girls' education in science, technology, engineering and mathematics, including information and communications technology, throughout their education, by, inter alia, expanding the scope of education and training opportunities ranging from basic digital fluency to advanced technical skills, recognizing that girls who develop such skills may enjoy more academic success and higher-paying jobs in the future, and recognizing also that girls and women have an equally important role to play in these arenas as men and boys;

18. *Calls upon* States, with the support, where appropriate, of international organizations, civil society and non-governmental organizations, to develop policies and programmes, giving priority to formal, informal and non-formal education programmes, including 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 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 informed decision-making, communication and risk reduction skills and to develop respectful relationships, in full partnership with young persons, parents, legal guardians, caregivers, educators and health-care providers, in order to, inter alia, enable them to protect themselves from HIV infection and other risks;

19. *Urges* States to acknowledge the different needs of girls and boys during their childhood and adolescence and, as appropriate, to make adapted investments that are consistent with and responsive to their changing needs, in particular ensuring that girls have access to clean water, including safe drinking water, sanitation, hygiene and feminine hygiene products as well as private toilet facilities, including feminine hygiene product disposal facilities, in educational institutions and other public spaces, which will improve their health and access to education and increase their safety;

20. *Calls upon* States, in collaboration with civil society and other relevant actors, to promote educational and health practices in order to foster a culture in which menstruation is recognized as healthy and natural, and girls are not stigmatized on this basis, recognizing that girls' attendance at school can be affected by negative perceptions of menstruation and lack of means to maintain safe personal hygiene, such as water, sanitation and hygiene facilities in schools that meet the needs of girls;

21. *Urges* States to strengthen efforts to urgently eradicate all forms of discrimination against women and girls, and calls upon all States, the United Nations

system and civil society to take measures to address the obstacles that continue to affect the achievement of the goals set forth in the Beijing Platform for Action,²² as contained in paragraph 33 of the further actions and initiatives,²³ including reviewing remaining laws that discriminate against women and girls in order to modify or abolish them and, where appropriate, strengthening national mechanisms to implement inclusive policies and programmes for the girl child and, in some cases, to enhance coordination among responsible institutions for the realization of the human rights of girls, including access to justice, fighting impunity for perpetrators of and ensuring the availability of appropriate penalties for crimes of sexual violence committed against the girl child, and to mobilize all necessary resources and support in order to achieve those goals;

22. *Also urges* States to ensure that the applicable conventions of the International Labour Organization relating to the employment of girls and boys are respected and effectively enforced and that girls who are employed have equal access to decent work and equal pay for equal work or work of equal value, are protected from economic and sexual exploitation, discrimination, sexual harassment, violence and abuse in the workplace, are aware of their rights and have access to formal and non-formal education, skills development and technical and vocational training, and urges States to develop gender-sensitive measures, including national action plans, where appropriate, to eliminate child labour and its worst forms, commercial sexual exploitation, hazardous forms of child labour, trafficking and slavery-like practices, including forced and bonded labour, and the recruitment or use of children in armed conflict in violation of applicable international law, and to recognize that girls, including those living in rural and remote areas, face greater risks in this regard;

23. *Calls upon* States, with the support of relevant stakeholders, including the private sector, civil society, non-governmental organizations and community-based organizations, as appropriate, to take measures to ensure the right of girls to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health, including through the development and enforcement of policies, programmes and legal frameworks and the strengthening of health systems that make universally accessible and available quality, gender-responsive, adolescent-friendly health services, menstrual hygiene, information and commodities, including for sexual and reproductive health-care services, HIV/AIDS, and mental health services and nutrition interventions;

24. *Also calls upon* States to strengthen the capacity of national health systems, and in this regard invites the international community to assist national efforts, upon request, including by allocating adequate resources in order to provide the essential services needed to prevent obstetric fistula and to treat those cases that occur by providing the continuum of services, including family planning, prenatal and postnatal care, skilled birth attendance, emergency obstetric care and post-partum care, to adolescent girls, including those living in poverty and in underserved rural areas where obstetric fistula is most common;

25. *Urges* all States to enact, uphold and strictly enforce laws and policies aimed at preventing and ending child, early and forced marriage and protecting those at risk and to ensure that marriage is entered into only with the informed, free and full consent of the intending spouses, to enact and strictly enforce laws concerning the minimum legal age of consent and the minimum age for marriage, to raise the minimum age for marriage, engage all relevant stakeholders, including girls, where necessary, and ensure that these laws are well known, and national judicial systems

²² *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, annex II.

²³ Resolution [S-23/3](#), annex.

are fit, and to further develop and implement holistic, comprehensive and coordinated policies, plans of action and programmes and to support already married girls and adolescents, ensure the provision of viable alternatives and institutional support, ensure access to quality educational opportunities, and increase access to quality and safe schooling for girls, including those living in rural areas, to ensure the survival, protection, development and advancement of the girl child in order to promote and protect the full enjoyment of her human rights and to ensure equal opportunities for girls, including by making such plans an integral part of her total development process;

26. *Urges* States to enact, as appropriate, and implement legislation to protect, support and empower children living in child-headed households, in particular those headed by girls, that includes provisions to ensure their physical, psychosocial and economic well-being, including protecting their property and inheritance rights, access to health-care services, nutrition, clean water, including safe drinking water, sanitation and hygiene, shelter, education, scholarships and training opportunities, and that their family is protected and assisted in staying together, including through, where appropriate, social protection programmes and economic support;

27. *Also urges* States to forge partnerships with relevant stakeholders, particularly by working with and involving communities in developing programmes and mechanisms designed to ensure the safety and protection as well as the empowerment of children, especially girls, and to ensure that they receive the support that they need from their communities;

28. *Calls upon* States to strengthen research, data collection and analysis on the girl child, disaggregated by household structure, sex, age, disability, economic situation, marital and migratory status, geographical location and other characteristics relevant in national contexts, and improve gender statistics on time use, unpaid care work and water and sanitation in order to provide a better understanding of the situations of girls, especially of the multiple forms of discrimination that they face, and to inform the development of necessary policies and programme responses, which should take a holistic, gender-sensitive, age-appropriate approach to addressing the full range of the forms of discrimination that girls may face, in order to promote, respect, protect and fulfil their rights effectively;

29. *Urges* States to take all measures necessary to ensure the full enjoyment by girls with disabilities of all human rights and fundamental freedoms, on an equal basis with other children, and to adopt, implement and strengthen appropriate policies and programmes designed to address their needs;

30. *Urges* all States to enact and enforce legislation to protect girls from all forms of violence, discrimination, exploitation and harmful practices in all settings, including female infanticide and prenatal sex selection, female genital mutilation, rape, domestic violence, incest, sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, child prostitution, child pornography and other child sexual abuse material, trafficking and forced migration, forced labour and child, early and forced marriage, and to develop age-appropriate, safe, confidential and disability-accessible programmes and medical, social and psychological support services to assist girls who are subjected to violence and discrimination;

31. *Urges* States to strengthen and intensify their efforts to prevent and eliminate all forms of school-related violence against girls and to hold perpetrators accountable;

32. *Calls upon* all States to enact and enforce the necessary legislative or other measures, in cooperation with relevant stakeholders, including the private sector and the media, to prevent the distribution over the Internet of child pornography and other child sexual abuse material, ensuring that adequate mechanisms are in place to enable

the reporting and removal of such material and that its creators, distributors and collectors are prosecuted, as appropriate;

33. *Urges* States to formulate or review, as needed, comprehensive, multidisciplinary and coordinated national plans, programmes or strategies to eliminate all forms of discrimination and violence against women and girls, which should have dedicated resources, be widely disseminated and provide targets and timetables for implementation, as well as effective domestic enforcement procedures through the establishment of monitoring and evaluation mechanisms involving all parties concerned, including consultations with women's organizations, giving attention to the recommendations relating to the girl child of the Special Rapporteurs of the Human Rights Council on violence against women, its causes and consequences, and on trafficking in persons, especially women and children, and of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children;

34. *Also urges* States to ensure that children who are capable of forming their own views have the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting them, with the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child, to ensure that this right is fully and equally enjoyed by the girl child, to meaningfully involve girl children, including those with special needs, as well as girls with disabilities, and their representative organizations in decision-making processes, as appropriate, and to include them as full partners in identifying their own needs and in developing, planning, implementing and assessing policies and programmes to meet those needs, with a view to ensuring their full and effective participation;

35. *Recognizes* that a considerable number of girl children are particularly vulnerable, including orphans, children living on the street, internally displaced and refugee children, children affected by trafficking and sexual and economic exploitation, children living with or affected by HIV and AIDS, and children who are incarcerated or who live without parental support, and therefore urges States, with the support of the international community, where relevant, to take appropriate measures to address the needs of such children by implementing national, subregional and regional policies and strategies to build and strengthen governmental, community and family capacities to provide a supportive environment for such children, including by providing appropriate counselling and psychosocial support, and ensuring their safety, enrolment in school and access to shelter, good nutrition and health and social services on an equal basis with other children;

36. *Urges* all States and the international community to respect, promote and protect the rights of the girl child, taking into account the particular vulnerabilities of the girl child in pre-conflict, conflict and post-conflict situations and in climate-related and other hazards and natural disasters, as well as in other humanitarian emergencies, and urges States to take special measures for the protection of girls in all phases of humanitarian emergencies, from relief to recovery, and in particular to ensure that children have access to basic services, which include clean water, including safe drinking water, sanitation and hygiene, to protect them from sexually transmitted infections, including HIV infection, gender-based violence, including rape, sexual abuse and sexual exploitation, torture, abduction and trafficking, including forced labour, paying special attention to refugee, migrant and displaced girls, and to take into account their special needs in disarmament, demobilization, rehabilitation assistance and reintegration processes;

37. *Calls upon* States to ensure that the perspectives and priorities of girls, including those living in rural and remote areas, as well as in poverty are taken into account in armed conflict and post-conflict situations and in humanitarian emergencies and that they fully, equally and meaningfully participate, in accordance

with the age and maturity of the child, in the design, implementation, follow-up and evaluation of policies and programmes related to conflict prevention, peace mediation, peacebuilding and post-conflict reconstruction, recognizing the contributions of all members of society to raise awareness and advocate combating the stigmatization of children, including girls affected by armed conflict;

38. *Deplores* all acts of sexual exploitation and abuse of and trafficking in women and children, including in humanitarian crises and by humanitarian workers and peacekeepers, including military, police and civilian personnel involved in United Nations operations, takes note of the voluntary compact on preventing and addressing sexual exploitation and abuse introduced by the Secretary-General, welcomes the efforts undertaken by United Nations agencies and peacekeeping operations to implement a zero-tolerance policy in this regard, and requests the Secretary-General or the Member States from which those humanitarian workers originate and personnel-contributing countries to continue to take all appropriate action necessary to combat such abuses and exploitation by such personnel, including through the full implementation without delay of those measures adopted in the relevant General Assembly resolutions based on recommendations of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations;²⁴

39. *Calls upon* Member States to devise, enforce and strengthen effective child- and youth-sensitive measures to combat, eliminate and prosecute all forms of trafficking in women and girls, including for sexual and economic exploitation, as part of a comprehensive anti-trafficking strategy within wider efforts to eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls, including by taking effective measures against the criminalization of girls who are victims of exploitation and ensuring that girls who have been exploited receive access to the necessary psychosocial support, and in this regard urges Member States, the United Nations and other international, regional and subregional organizations, as well as civil society, including non-governmental organizations, the private sector and the media, to fully and effectively implement the relevant provisions of the United Nations Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons²⁵ and the activities outlined therein, with full respect for the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime;²⁶

40. *Reaffirms* that everyone has a right to a nationality as enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,²⁷ and in this regard calls upon States that have not yet done so to consider adopting and implementing nationality legislation consistent with their applicable obligations under international law and to facilitate the acquisition of nationality by and ensure free or low-cost birth registration for children born on their territories or their nationals abroad who would otherwise be stateless;

41. *Calls upon* Governments, civil society, including the media, and non-governmental organizations to promote human rights education and full respect for and the enjoyment of the human rights of the girl child, inter alia, through the translation, production and dissemination of age-appropriate and gender-sensitive information material on those rights to all sectors of society, in particular to children;

42. *Requests* the Secretary-General, as Chair of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination, to ensure that all organizations and bodies of the United Nations system, individually and collectively, in particular the United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural

²⁴ See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-ninth Session, Supplement No. 19 (A/59/19/Rev.1)*.

²⁵ Resolution 64/293.

²⁶ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 2237, No. 39574.

²⁷ Resolution 217 A (III).

Organization, the World Food Programme, the United Nations Population Fund, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), the World Health Organization, the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, the United Nations Development Programme, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the International Labour Organization, take into account the rights and the particular needs of the girl child in country programmes of cooperation in accordance with national priorities, including through the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework;

43. *Requests* all human rights treaty bodies and the human rights mechanisms of the Human Rights Council, including the special procedures, to adopt regularly and systematically a gender perspective in the implementation of their mandates and to include in their reports information on the qualitative analysis of violations of the human rights of women and girls, and encourages the strengthening of cooperation and coordination in that regard;

44. *Requests* States to ensure that, in all policies and programmes designed to provide comprehensive HIV and AIDS prevention, treatment, care and support, particular attention and support are given to the girl child at risk, living with or affected by HIV, including pregnant girls and young and adolescent mothers and girls with disabilities, and child heads of households, with a view to achieving Sustainable Development Goal 3, in particular the target of ending the AIDS epidemic by 2030;

45. *Invites* States to promote initiatives aimed at developing new and affordable antiretroviral drugs and HIV diagnostics, especially second-line drugs, and point-of-care diagnostics that are child-friendly, as well as investments in female-controlled methods of HIV prevention and their rapid roll-out, including through bilateral and private sector initiatives as well as initiatives on a voluntary basis taken by groups of States, including those based on innovative financing mechanisms that contribute to the mobilization of resources for social development, including those that aim to provide further access to drugs at affordable prices to developing countries on a sustainable and predictable basis, and in this regard takes note of the international drug purchase facility, Unitaid;

46. *Calls upon* all States to integrate food and nutritional support with the goal that children, especially girl children, have access at all times to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food requirements for an active and healthy life;

47. *Calls upon* States to ensure that social protection programmes, including HIV-sensitive programmes, are provided to orphans and other vulnerable children, with particular attention to addressing the needs and vulnerabilities of girl children, ensuring school attendance and protecting their rights;

48. *Urges* States and other relevant actors to scale up social protection programmes, including other social safety nets and poverty alleviation programmes that are gender-sensitive in design and implementation, to address the specific needs of girls, including of those living in rural and remote areas, and prevent deepening poverty and social exclusion and educational barriers as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic;

49. *Urges* States and the international community to increase resources at all levels, particularly in the education and health sectors, so as to enable young people, especially girls, to gain the knowledge, attitudes and life skills that they need to fulfil their social, economic and other potential and overcome their challenges, including the prevention of HIV infection and early pregnancy, and to enjoy the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health, including sexual and reproductive health;

50. *Urges* States, the international community, relevant United Nations entities, civil society and international financial institutions to continue to actively

support, through the allocation of financial resources and technical assistance, efforts to address girls' right and access to education;

51. *Calls upon* States and other relevant stakeholders to mobilize resources and increase long-term gender- and age-responsive as well as disability-inclusive investments, also through budget allocations, with the focus on achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all girls, including those living in rural and remote areas, in line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and to galvanize relevant private sector investment;

52. *Strongly calls upon* States and the international community to create an environment in which the well-being of the girl child is ensured, inter alia, by cooperating, supporting and participating in global efforts towards the full and timely realization of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development and of all other relevant internationally agreed development goals, in particular for the eradication of poverty at the global, regional and country levels, recognizing that strengthened availability and effective allocation of resources are required at all levels in this regard, and reaffirming that investment in children, particularly girls, and the realization of their rights are among the most effective ways to eradicate poverty;

53. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit a report to the General Assembly at its seventy-eighth session on the implementation of the present resolution, including a status analysis on improvements in the social, economic and political investments made by Member States, and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the girl child and the recovery from it, using information provided by Member States, the organizations and bodies of the United Nations system and non-governmental organizations, with a view to assessing the impact of the present resolution on the well-being of the girl child.

Draft resolution II 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,

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

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

² United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vols. 2171, 2173 and 2983, No. 27531.

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.

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 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

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.

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](#).

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,

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

²⁹ [A/76/305](#).

³⁰ [A/76/224](#).

³¹ [A/76/231](#).

³² [A/75/210](#).

³³ [A/76/263](#).

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

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

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

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

³⁵ Resolution 70/1.

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 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 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;

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).

(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

³⁸ [A/61/299](#).

³⁹ [A/74/136](#).

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 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.

Annex**Virtual informal meetings to hear an introductory statement and hold interactive dialogues on agenda item 70 and sub-items (a) and (b)**

1. At the 4th virtual informal meeting of the Committee on the afternoon of 7 October 2021, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict made an introductory statement and responded to questions posed and comments made by the representatives of the Russian Federation, Estonia (on behalf of the Nordic Baltic countries), Georgia, Croatia, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Pakistan, the European Union, Sri Lanka, France, India, Saudi Arabia, Malta, Azerbaijan, Senegal, Burkina Faso, Myanmar, Argentina, Qatar, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Algeria, Armenia, China, Switzerland, Portugal, Poland, Turkey, the Philippines, the United States of America, Italy, the Syrian Arab Republic, Indonesia (on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations) and Belgium.
2. At the same meeting, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence Against Children made an introductory statement and responded to questions posed and comments made by the representatives of Australia, Morocco, Portugal, Luxembourg, Colombia, the European Union, Slovenia, Mexico, Spain, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Hungary, Saudi Arabia, Malaysia, Belgium, China, Timor-Leste, Uruguay, Algeria, Japan and Tajikistan.
3. Also at the same meeting, the Special Rapporteur on the sale and sexual exploitation of children, including child prostitution, child pornography and other sexual abuse material made an introductory statement and responded to questions posed and comments made by the representatives of the Russian Federation, the European Union, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the Philippines, the United States of America, Morocco, Mexico, China and Israel.
4. Also at the 4th virtual informal meeting, the Chair of the Committee on the Rights of the Child made an introductory statement and responded to questions posed and comments made by the representatives of Switzerland, Spain, Indonesia, the European Union, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the Syrian Arab Republic, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Bahrain, the Russian Federation, El Salvador, China, Myanmar, Thailand, Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Japan, Malaysia, Maldives, India, Algeria and Qatar.
5. At the same meeting, a representative of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) made an introductory statement on behalf of the Director of the Programme Group Leadership Team at UNICEF, and the Director of the Programme Group Leadership Team at UNICEF responded to questions posed and comments made by the representatives of Lebanon, the Syrian Arab Republic, Bangladesh, Luxembourg, Uruguay, Morocco and Algeria.