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

**Belgium, Colombia, Côte d'Ivoire, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Fiji,
Germany, Honduras, Mexico and Tuvalu: draft resolution**

Protecting children from bullying

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions [69/158](#) of 18 December 2014, [71/176](#) of 19 December 2016 and [73/154](#) of 17 December 2018 on protecting children from bullying, all its previous resolutions on the rights of the child and the resolutions adopted by the Human Rights Council that are relevant to the protection of children from bullying,

Reaffirming the Convention on the Rights of the Child,¹ and emphasizing that it constitutes the standard in the promotion and protection of the rights of the child and that States parties to the Convention shall undertake all appropriate legislative, administrative and other measures for the implementation of the rights recognized therein,

Recalling the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training,² the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization Declaration of Principles on Tolerance³ and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization Convention against Discrimination in Education,⁴

Welcoming the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in its entirety,⁵ especially the Goals and targets aimed at ending abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children, and at building and upgrading education facilities that are child-, disability- and gender-sensitive and provide safe, non-violent, inclusive and effective learning environments for all children, and underscoring the importance of its implementation for ensuring the enjoyment of the rights of the child,

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

² Resolution [66/137](#), annex.

³ See [A/51/201](#), annex, appendix I.

⁴ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 429, No. 6193.

⁵ Resolution [70/1](#).



Welcoming also the thirtieth anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child,

Welcoming further the proclamation of the International Day against Violence and Bullying at School, including Cyberbullying, to be observed the first Thursday of November of every year, taking place for the first time in 2020,

Noting national efforts on the implementation of the recommendations contained in the report of the Secretary-General,⁶ and taking note of the report, as well as of the conclusions and recommendations contained therein,

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 violence against children, including all forms of bullying, and in this regard noting with appreciation the efforts of, inter alia, the Global Partnership to End Violence against Children and the WeProtect Global Alliance,

Noting the organization of expert consultations at the regional level, promoted by Member States, in order to raise awareness of the impact of bullying on the rights of the child and to share experiences and best practices, as outlined in the report of the Secretary-General,

Welcoming the development of national and subnational action plans and awareness-raising campaigns and the enactment of legislation by several Member States to prevent and respond to school violence and bullying, including cyberbullying,

Recognizing that bullying, including cyberbullying, can take both direct and indirect forms, from acts of physical, verbal, sexual and relational violence or aggression to social exclusion, including from peer to peer, which can inflict physical, psychological and social harm, and that, although rates differ from country to country, bullying, online or in person, has a negative impact on the fulfilment of the rights of the child and is among children's main concerns, affecting a high percentage of children and compromising their health, emotional well-being and academic work, and acknowledging the need to prevent and eliminate bullying among children,

Noting with great concern the threat to human health, safety and well-being caused by the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, which has spread all around the globe, as well as the unprecedented and multifaceted effects of the pandemic, including the severe disruption to societies, economies, global trade and travel and the devastating impact on the livelihoods of people, and recognizing that the poor and the most vulnerable people are the most affected and that the impact of the pandemic will have repercussions on development gains, hampering progress in the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, including target 3.8,

Recognizing that the widespread use of online platforms can mitigate the loss of education and learning opportunities caused by school closures, but that the poorest and most vulnerable children are least likely to live in a suitable home-learning environment with an adequate Internet connection, and deeply concerned that increased unsupervised online Internet use has exacerbated children's exposure to the risk of online violence, including cyberbullying, sexual exploitation and abuse, trafficking in persons, hate speech, stigmatization, xenophobia and discrimination,

Recognizing also the importance of generating appropriate statistical information and data on bullying, including cyberbullying, disaggregated by income, sex, age, race, ethnicity, migration status, disability and geographic location and other characteristics relevant in national contexts,

⁶ A/73/265.

Concerned about the occurrence of bullying 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 and academic work and for a wide range of emotional and/or physical problems, as well as potential long-term effects on the individual's ability to realize his or her own potential,

Concerned also that bullying, including cyberbullying, is associated with long-lasting consequences that continue on into adulthood,

Noting with concern that children who are marginalized or vulnerable, who face stigmatization, discrimination or exclusion, are disproportionately affected by bullying, both in person and online,

Recognizing that bullying often includes a gender dimension and is associated with gender-based violence and stereotyping that negatively affects both boys and girls,

Noting the risks associated with the use of new information and communications technologies and applications, including increased vulnerability to bullying, while stressing that they can create new ways to enhance education and, inter alia, foster learning and teaching on the rights of the child and can be useful tools to promote children's protection, including with appropriate guidance from parents and legal guardians, with the best interests of the child as a primary consideration,

Noting also the role that information and communications technologies play in reducing the risk of sexual exploitation and abuse, including by empowering children to report such abuses,

Recalling the obligations of States parties to the Convention on the Rights of the Child to ensure that parents or, as the case may be, legal guardians, have the primary responsibility for the upbringing and development of the child as well as to take all appropriate legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s) or any other person who has the care of the child, and recognizing that the child, for the full and harmonious development of his or her personality, should grow up in a family environment, in an atmosphere of happiness, love and understanding,

Acknowledging the distinct and important roles that parents, legal guardians, schools, civil society, sports associations, communities, State institutions and traditional and non-traditional media each play in securing children's protection from the risks associated with bullying, including cyberbullying, and in preventing all forms of violence, including by promoting children's online safety,

Recognizing that early childhood is a critical stage for cognitive, emotional and behavioural development and that the parent-child relationship is a significant factor in predicting bullying behaviour in adolescents, as well as the existing evidence of a link between domestic violence and bullying in educational environments,

Emphasizing that evidence-based initiatives to strengthen children's life skills and respect for human rights, tolerance, concern for others and the responsibility to foster safety, as well as whole-school and whole-community programmes that fully respect all human rights and help to prevent and address bullying, constitute best practices that should be developed, strengthened and shared through international cooperation,

Acknowledging that children are uniquely placed to inform effective solutions and responses to bullying, including cyberbullying, and underlining that children's participation and their contributions, including their views and recommendations, therefore need to be at the centre of efforts to prevent and address bullying and that

their effective and meaningful participation is critical to a clear understanding of bullying and its impacts in order to effectively address it,

1. *Takes note* of the policy brief of the Secretary-General on the impact of COVID-19 on children and the annual report of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children;⁷

2. *Calls upon* Member States:

(a) To continue to take all appropriate measures to prevent and protect children, including in school, in person and online, from any form of violence, including forms of bullying, including cyberbullying, by promptly responding to such acts, and to provide appropriate support to children affected by and involved in bullying;

(b) To continue to promote and invest in education, including as a long-term and lifelong process by which everyone learns tolerance and respect for the dignity of others and the means and methods of ensuring such respect in all societies;

(c) To address, through necessary measures, the wider economic and social inequalities that may contribute to bullying, including cyberbullying, including poverty, gender norms and stereotypes, taking into account that risk factors are mixed and vary depending on country and context;

(d) To develop and implement, as appropriate, measures and restorative practices to repair harm, restore relationships, avoid recidivism, promote the accountability of perpetrators and change aggressive behaviour;

(e) To generate and analyse statistical information and data disaggregated by sex, age and other characteristics relevant in national contexts, and to provide information on disability, with regard to the problem of bullying, including cyberbullying, as a basis on which to elaborate effective public policies;

(f) To adopt and strengthen, as appropriate, clear and comprehensive measures, including, where relevant, legislation, that seek to prevent and protect children from bullying, including cyberbullying, and provide for safe and child-sensitive counselling and reporting procedures and safeguards for the rights of affected children;

(g) To ensure that child protection, social protection and mental health services are recognized as life-saving and essential, and that they continue to be provided and be accessible to all children, including during lockdowns, quarantines and other types of restrictions;

(h) To strengthen the capacities of schools and the skills of professionals working with children in early detection and response to prevent and respond to bullying, including cyberbullying, in particular initiatives to mobilize support to prevent and address this phenomenon, and to ensure that children are informed of any existing public policies to secure their protection;

(i) To continue to raise public awareness, involving family members, legal guardians, caregivers, young people, schools, formal and non-formal and in-person and online education settings, communities, community leaders, the media, sports organizations, athletes, parents and coaches, as well as civil society organizations, with the participation of children, regarding the protection of children from bullying;

(j) To develop accessible parenting and other skills programmes for parents, legal guardians and family members, together with social protection interventions that help to tackle negative social norms that contribute to violence against children and

⁷ A/75/149.

bullying, and that help to promote a nurturing family environment and reduce children's exposure to violence at home on account of school closures, confinement, movement restrictions, disruption of the provision of already limited child protection services, or added family stress related to job loss, isolation and anxieties over health and finances;

(k) To involve and provide children with the opportunity to participate effectively in the development of initiatives to prevent and address bullying, including available support services and safe, accessible, age- and child-sensitive, confidential and independent counselling and reporting mechanisms, to guide them in promoting inclusive and responsible digital behaviour and to inform them of available mental and physical health-care services and procedures in place to support them, where they exist, and encourages Member States to make such support services available, as much as possible;

(l) To pay particular attention to children in vulnerable situations, including through efforts to promote mutual respect and tolerance for diversity in order to overcome stigmatization, xenophobia, discrimination or exclusion;

(m) To continue to share national experiences and best practices for preventing and tackling bullying, including cyberbullying;

3. *Encourages* Member States to continue to share with the Secretary-General, through existing processes and mechanisms, information about any initiatives undertaken at the national or subnational level to prevent and address bullying, including cyberbullying, to promote peaceful social interaction with a view to assessing progress, and to make use of the results achieved;

4. *Encourages* Member States that have not yet done so to adopt appropriate measures, such as plans of action on the prevention of and response to bullying, including cyberbullying, to implement them effectively and to assess progress in children's protection, drawing on the experience of Member States, the United Nations, regional organizations, academia and civil society actors;

5. *Calls upon* Member States, with assistance from relevant intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, to support victims of bullying with access to evidence-based, quality programmes, care and counselling for their physical, psychological and social recovery, as well as psychological care and trauma counselling, rehabilitation and social reintegration;

6. *Welcomes* the continued collaboration of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children with human rights bodies and mechanisms, within their respective mandates, including the special procedures mandate holders of the Human Rights Council, in order to support efforts to prevent and address violence against children, including bullying in person and online;

7. *Invites* the Secretary-General to facilitate further international efforts, in collaboration with Member States, to continue to raise awareness of the impact of bullying, including cyberbullying, on the basis of evidence, including through existing initiatives of United Nations specialized agencies, funds and programmes;

8. *Invites* the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children to include information on the progress achieved in the protection of children from bullying, including cyberbullying, in her participation in the interactive dialogues of the Third Committee of the General Assembly;

9. *Decides* to continue its consideration of the question at its seventy-seventh session under the item entitled "Promotion and protection of the rights of children".