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Country session: Lebanon

Date: 75th session – 18 and 19 May 2017

Context

The Committee appreciated the efforts of the State in hosting and supporting the high number of Syrian refugees, including children, and recognized the impact of the Syrian conflict in the country's socio-political and economic situation. Committee members also acknowledged the internal difficulties to provide services to all children in the State party, as well as the decreasing funds from the international community for Syrian refugees.

Background information

[OHCHR press release](#)

[Webcast](#)

[Audio file](#)

[Summary records](#)

Reporting

Reporting methodology

Regular reporting procedure

Simplified reporting procedure

Concluding Observations with urgent measures

State report:

Common core document	
Initial submission	6 June 1996

No. of report	Fourth and fifth periodic reports	No. of report	Not ratified	No. of report	Initial report
Due date	12 Dec 2011	Due date	-	Due date	8 December 2006
Submission	6 November 2015	Submission	-	Submission	Not submitted

Written replies to the LOIs – CRC	
Due date	23 February 2017
Submission	15 March 2017

Public reports from children's rights defenders:

Alternative reports / Additional information	
NGOs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Human Rights Watch - HRW ▪ Equality Now, the Lebanese Council to Resist Violence against Women (LECORVAW), ABAAD-Resource Center for Gender Equality, the Committee for the Follow-Up on Women's Issues (CFUWI), and the Global Campaign for Equal Nationality Rights. ▪ International Disability Alliance – IDA



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- Institute on Statelessness and Inclusion - ISI

State delegation

Large high level and multisectoral delegation led by Mr. Pierre Bou Assi, the Minister of Social Affairs. He was supported by delegates from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Emigrants, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Social Affairs, Ministry of Labor, Ministry of Education and Higher Education, Ministry of Public Health, Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Defense and the Permanent Mission in Geneva.

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

Committee's Task Force members

Name & Last Name	Country
Hatem Kotrane	Tunisia
Amal Aldoseri	Bahrein
Clarence Nelson	Samoa
Ann Skelton	South Africa

Dialogue description:

i. Character of the dialogue

The atmosphere during the session was cordial. The answers of the State to the Committee's questions were both political and technical, focused mainly on law development and programs implementation.

ii. General assessment made by the Committee

The Committee welcomed the legislative and policy progress made by the State since the last session, and acknowledged the sensitivity of some of the issues discussed during the dialogue. It nevertheless identified some pressing matters that the State should tackle urgently to fully implement the CRC.

iii. Main issues discussed

- **Syrian and Palestinian refugee children:** Throughout the whole dialogue, the Committee asked about the rights of Syrian and Palestinian refugee children, especially their right to education and health. The delegation stated that they were confronting several challenges because of the ramification of the Syrian crisis, but the government was upholding his responsibilities with the Syrian refugees. The chief of delegation called for international assistance to continue to support those children.
- **Corporal punishment:** The Committee was deeply concerned about the widespread cultural acceptance of corporal punishment and the absence of an explicit legal ban. It pointed out that corporal punishment was still considered as a mean of discipline in schools and at home. Committee members recommended its prohibition in all settings. The delegation replied that all kind of violence against children in schools was punished and that a policy protecting children from violence and discrimination in schools was being developed. Awareness-raising campaigns were also carried out for students and teachers. State delegates acknowledged that corporal punishment at home was allowed



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and that NGOs were advocating at national level to revise this provision, while the government was considering it.

- **Sexual and exploitation and abuse:** The Committee raised its deep concerns about the impunity of sexual abuse perpetrators if they marry their victims. Committee members also pointed out the high risk of sexual abuse and exploitation of refugee children as well as the lack of shelters for victims and reliable data on this offense. The delegation replied that there were eight centers providing support for abused children and social support was given to families. It stressed that between 2014 and 2015 there were eight cases of trafficked children. The delegation did not reply to the question on the exoneration of perpetrators in case of rape.
- **Recruitment of children in armed groups:** The Committee pointed out that there was evidence that armed groups were enlisting children and underlined the State's accountability for all activities carried out in its own territory. Committee members requested more information about plans to implement the national plan to protect children in armed conflict and measures to prevent child recruitment in domestic and foreign groups. The delegation stated that the government was working jointly with UNICEF to carry out protection programs in areas affected by armed conflict, and activities were also planned in Syrian and Palestinian refugee camps. Awareness-raising campaigns were also undertaken to prevent children from joining armed groups. Moreover, the delegation stressed that, in accordance with international humanitarian law, conscription of children had been banned since 2007 and the voluntary enrolment in armed forces was allowed only to people above 18 years old.
- **Child begging:** Committee members expressed their concerns about the high number of child beggars, which is linked to the sale, abduction, exploitation of children and trafficking of organs. They pointed out that the State was a country of transit, export and import of sexual exploited children coming from West Africa and South Asia and asked about plans and strategies to address this issue. The delegation acknowledged that this was an acute problem and requested support from UNICEF and the Committee.

Recommendations of the Committee

In its [Concluding Observations](#), the Committee integrated the situation of Syrian and Palestinian refugee children in most of the recommendations. In addition, the Committee drew attention to the need of **urgent measures** concerning the following 7 areas:

- **Corporal punishment:** The State should amend national legislation to explicitly prohibit corporal punishment in both private and public settings (schools, home, alternative care facilities, etc.), and should implement protection policies in schools. It should also carry out awareness-raising programs on positive, non-violent and participatory forms of discipline, and undertake parental programs and training for teachers and personnel working with/for children.
- **Sexual exploitation and abuse:** The State should revoke the article of the Penal Code, and all related provisions, that exonerate perpetrators from prosecution if they marry the victim. The State should adopt and implement a national action plan to combat abuse and exploitation of children, particularly of refugee children. It should ensure mandatory, child-friendly and accessible reporting mechanisms and thorough investigations, prosecutions and convictions for perpetrators. Personnel working for/with children must be trained on how to deal with complaints while respecting the child's privacy. Child protection agencies must be fully funded and staffed, and shelters for victims must be established to provide them with proper services. Moreover, prevention strategies should be carried out alongside with recovery and social reintegration programs for child victims.
- **Children with disabilities:** The State should adopt a human rights-based approach to disability, especially for children, who have to be fully integrated in all spheres of social life. Special focus must be placed on Palestinian and Syrian refugee children. The State must ensure accessibility and inclusive education both in private and public schools and care facilities. Children with disabilities must have access to health care, including early detection



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programmes. Social support programs to parents/caregivers must be strengthened to foster deinstitutionalization of children; periodic assessments of alternative care facilities for children with disabilities must be conducted and reporting mechanisms in case of ill-treatment be effective. Finally, the Committee recommended to conduct awareness-raising campaigns to destigmatize children with disabilities and recommended the State to ratify the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

- **Education, including vocational training and guidance:** The State should ensure the right to education to all children in Lebanon, including asylum seeking, refugee and migrant children. It should improve the quality of public education by ensuring qualified teachers and reinforced non-formal programmes. It should address the high school drop-out rates and foster vocational training. School curricula must be updated to ensure children's participation, a fully resourced and staffed early childhood policy must be adopted and cultural facilities for leisure must be guaranteed, especially for children from marginalized backgrounds.
- **Economic exploitation, including child labor:** The State should ensure that provisions related to child labor are properly enforced and should harmonize minimum ages of work (14) and compulsory education (15). It should address child labor both in formal and informal sectors, and implement the national plan to combat the worst form of child labor, while ensuring data-gathering. Moreover, the Committee recommended to strengthen labor inspections and monitoring mechanisms, as well as raising awareness on the consequences of child labor with the public, politicians, religious leaders and the business sector. Finally, the State should continue its cooperation with the International Labour Organization to move out children from the worst forms of labor and undertake social reintegration programs.
- **Sale, trafficking and abduction:** The State should develop a comprehensive anti-trafficking strategy and plan of action to effectively combat all forms of child trafficking (sexual exploitation, forced labor, street begging and illicit drug trade) in a coordinated manner across all relevant institutions. In addition, it should ensure that children trafficked are not detained or convicted for the offenses committed while being subjected to trafficking. The Committee urged the State to increment investigations, prosecutions and convictions of perpetrators, as well as to increase training of judges, law enforcement officials, diplomats and other personnel on the crime of trafficking. Finally, the State should implement standard procedures for identifying child victims, especially among vulnerable population (refugees, undocumented migrants and domestic workers), and provide them with proper services.
- **Administration of juvenile justice:** The Committee urged the State party to align its juvenile justice system to the CRC, including by raising the minimum age of criminal responsibility to an acceptable international standard and to ensure that all children below 18 are protected under the juvenile system, including the ones charged for terrorism. Moreover, the State should guarantee a qualified and independent legal aid for children in conflict with the law throughout the whole legal process, and it should foster alternative measures to detention. Detention of children should be a last resort measure, and its conditions should comply with international standards. The State should monitor the conditions of detention and access to complaints mechanisms must be guaranteed. Finally, the quality and the capacity of the specialized juvenile courts and personnel working with/for children in conflict with the law must be reinforced.



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Sustainable Development Goals

Throughout its Concluding Observations the Committee referred to the following targets:

- 16.2 to end all form of violence against children
- 3.1 to reduce the global maternal mortality
- 3.2 to end preventable deaths of newborns and children under 5 years of age
- 3.3 end the epidemics of AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria and neglected tropical diseases and combat hepatitis, water-borne diseases and other communicable diseases
- 3.5 Strengthen the prevention and treatment of substance abuse, including narcotic drug abuse and harmful use of alcohol
- 3.7 to ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health-care services
- 1.3 Implement nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures for all
- 4.1 to ensure that all girls and boys complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes
- 4.2 to ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education so that they are ready for primary education
- 4.5 to eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and children in vulnerable situations

Next State report

CRC	
No. of report	Sixth and seventh periodic reports
Due date	12 June 2023

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