

CRC, CRC/C/124 (2003)

**I. RECOMMENDATION ADOPTED BY THE COMMITTEE
ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD**

Organization of work

Thirty-second session, recommendation

The Committee on the Rights of the Child,

Stressing the crucial importance of periodic reporting by States parties, in conformity with the obligations under article 44 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, (a) within two years after the entry into force of the Convention for the State party concerned and (b) thereafter every five years,

Noting that many States parties have yet to submit their second periodic report under the Convention,

Acknowledging that at the time of the dialogue with the Committee States parties have updated the information they provided in their initial report in the written replies submitted to the list of issues,

Referring to its recommendation adopted at its twenty-ninth session (CRC/C/114) concerning overdue reports and the one-time schedule proposed to States parties in order that they may catch up with the established periodicity in the following two situations:

(a) When the second periodic report is due within the year following the dialogue with the Committee;

(b) When the second periodic report is already due at the time of the dialogue and the third report is due two years or more after the dialogue with the State party,

Expressing the need to support States parties in an effort to ensure compliance with the strict time frame established by article 44, paragraph 1, of the Convention,

1. Decides to inform States parties in the related concluding observations adopted by the Committee of the deadline for the submission of their second and, where appropriate, following periodic reports;

2. Decides, therefore, to apply the following additional rule:

(a) When the second periodic report is due between one and two years following the dialogue with the Committee, the State party shall be requested to submit that report combined with the third one; however, in view of the large number of reports received by the Committee every year and the consequent lengthy time period between the date of submission of a State party report and its consideration by the Committee, the

Committee urges the State party, in order to reduce that period, to submit its consolidated second and third report 18 months before its due date. This rule also applies, mutatis mutandis, when a similar situation occurs with the third and fourth periodic reports;

3. Stresses that these rules apply only as an exceptional measure, for one time only, in an attempt to provide an opportunity for a State party to respect the strict reporting periodicity foreseen in article 44, paragraph 1, of the Convention.

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VII. WORKING METHODS

510. At its 851st meeting, held on 23 January 2003, the Committee discussed its working methods in relation to overdue States parties' reports. It decided to adopt a new recommendation aiming at providing guidance to States parties that would complement the one adopted at its twenty-ninth session (see CRC/C/114). At the same meeting, it also considered a second draft of new reporting guidelines for the submission of periodic reports under the Convention.

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IV. WORKING METHODS

664. At its 863rd meeting, held on 19 May 2003, the Committee decided to amend its provisional rules of procedures (CRC/C/4). The Committee agreed to replace the word "ten" by the word "eighteen" in the Rules, in light of the entry into force of the amendment to article 43, paragraph 3, of the Convention increasing the membership of the Committee from 10 to 18 members (resolution 50/155) (see also paragraphs 4 and 10 above).

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CRC, CRC/C/133 (2003)

I. RECOMMENDATION OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD ON ITS WORKING METHODS*

The Committee on the Rights of the Child,

Welcoming once again the rapid and unprecedented number of ratifications of and accessions to the Convention on the Rights of the Child of 1989, making it, with 192 States parties, the most widely accepted international human rights instrument,

* Adopted at its thirty-fourth session.

Recalling that in accordance with article 44 of the Convention, States parties are requested periodically to submit reports to the Committee on the Rights of the Child for the purpose of examining progress made in achieving the realization of the obligations recognized under the Convention,

Noting with great concern that the Committee on the Rights of the Child is faced with an extremely heavy workload and a significant backlog of States parties' reports awaiting review, and that reports submitted cannot be considered by the Committee until approximately two years after their submission,

Aware that 13 initial reports and 100 second periodic reports are overdue,

Aware also that since the two Optional Protocols to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography and on the involvement of children in armed conflict entered into force in 2002, States parties have begun to submit initial reports on the implementation of these protocols,

Recalling the approval by the General Assembly at its forty-ninth session of the Committee's recommendation adopted at its fifth session in January 1994 requesting the Assembly to increase the number of its annual sessions and pre-sessional working groups to enable the Committee to address its workload,

Recalling also that in January 2000, the Committee decided to consider the reports of 27, rather than 18, States parties annually, thereby increasing its workload by 50 per cent, in order to address the backlog of States parties' reports awaiting review,

Highlighting the fact that in order to rationalize its work and that of States parties, the Committee decided at its thirtieth session in 2002 to request all States parties to limit their periodic reports to 120 pages,

Welcoming the entry into force on 18 November 2002 of the amendment to article 43, paragraph 2, of the Convention increasing the membership of the Committee from 10 to 18 members,

Welcoming also the ongoing dialogue the Committee has established with States parties to the Convention on its working methods, including during its informal meeting with States parties in Geneva on 19 January 2003,

Recalling the Secretary-General's emphasis, in his report on strengthening the United Nations: an agenda for further change (A/57/387 and Corr.1), on the importance of continued efforts to modernize the human rights treaty system, and the General Assembly's call for streamlined reporting procedures contained in its resolution 57/300,

Convinced that fundamental reform of its working methods is required so that the Committee can consider States parties' reports in a timely manner,

1. *Decides* that beginning at its thirty-eighth session in January 2005, for an initial period of two years, it will consider the reports of States parties in two parallel chambers, each consisting of nine members of the Committee, taking due account of equitable geographical distribution, thereby increasing the number of States parties' reports to be examined from 27 to 48 a year;

2. *Requests* the General Assembly at its fifty-eighth session to approve the Committee's decision and to provide appropriate financial resources to enable the Committee to work in two chambers, beginning at the pre-sessional working group for its thirty-eighth session.

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VII. WORKING METHODS

625. At the session's opening meeting (890th), held on 15 September 2003, the Committee amended its provisional rules of procedure (CRC/C/4) by changing the number "10" in rule 11 to "18" in order to reflect the increase in the membership of the Committee (amendment to article 43 (2) of the Convention that entered into force on 18 November 2002). At the same meeting, the Committee also agreed that the amended provisional rules of procedure would also apply to the consideration of reports submitted under the Optional Protocols to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, and on the involvement of children in armed conflict.

626. At its 917th meeting, held on 2 October 2003, the Committee discussed its working methods in relation to the consideration of initial reports submitted under the two Optional Protocols to the Convention.

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