IV. Main areas of concern and recommendations

A. General measures of implementation (arts. 4, 42 and 44 (6))

Cooperation with civil society

15. The Committee welcomes the State party’s cooperation with organizations providing psychological and social support to child victims of the armed conflict, as well as with those facilitating family reunification and access to identity documents. The Committee recalls its previous recommendation (CRC/C/SYR/CO/3-4, para. 29) and recommends that the State party:

(a) Systematically involve non-governmental and children’s organizations in the planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies, plans and programmes related to children’s rights;

(b) Ensure that reported instances of intimidation, harassment, physical attacks and arbitrary arrest of human rights defenders or civil society activists working on children’s rights are promptly and independently investigated, and that those responsible for such abuse are held accountable.

C. General principles (arts. 2, 3, 6 and 12)

Best interests of the child
18. With reference to its general comment No. 14 (2013) on the right of the child to have his or her best interests taken as a primary consideration, the Committee recommends that the State party ensure that this right is appropriately integrated in court procedures related to divorce and custody, in placement of children in public care, in military and security operations and in reconstruction efforts.

F. Family environment and alternative care (arts. 5, 9–11, 18 (1) and (2), 20, 21, 25 and 27 (4))

Family environment

34. The Committee regrets the extensive impact the armed conflict has had on Syrian families, and encourages the State party to strengthen its measures to support families, without discrimination, and pay particular attention to women-headed families and families living in areas previously controlled by non-State armed groups. Furthermore, the Committee recalls its previous recommendation (CRC/C/SYR/CO/3-4, para. 56) and recommends that the State party, pursuant to article 33, paragraph 3, of its Constitution, ensure that mothers and fathers share responsibility for their children on an equal basis in all matters.

Children deprived of a family environment

35. The Committee notes the measures taken to provide care services to children deprived of a family environment, including through social care institutions, and recommends that the State party strengthen its efforts to support children who have been forcibly separated from or have lost their families during the armed conflict, including children living in areas retaken by the State party. The Committee regrets the lack of information on the situation of children in alternative care and, recalling its previous recommendation (CRC/C/SYR/CO/3-4, para. 58), recommends that the State party:

(a) Support and facilitate family-based care for children wherever possible, and strengthen the system of foster care with a view to reducing the institutionalization of children;

(b) Eliminate the segregation of orphans of known parents and those of unknown parents in separate institutional care facilities, as it leads to further stigmatization of those children and reduces their life chances;
(c) Ensure periodic review of the placement of children in foster care and institutions, and monitor the quality of care therein;
(d) Take into account the Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children (General Assembly resolution 64/142 of 18 December 2009, annex).

G. Disability, basic health and welfare (arts. 6, 18 (3), 23, 24, 26, 27 (1)–(3) and 33)

Children with disabilities

36. The Committee notes the measures taken by the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour to support children with disabilities, but is concerned that the approach mostly remains one of institutionalization. It is also concerned about the impact of the armed conflict on children with disabilities, including with regard to their access to health services and education. The Committee urges the State party to adopt a human rights-based approach to disability, set up a comprehensive strategy for the inclusion of children with disabilities and:

...  
(b) Support and encourage family-based care for children with disabilities, accelerate their deinstitutionalization process, and encourage foster care for children who cannot stay with their families;

...

I. Special protection measures (arts. 22, 30, 32, 33, 35, 36, 37 (b)–(d) and 38–40)

Children in armed conflict

49. The Committee is gravely concerned about credible and corroborated information on the innumerable grave violations against children committed by all parties to the conflict, in particular:

...  
(b) The recruitment and use of children in hostilities, including children under the age of 15, some as young as 4 years old, and children of foreign origin, by armed groups and, on some occasions, by the armed forces of the State and affiliated militias;
51. The Committee urges the State party to:

... 

(b) Fully implement Law No. 11 of 2013 prohibiting the recruitment and involvement of children in hostilities, and take prompt measures to investigate, prosecute and sanction the perpetrators in cases of child recruitment;

...

Children in street situations

53. The Committee is concerned about the increased number of children in street situations and engaged in begging. Recalling its previous recommendation (CRC/C/SYR/CO/3-4, para. 79), the Committee recommends that the State party decriminalize begging, prevent the institutionalization of those children and, with their participation, develop measures for their rehabilitation and social integration.

Country Report

CRC/C/SYR/5
1 November 2017


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CEDAW  Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
CRC  Convention on the Rights of the Child/Committee on the Rights of the Child
CRPD  Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
ICCRP  International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
ICESCR  International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
OPAC to CRC  Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict
UN  United Nations
UPR  Universal Periodic Review