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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 8 September 2023, the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the General Committee, decided to include in the agenda of its seventy-eighth session the item entitled “Promotion and protection of the rights of children” and to allocate it to the Third Committee.
2. The Committee held a general discussion, considered proposals and took action on the item at its 11th to 14th and 55th meetings, on 5 and 6 October and on 16 November 2023. An account of the Committee’s consideration of the item is contained in the relevant summary records.¹
3. For its consideration of the item, the Committee had before it the following documents:
 - (a) Report of the Secretary-General on the impact of the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic on girls and the recovery from it ([A/78/284](#));
 - (b) Report of the Secretary-General on the status of the Convention on the Rights of the Child ([A/78/366](#));
 - (c) Annual report of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children ([A/78/214](#));
 - (d) Report of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict ([A/78/247](#));
 - (e) Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Special Rapporteur of the Human Rights Council on the sale, sexual exploitation and sexual abuse of children ([A/78/137](#)).

¹ [A/C.3/78/SR.11](#), [A/C.3/78/SR.12](#), [A/C.3/78/SR.13](#), [A/C.3/78/SR.14](#) and [A/C.3/78/SR.55](#).



4. At the 11th meeting, on 5 October, 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 United States of America, Malaysia, Argentina, Estonia (on behalf of the Nordic and Baltic countries), Malta, Croatia, Saudi Arabia, Romania, Japan, Belgium, France, Nigeria, Pakistan, Switzerland, Greece, Armenia, Qatar, Slovenia, Colombia, Ukraine, Liechtenstein, Georgia, Poland, Luxembourg, the Russian Federation, India, Egypt, the European Union, in its capacity as observer, Lebanon, China, Morocco, Albania, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Belarus, the Syrian Arab Republic, Mexico, Yemen and Azerbaijan, as well as by the observers for the State of Palestine and the Sovereign Order of Malta.

5. 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 the Dominican Republic, Malta, the Philippines, Belgium, Portugal, Mexico, Colombia, Brazil, Malaysia, Greece, Ukraine, China, Côte d'Ivoire, the European Union, Poland, Italy, Pakistan, Luxembourg, Saudi Arabia, Japan, Israel, the Russian Federation, Morocco and the Syrian Arab Republic.

6. Also at the same meeting, the Special Adviser on Child Rights in the Office of the Executive Director of the United Nations Children's Fund made an introductory statement and responded to questions posed and comments made by the representatives of Bangladesh, Ukraine, Poland, China, Greece, the European Union, Malaysia, Morocco, Algeria and the Islamic Republic of Iran.

7. At the 12th meeting, on 5 October, 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 Ukraine, the European Union, Mexico, Switzerland, Bangladesh, China, El Salvador, Egypt, Nepal, the Russian Federation, Morocco and South Africa.

8. At the same meeting, the Special Rapporteur on the sale, sexual exploitation and sexual abuse of children made an introductory statement and responded to questions posed and comments made by the representatives of the United States of America, the Philippines, Israel, Bangladesh, Cameroon, the European Union, Egypt, Ukraine, the Russian Federation, Algeria, China, Morocco and the Syrian Arab Republic.

9. At the 47th meeting, on 3 November, the representative of the United States of America made a statement with regard to the draft resolutions before the Committee.²

II. Consideration of proposals

A. Draft resolution [A/C.3/78/L.19/Rev.1](#)

10. At its 55th meeting, on 16 November, the Committee had before it a revised draft resolution entitled "Rights of the child" ([A/C.3/78/L.19/Rev.1](#)), submitted by Albania, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Austria, the Bahamas, Barbados, Belgium, Belize, Bhutan, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Bulgaria, the Central African Republic, Chile, Colombia, the Congo, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Dominica, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Estonia, Fiji, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Mexico, Monaco, Montenegro,

² See [A/C.3/78/SR.47](#).

Netherlands (Kingdom of the), Nicaragua, North Macedonia, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Poland, Portugal, the Republic of Moldova, Romania, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Suriname, Sweden, Trinidad and Tobago, Ukraine, Uruguay and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of). Subsequently, Andorra, Australia, Bangladesh, Canada, Côte d'Ivoire, Georgia, Iceland, Japan, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Liechtenstein, Mongolia, Nepal, New Zealand, Norway, the Philippines, the Republic of Korea, San Marino, Serbia, Switzerland, Thailand, Tunisia, Türkiye and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland joined in sponsoring the draft resolution.

11. At the same meeting, Guinea, Kazakhstan, Malawi, Morocco and Sierra Leone joined in sponsoring the draft resolution.

12. Also at the same meeting, the representative of Spain (on behalf of the European Union and the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States) made a statement.

13. Also at its 55th meeting, the Committee adopted draft resolution [A/C.3/78/L.19/Rev.1](#) (see para. 19, draft resolution I).

14. Before the adoption of the draft resolution, the representative of Uruguay (on behalf of the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States) made a statement. After the adoption of the draft resolution, statements were made by the representatives of Saudi Arabia, Malaysia, the Russian Federation, the United States of America, Iraq, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Yemen, Canada, the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Niger, Nigeria, Singapore, Senegal, Indonesia, Cameroon (on behalf of the Group of African States), Egypt, Mali, the Syrian Arab Republic, Israel, Cuba, and Libya, as well as by the observer for the Holy See.

B. Draft resolution [A/C.3/78/L.23/Rev.1](#)

15. At its 55th meeting, on 16 November, the Committee had before it a revised draft resolution entitled "The girl child" ([A/C.3/78/L.23/Rev.1](#)), submitted by Angola, Armenia, Bhutan, Botswana, Brazil, the Central African Republic, China, Comoros, the Congo, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Eswatini, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Seychelles, South Africa, Tunisia, the United Republic of Tanzania, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Zambia and Zimbabwe. Subsequently, Algeria, Bangladesh, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Côte d'Ivoire, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Mongolia, Morocco, Nepal, Panama, Paraguay, the Philippines, Thailand and Türkiye joined in sponsoring the draft resolution.

16. At the same meeting, the representative of Angola made a statement on behalf of the Southern African Development Community and orally revised the eleventh preambular paragraph.

17. Also at the same meeting, the Committee adopted draft resolution [A/C.3/78/L.23/Rev.1](#), as orally revised (see para. 19, draft resolution II).

18. After the adoption of the draft resolution, statements were made by the representatives of Iraq, Spain (on behalf of the European Union), Australia, El Salvador, Canada (also on behalf of Iceland, Liechtenstein, New Zealand, Norway and Switzerland), the Niger, Chile, Oman (also on behalf of Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar and Saudi Arabia), the United States of America, Yemen, Mali and Senegal, as well as by the observer for the Holy See.

III. Recommendations of the Third Committee

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

Draft resolution I **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 the rights of the child are human rights, and that these rights need to be protected and upheld both offline and online,

Reaffirming further 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 that the general principles of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, including the best interests of the child, and non-discrimination, participation and survival and development of the child, provide the framework for actions concerning children, including in the digital environment,

Reaffirming also 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, and recalling that 2023 marks the seventy-fifth anniversary of its adoption,

Reaffirming further 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, and in this regard emphasizing the impact of the digital environment on the rights of the child,

Underscoring the importance of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda in ensuring the enjoyment of the rights of the child and their well-being,

Noting that States parties should implement the Convention on the Rights of the Child in relation to the digital environment, including the importance of privacy to children’s agency, dignity and safety, and for the exercise of their rights,

Recognizing the importance of the digital environment in children’s lives for the realization of the rights enshrined in, inter alia, the Convention of the rights of the Child,

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

² *Ibid.*, vols. 2171, 2173 and 2983, No. 27531.

³ Resolution [217 A \(III\)](#).

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 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

Recognizing that safe, equitable and effective access to digital technologies can enable children to enjoy their rights enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Convention on the Rights of the Child and other relevant international human rights instruments,

Reaffirming all of its previous resolutions on the rights of the child, the most recent of which was resolution [76/147](#) of 16 December 2021, and recalling also all other relevant resolutions on this matter, including its resolutions [77/201](#) of 15 December 2022 on protecting children from bullying, [73/327](#) of 25 July 2019 on the International Year for the Elimination of Child Labour, 2021, [77/202](#) of 15 December 2022 on child, early and forced marriage, [76/146](#) on 16 December 2021 on the girl child and [77/211](#) of 15 December 2022 on the right to privacy in the digital age,

Noting Human Rights Council resolutions [45/30](#) of 13 October 2020, entitled “Rights of the child: realizing the rights of the child through a healthy environment”,¹⁷ [51/10](#) of 6 October 2022 on countering cyberbullying¹⁸ and [54/5](#) of 10 October 2023 on ensuring quality education for peace and tolerance for every child,¹⁹ as well as the agreed conclusions of the sixty-seventh session of the Commission on the Status of Women in 2023,²⁰

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.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, vol. 1465, No. 24841.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, vol. 1015, No. 14862.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, vol. 2133, No. 37245.

¹⁷ See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Seventy-fifth Session, Supplement No. 53A (A/75/53/Add.1)*, chap. III.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, *Seventy-seventh Session, Supplement No. 53A (A/77/53/Add.1)*, chap. III, sect. A.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, *Seventy-eighth Session, Supplement No. 53A (A/78/53/Add.1)*, chap. III, sect. A.

²⁰ *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2023, Supplement No. 7 (E/2023/27)*, chap. I, sect. A.

Reaffirming the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action,²¹ the United Nations Millennium Declaration²² and the outcome document of the twenty-seventh special session of the General Assembly on children, entitled “A world fit for children”,²³ recalling the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action,²⁴ the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development²⁵ 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,²⁶ the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples²⁷ and the outcome document of the high-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly known as the World Conference on Indigenous Peoples,²⁸ the Declaration on the Right to Development,²⁹ 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 2007,³⁰ 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,³¹

Taking note of general comment No. 25 (2021) of the Committee on the Rights of the Child regarding the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child in relation to the digital environment,³² and taking note also of general comment No. 26 (2023) on children’s rights and the environment, with a special focus on climate change,³³

Taking note also 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,

Expressing concern that many developing countries still face serious challenges in building their national science, technology and innovation base, lack affordable access to information and communications technologies, and that, for the poor, the promise of science, technology and innovation remains unfulfilled,

Reaffirming that the creation, development and diffusion of new innovations and technologies and associated know-how, including the transfer of technology, on mutually agreed terms, are powerful drivers of economic growth and sustainable development and have a direct impact on addressing the prevailing challenges to expanding access to digital technologies, particularly in developing countries,

²¹ [A/CONF.157/24 \(Part I\)](#), chap. III.

²² Resolution [55/2](#).

²³ Resolution [S-27/2](#), annex.

²⁴ *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.

²⁵ *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.

²⁶ *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.

²⁷ Resolution [61/295](#), annex.

²⁸ Resolution [69/2](#).

²⁹ Resolution [41/128](#), annex.

³⁰ Resolution [62/88](#).

³¹ Resolution [74/2](#).

³² [CRC/C/GC/25](#).

³³ [CRC/C/GC/26](#).

Noting with grave concern that globally, around 2.2 billion, or two thirds of, children and young people worldwide, especially girls and adolescent girls, who are disproportionately impacted, do not have Internet access at home, while recognizing that although digital technologies can offer increasing opportunities and benefits, with the increased reliance on virtual learning in many schools, the challenges faced by children, especially those in developing countries, in accessing the Internet and digital devices, including lack of equipment, digital literacy skills and adequate technology to provide online teaching, lead to limited access or lack of access to quality education for many children, including girls and those in rural or remote areas,

Taking note 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 Assembly³⁴ and on the status of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the issues addressed in resolution 76/147,³⁵ as well as the most recent reports of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children,³⁶ the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict,³⁷ the Special Rapporteur on the sale, sexual exploitation and sexual abuse of children³⁸ and the Special Rapporteur on trafficking in persons, especially women and children,³⁹ 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, including in the digital environment,

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, responsibilities 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,

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 recruitment or use by armed forces or armed groups and by supporting long-term and sustainable reintegration and rehabilitation for these children,

³⁴ [A/77/309-E/2023/5](#).

³⁵ [A/78/366](#).

³⁶ [A/78/214](#).

³⁷ [A/78/247](#).

³⁸ [A/78/137](#).

³⁹ [A/78/172](#).

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,

Recognizing 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,

Recognizing also that the responsibility to respect the rights of the child extends to private actors and businesses, which should pay particular attention to accessible design and operation of the digital environment and the safeguarding of the safety, privacy and protection of the child, including but not limited to products and services specifically designed for children or directed toward them, as well as those that are not targeted at children but which may still be used by them,

Expressing concern that children often do not and/or cannot provide their free, explicit and informed consent to the collection, processing and storage of their data or to the reuse, sale or multiple resale of their personal information, as the collection, processing, use, storage and sharing of personal information, including sensitive data, have increased significantly in the digital age,

Reaffirming that the realization of the rights of the child may be supported through the development of digital literacy and skills among children, as well as their parents or legal guardians, teachers and educators, and recognizing the importance of strengthening their evolving capacities, digital skills and competencies, and empowering children to report and seek help in responding to online threats and bullying, including cyberbullying, in adequate ways and raising their awareness of online safety, disinformation and misinformation,

Recognizing the critical role of parents and legal guardians, teachers and educators in ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education, including digital learning, by providing support, including through the necessary training, access to devices, materials and technological infrastructure,

Deeply concerned that increased unsupervised use of digital technologies has exacerbated children's, including adolescents', exposure to risks, harms and all forms of violence, such as harassment and abuse, sexual and gender-based violence, including that which occurs through or is amplified by the use of technology, sexual harassment, peer-to-peer sexual harassment and cyberbullying, child sexual exploitation and abuse, child grooming, gambling, economic exploitation, including child labour, the promotion of and incitement to self-harm and life-threatening activities, trafficking in persons and abduction, and the recruitment of children to participate in criminal or terrorist activities, exposure to violent and sexual content and hate speech, as well as all forms of discrimination, including but not limited to stigmatization, racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, and discrimination based on religion or belief,

Acknowledging that ensuring a respectful, supportive child-rearing environment free from violence supports the realization of children's individual personalities and fosters the development of social, responsible and actively contributing citizens in the local community and larger society, and recognizing that the protection of the child

from violence is a key strategy for reducing and preventing all forms of violence in societies and for promoting freedom, justice and peace in the world,

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,

Recognizing the importance of taking effective measures to prevent violations and abuses of the rights of the child, responding appropriately to all forms of violence against children, online and offline, and providing for safe and child-sensitive counselling, complaint and reporting mechanisms and safeguards for the rights of all affected children, and recognizing the need to foster a policy of zero tolerance for all forms of violence against children,

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 girls are often at greater risk of being exposed to and encountering various forms of discrimination and violence, particularly in digital contexts, 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 their 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, reaffirming the need to achieve gender equality to ensure a just and equitable world for all girls, including by partnering with men and boys, as an important strategy for advancing full enjoyment of human rights,

Expressing concern about the unequal pace of digital transformation and access to digital technology and structural and systemic barriers, inter alia, gender stereotypes and negative social norms, which undermine the ability of women and girls to securely access digital technologies and the Internet and of being equipped with the knowledge, awareness and skills for their empowerment, and connected at a level that allows for a safe online experience at affordable cost, especially in developing countries, including the least developed countries, landlocked developing countries, small island developing States and African countries,

Acknowledging the impact that the digital environment has on the physical and mental health of children, reaffirming the obligations of States, in accordance with international human rights law, to take all necessary measures to ensure that the right of the child to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health is respected, protected and fulfilled, and underscoring the responsibility of private sector actors to ensure that their actions do not negatively affect the enjoyment of this right and detrimental consequences on children's health and development are avoided and that all forms of violence are prevented and addressed, in view of their negative impact on the physical and mental health of the child, without discrimination of any kind,

Acknowledging also the importance of preventing, avoiding and minimizing the possible risks to the enjoyment of the rights of the child that may emerge as the result of the conception, design, use, deployment and further development of new and emerging technologies, such as those that involve artificial intelligence,

Expressing concern about the spread of disinformation and misinformation, including among children, particularly on social media platforms, which can be designed and implemented so as to mislead, to spread racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, misogyny, stereotyping and stigmatization, to violate and abuse human rights, including the right to be free from arbitrary or unlawful interference with their right to privacy, to impede freedom of expression, including the freedom to seek, receive and impart information, and to incite all forms of violence, hatred, intolerance, discrimination and hostility, and emphasizing the important contribution of journalists and media workers, civil society and academia in countering this trend,

Recognizing that the empowerment of and investment in children, and in particular girls, which is critical for economic growth, and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, including the eradication of poverty and extreme poverty, are key in breaking the cycle of all forms of discrimination and violence, including multiple and intersecting forms, and in promoting, respecting and protecting the full and effective enjoyment of their human rights, and recognizing further that empowering children requires their active and meaningful 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, while acknowledging that all parents have common responsibilities for the upbringing and development of the child, with the best interests of the child as their basic concern,

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,

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,

Recognizing further that, although digital technologies can offer increasing opportunities and benefits, the increased reliance on virtual learning and the challenges faced by children in accessing the Internet and digital devices, including barriers caused by digital divides, including the gender digital divide, a lack of equipment and digital literacy skills, can limit access to equitable and quality education and increase inequalities between and within countries, with internally displaced children, refugees, migrants, those living in humanitarian situations, as well as those with disabilities and those living in rural and remote areas, children in alternative, especially institutional, care, and from the poorest households being the most affected,

Recognizing that the digital environment enables children, including children in vulnerable situations, to communicate with each other, advocate for their rights and form associations, recognizing also their positive, important and legitimate role in

promoting the respect, protection and fulfilment of human rights, including in the digital environment, and recognizing further the need to protect them from threats, acts of intimidation, reprisals and violence and harassment, both online and offline,

Recognizing also the role of the Internet, including for the right to enjoyment of rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to the age of the child, while ensuring that children are safe and protected when they engage in the digital environment, in full accordance with the provisions of the Convention on the Rights of the Child,

Reaffirming that, with regard to economic, social and cultural rights, States should take steps to ensure the allocation of available resources to the maximum extent possible and, where needed, within the framework of international cooperation, to provide guidance and support to parents and caregivers on how to create safe and inclusive environments that facilitate children's play and recreational activities, including on their responsible use of digital technology,

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 the importance of prevention in ensuring safe online and information and communications technology environments for children, while protecting them against arbitrary or unlawful interference with their rights to privacy, to seek, receive or impart information, to education, to participation and to the freedoms of expression and of association, and recognizing also that prevention measures and approaches should involve key actors, including Governments, parents, civil society, organizations of persons with disabilities, industry, especially technology enterprises and those related to social media, schools, children, academia, competent authorities and relevant actors, community-based organizations and the general public,

Recognizing also 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,

Noting with appreciation the work that aims to strengthen the respect, protection and fulfilment of the rights of the child carried out by all relevant organs, bodies, entities and organizations of the United Nations system, including by relevant mandate holders and special procedures, within their respective mandates, and by relevant regional organizations, and intergovernmental organizations, and recognizing the valuable role of national human rights institutions and civil society, including non-governmental organizations, and noting the annual full-day meeting on the rights of the child, on the theme "Rights of the child and the digital environment", held during the fifty-second session of the Human Rights Council,

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 divide, while protecting children from harm in the digital environment,

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. *Recalls* that, in line with the Convention on the Rights of the Child, States parties should undertake all appropriate measures for the effective implementation of the rights recognized therein, and underlines that this includes the rights of the child in relation to the digital environment;

3. *Calls upon* States parties to increase their efforts for the full implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child;

4. *Urges* States to review, adopt and update national legislation in line with their international human rights obligations and commitments to ensure that the digital environment is compatible with the rights set out in the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Optional Protocols thereto and other relevant human rights instruments;

5. *Also urges* States to ensure that the best interests of the child is a primary consideration in decision-making related to the rights of the child in the digital environment, by considering the critical importance of child rights impact assessments of relevant laws, standards and policies to evaluate their actual impact on the rights of the child, and encourages the implementation of the child rights impact assessment and safeguarding principles by businesses in the digital environment;

6. *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;

7. *Urges* States parties to withdraw reservations that are incompatible with the object and purpose of the Convention on the Rights of the Child 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;

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. *Highlights* the importance of promoting and protecting the right of the child to enjoy the benefits of scientific progress and its applications, and to this end notes the importance of bridging digital divides, promoting digital literacy as well as public awareness and understanding of new and emerging digital technologies, promoting risk awareness and self-protection training and guidance, and supporting capacity-building initiatives to enhance understanding, knowledge and skills relating to the human rights implications of new and emerging digital technologies;

10. *Calls upon* States to address prevailing challenges to bridge the digital divide within and among countries, the gender, disability and age digital divides and the divide between rural and urban areas, including between developing and developed countries, and to urgently address the major impediments that developing countries face in accessing new technologies and to harness digital technologies for development, recalls the need to emphasize quality and equity of access to developing countries, to bridge digital and knowledge divides, using a multidimensional approach that includes speed, stability, affordability, language, training, capacity-building, local content and accessibility for persons with disabilities, and to promote the full enjoyment of human rights, including the right to be free from arbitrary or

unlawful interference with their right to privacy, for every child, without discrimination of any kind, and urges the full respect, protection and fulfilment of human rights in providing and expanding access and bridging the digital divide;

11. *Underlines* the need for digital, media and information literacy as well as the need to address prevailing challenges to bridge digital divides, within and among countries and regions, including through international cooperation, to ensure that children, especially children in vulnerable situations, are able to connect to and access the Internet in a safe and secure way;

12. *Encourages* States to promote the rights of the child in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,⁴⁰ in accordance with their obligations under international law and in the best interests of the child;

13. *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, including for menstrual hygiene health and management, with limited or no access to basic physical and mental health-care services, adequate 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 their full potential and to participate as full members of society, and exposed to conditions that lead to increased violence;

14. *Also urges* States to ensure that no restrictions are placed on the exercise by children of their human rights, including to freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly, in the digital environment other than those that are lawful, necessary and proportionate;

15. *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;

16. *Calls upon* States to promote the use of digital identification systems that enable every child to be registered immediately after birth and to have a name and to have the right to be recognized by national authorities to facilitate access to essential services, especially for children in rural and remote areas, refugee and migrant children and those in the most vulnerable situations;

17. *Also 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

⁴⁰ Resolution 70/1.

providers, in order to, inter alia, enable them protect themselves from HIV infection and other risks;

18. *Further calls upon* States to create opportunities for children's inclusive and meaningful participation in decision-making processes in line with their evolving capacities, including girls and adolescent girls, children with disabilities, children belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities, Indigenous children, and children in vulnerable situations and those who are hardest to reach, in all matters affecting them, including in relation to the digital environment, and for children to become agents of change within their communities, taking into account the importance of involving children's organizations and child-led initiatives, by creating inclusive consultative mechanisms and ensuring that policy measures are developed on the basis of participatory, evidence-based decision-making processes that take into account the views of children and the best interests of the child;

19. *Urges* all States to 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 provided the opportunity to be heard in any proceeding affecting them, and to ensure that they have access to quality inclusive education and information in child-friendly and accessible formats, that their views are given due weight and that they are included in decision-making processes, in accordance with their age and maturity, in all matters affecting them, including those relating to the digital environment;

20. *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;

21. *Acknowledges with concern* the lack of readiness and vision for digital and remote learning across the globe, evidenced through the absence or shortage of appropriate infrastructure, connectivity, policies and programmes, digital learning solutions, educational content and resources and guidance and support mechanisms for schools, teachers and families, as well as the lack of digital literacy and skills among students, teachers and caregivers, and in this regard commits to address these challenges and spread the benefits of digitalization including by expanding the participation of all countries in the digitalization, in particular developing countries, among others through enhancing their digital infrastructure connectivity as well as building their capacities and access to technological innovations through stronger partnerships and improving digital literacy;

22. *Urges* 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;

23. *Recognizes* that children with disabilities, particularly girls, may face stigmatization, discrimination and exclusion and are disproportionately subjected to mental and physical violence and sexual abuse and therefore may be particularly

exposed to online risks, including cyberbullying, and that there is a need to take steps to ensure that the digital environment, including safety information, protective strategies, services and forums relating to it, is accessible and safe, bearing in mind the importance of countering prejudice that might lead to overprotection or exclusion;

24. *Urges* States to take comprehensive, multisectoral, coordinated, effective and gender-responsive measures to prevent and eliminate all forms of violence against all children and to address structural and underlying causes and risk factors, including through enhanced prevention measures, research and strengthened coordination and monitoring and evaluation, implementing, in partnership with all relevant stakeholders, effective violence prevention and response activities in schools and communities, educating children from a young age regarding the importance of treating all people with dignity and respect, and designing educational programmes and teaching materials that support consent, non-violent behaviour, respect for boundaries and what constitutes unacceptable behaviour and how to report it, that eliminate gender stereotypes and negative social norms, build self-esteem and informed decision-making and communication skills and promote the development of respectful relationships based on gender equality, inclusion and respect for human rights;

25. *Calls upon* States to promote the provision of accessible, gender-responsive and age-appropriate information to children, including children with disabilities, on their rights, including through human rights education programmes as well as equal access to technologies that provide them with information and material from a diversity of national and international sources, especially those aimed at the promotion of their social, spiritual and moral well-being, and physical and mental health, and the protection of their rights;

26. *Also calls upon* States to accelerate efforts to eliminate all 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;

27. *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;

28. *Calls upon* States to scale 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;

29. *Also calls upon* States to ensure that child protection, including social protection and gender-sensitive mental health services, is recognized as essential and that it continues to be provided and be accessible, affordable and available to all children at all times, including through the use of digital technologies;

30. *Encourages* States to adopt and implement sustained and inclusive child-empowering, age-appropriate, disability-inclusive and gender-responsive non-formal

and formal education programmes, providing children, parents, legal guardians, caregivers, teachers and other professionals working with and for children with skills relating to digital and data literacy, to promote awareness among children of the possible adverse consequences of exposure to risks relating to content, contact, conduct and contract, including cyberaggression, trafficking, sexual exploitation and abuse and other forms of violence that occur through or are amplified by the use of technology, recognizing a child who is a victim of online harm and responding appropriately, as well as coping strategies to reduce harm and strategies to protect their personal data and those of others and to build children's social and emotional skills and resilience in order to ensure all children's safety and their human rights in the digital context;

31. *Calls upon* States to invest equitably in technological infrastructure in schools and other learning settings, ensuring the availability and affordability of a sufficient number of devices, high-quality and high-speed broadband and a stable source of electricity, accessibility and the timely maintenance of school technologies;

32. *Also calls upon* States to support and invest in education, including human rights education, as a long-term and lifelong process, through which everyone learns equality, non-discrimination, non-violence, tolerance, inclusion and respect for the dignity of others and the means and methods of ensuring such respect in all societies, including in digital contexts, and to engage, educate, encourage and support the promotion of positive behaviour that addresses all forms of discrimination and violence that occur through or are amplified by the use of technology;

33. *Recognizes* that information and communications technologies present new opportunities and challenges and that there is a pressing need to address the major impediments that developing countries face in engaging with and accessing new technologies, such as an appropriate enabling environment, sufficient resources, infrastructure, education, capacity, investment and connectivity, as well as issues related to technology ownership, setting standards and technology flows, and in this regard urges all stakeholders to consider ensuring appropriate financing of digital development and adequate means of implementation, including strengthened capacity-building of developing countries, particularly the least developed countries, towards a digitally empowered society and knowledge economy;

34. *Urges* States to stress the role and responsibility of online service providers in protecting children from online harm, especially child sexual exploitation and abuse;

35. *Encourages* States to urge businesses that have an impact on the enjoyment of children's rights in relation to the digital environment to ensure that human rights are respected in the conception, design, development, deployment, evaluation and regulation of digital technologies, including artificial intelligence, and to ensure that they are subject to adequate safeguards and oversight that seek to prevent or mitigate adverse human rights impacts that are directly linked to businesses' operations, products or services in order to promote an open, secure, stable, accessible and affordable digital technology environment for all children, and calls upon States to consider adopting legislation, regulations or policies to ensure that businesses address their responsibilities to respect children's rights, safety and well-being;

36. *Also encourages* States to urge businesses that have an impact on the enjoyment of children's rights in relation to the digital environment to prevent or mitigate adverse impacts on children's rights that are directly linked to their design and operations, products or services and to establish and implement regulatory frameworks and promote industry codes and terms of services that adhere to the highest standards of ethics, privacy and safety in relation to the design, engineering,

development, operation, distribution and marketing of their technological products and services and that respect, protect and fulfil the rights of the child;

37. *Reiterates its call upon* States to ensure a clear and predictable environment, including through legal and regulatory measures, which requires digital technology and other relevant industries to respect the rights of the child and which strengthens regulatory agencies' responsibility for the development of standards for the protection of the rights of the child, with powers and resources to monitor data privacy practices, investigate violations and abuses and receive communications from individuals and organizations, and to provide appropriate remedies;

38. *Urges* States to provide children whose rights have been violated or abused with access to effective and appropriate remedial victim support, as well as reparation and guarantees of non-repetition; and calls upon States and businesses to ensure the availability and accessibility of free-of-charge, safe, confidential, responsive and child-friendly reporting mechanisms;

39. *Calls upon* States to encourage business enterprises operating in the digital environment to undertake child rights due diligence and child rights impact assessments to guide mitigating measures, including for the protection of children's physical and mental health and the impacts of the digital environment on children, and in this regard to effectively consider issues of gender and vulnerability and to identify, prevent and mitigate any risks posed by their products and services to children, and in this regard takes note of the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights: Implementing the United Nations "Protect, Respect and Remedy" Framework;⁴¹

40. *Encourages* increased transparency by States and businesses to understand the impact of the use of digital technologies, including artificial intelligence, on children's well-being and development, and to encourage support to independent monitoring of the fulfilment of the rights of the child in the digital environment;

41. *Encourages* States to build and strengthen multi-stakeholder platforms with the participation of Governments, civil society and representatives of industry, in particular the digital technology sector, in consultation with children themselves and, where appropriate, their parents or legal guardians, with a view to promoting multi-stakeholder cooperation in the elaboration and implementation of policies to protect, empower and inform children and prevent violence that occurs through or is amplified by the use of technology;

42. *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 with disabilities, children of African descent and Indigenous children;

43. *Urges* States to prohibit the unlawful digital surveillance of children, with due regard to commercial settings and educational and care settings, to work towards enabling secure communications and the protection of individual users against arbitrary or unlawful interference with their privacy, including by developing technical solutions with any restrictions thereon complying with the obligations of States under relevant international human rights instruments;

44. *Calls upon* States to ensure that national legislation on data protection and privacy is in accordance with their international human rights obligations and allows law enforcement, social welfare and judicial authorities to conduct effective and appropriate investigations and prosecutions to combat violations and abuses of the

⁴¹ A/HRC/17/31, annex.

rights of the child, and to raise awareness of the importance of activities and compliance with the law by private actors, notably those in the digital industry, to strengthen those efforts;

45. *Urges* States to take appropriate measures regarding the collection, processing and sharing of children's personal data, addressing exploitative marketing practices aimed at children and adopting standards that identify, define and prohibit practices that manipulate or interfere with children's rights in the digital environment, including by requiring data protection, privacy-by-design, safety-by-design and other regulatory measures to ensure that businesses do not target children using techniques designed to prioritize commercial interests over those of the child, putting in place adequate safeguards that seek to prevent or mitigate adverse human rights impacts that are directly linked to their operations, products or services, and taking measures to ensure that access to and use of essential digital services and infrastructure by children is based on the least privacy-intrusive means available for their intended purpose;

46. *Calls upon* States and private entities to ensure that children are protected against economic exploitation, including by reducing children's exposure to marketing and commercial communication, and to ensure that the uses of automated processes of information filtering, profiling, marketing and decision-making do not supplant, manipulate or interfere with children's ability to form and express their opinions in the digital environment;

47. *Urges* States to take measures to ensure that children are informed, in a child-friendly, easily accessible and age-appropriate way, about the collection and use of their data online, and encourages private actors in the technology sector to adhere to the highest international standards and best practices for safety, privacy and security by design, taking into account the particular needs of children;

48. *Encourages* States to make efforts towards mainstreaming children's needs in all digital policies, 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;

49. *Strongly condemns* all forms of violence, harassment and abuse against children in all settings, online and offline, including physical, psychological and sexual violence, torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment, child abuse and exploitation, including sexual exploitation of children in the context of travel and tourism, child sexual abuse material, sexual exploitation of children such as child prostitution, cybergrooming, bullying, including cyberbullying, hostage-taking, domestic violence, trafficking in or sale of children and their organs, gang and armed violence, 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, age-appropriate and disability-inclusive 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;

50. *Calls upon* all States to protect the rights of the child and to ensure, for children belonging to national or ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities and migrant children, children affected by armed conflict, Indigenous children, children of African

descent, internally displaced children and children with disabilities, the enjoyment of all their rights as well as access to health-care services, 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;

51. *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;

52. *Encourages* States to adopt and strengthen clear and comprehensive measures, including legislative and policy measures, taking into account the best interests of the child, to prevent and protect children from bullying, including cyberbullying and the dissemination of personal sexually explicit content, and provide for safe and child-sensitive counselling and reporting procedures and safeguards for the rights of affected children;

53. *Calls upon* States to ensure the legal protection of children from violence, both online and offline, in a manner consistent with their obligations under international law, including international human rights law, and to criminalize relevant conduct related to violence against children online and offline, including but not limited to forms of sexual exploitation and abuse of children, such as child grooming, sexual extortion, the streaming of child abuse, the possession or distribution of, access to, or exchange or production of or payment for child sexual abuse material and the viewing, conducting or facilitation of children's participation in live sexual abuses or exploitation transmitted through digital technologies, in addition to the use of digital technology in the recruitment or use of children by armed groups and in the context of child trafficking;

54. *Also calls upon* States to develop coherent and coordinated protection systems and to provide universal access to quality comprehensive social, physical and mental health, including sexual and reproductive health, and legal and counselling services for all victims and survivors, to ensure their full recovery and reintegration into society, and to strengthen social welfare systems and effective service delivery for children affected by violence, in particular in the justice, education and health sectors;

55. *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 in digital environments, 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 and cyberbullying;

56. *Calls upon* States to ensure that all those responsible for or who attempt to commit crimes against children that occur through or are amplified by the use of technology are held accountable and brought to justice in order to fight impunity, taking into account that such crimes are often multi-jurisdictional and transnational in nature;

57. *Urges* States to promote and protect the rights of the child against sexual exploitation and sexual and gender-based violence, including in digital contexts, through the adoption of relevant legislation to prevent these acts as well as combat them through the detection of child sexual abuse material and its immediate removal from the Internet;

58. *Appreciates* the role of civil society, including child- and youth-led movements, including those aimed at promoting the respect, protection and fulfilment of human rights, in supporting victims and survivors of violence that occurs through or is amplified by the use of technology, including by amplifying their voices, and in receiving reports of online harms against children;

59. *Emphasizes* that child sexual exploitation and sexual abuse is a global phenomenon that requires a coordinated and multi-stakeholder global-level response, and in this regard notes the efforts of, inter alia, the WeProtect Global Alliance;

60. *Takes note* of ongoing efforts to mainstream the rights of the child into the work of the United Nations system, and 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;

61. *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 the mandate in promoting the prevention and elimination of all forms of violence against children, both online and offline, in all regions and in advancing the implementation of the recommendations of the United Nations study on violence against children,⁴² including through partnerships with regional organizations, as well as advocacy through thematic consultations, field missions and thematic reports addressing emerging concerns, including on the need to protect children from exposure to violence online and ensure a safe digital environment for them;

62. *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;

⁴² [A/61/299](#).

63. *Expresses support* for the work of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, recalls the adoption of resolution [51/77](#) of 12 December 1996, by which the mandate of the Special Representative was created, and the increased level of work and the progress achieved since the establishment of the mandate, welcomes the efforts by the Special Representative to increase public awareness and collect, assess and disseminate best practices and lessons learned, including the study on the evolution of the children and armed conflict mandate from 1996 to 2021, published in January 2022, the study on the gender dimensions of the six grave violations against children in armed conflict, identified by the Special Representative, published in May 2022, the guidance note on the monitoring and reporting of abduction of conflict-affected children, published in July 2022, and the follow-up study on the impact of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic on violations against children in situations of armed conflict, published in July 2022, and looks forward to the planned guidance note on the denial of humanitarian access, and particularly welcomes 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;

64. *Recognizes* that development, peace and security and human rights are interlinked and mutually reinforcing and that the protection and reintegration of, and the prevention of violations and abuses against, conflict-affected children should be considered across all stages of this spectrum;

65. *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;

66. *Decides:*

(a) To continue its consideration of the question at its eightieth 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 eightieth 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 early childhood development;

(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](#) of 18 December 2007, 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 on the sale, sexual exploitation and sexual abuse of children 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 elimination of all forms of sale and sexual exploitation and abuse of children, and in the protection, rehabilitation, recovery, reintegration and access to justice of children who are victims and survivors, in a gender-responsive, disability-inclusive, victim-centred, trauma-informed and child-friendly manner and with full respect for the rights of the child, including in how to advance the protection capacities of communities and families, with the best interests of the child as a primary consideration;

(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-ninth and eightieth sessions as a way to enhance communication between the Assembly and the Committee.

Draft resolution II

The girl child

The General Assembly,

Reaffirming its resolution 76/146 of 16 December 2021 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 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

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.

¹³ Resolution 60/262, annex.

¹⁴ Resolution 65/277, annex.

¹⁵ Resolution 70/266, annex.

¹⁶ Resolution 75/284, annex.

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,

Noting that States parties should implement the Convention on the Rights of the Child and ensure that the rights of girls are promoted and protected, including in relation to the digital environment,

Reaffirming that the promotion and protection of the rights of the child may be supported through the development of digital literacy and skills among girls, and acknowledging the importance of strengthening their capacities, digital skills and competencies, closing the digital divides, in particular the gender digital divide, and empowering girls to report and seek help in responding to online threats and bullying, including cyberbullying, and raising their awareness of online safety, while emphasizing the need to foster a policy of zero tolerance of all forms of violence against girls in the digital environment, in a manner consistent with States' obligations under international human rights law,

Recognizing the critical role of teachers and educators, caregivers, parents and legal guardians in ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education, including digital learning, by providing support, including through the necessary training, access to devices, materials and technological infrastructure,

Acknowledging the contributions of girls to their societies, the empowerment of all girls and the enjoyment of all human rights, and recognizing the opportunities to amplify these contributions through innovation and technological change, education in the digital age and access to digital technology and education, while also emphasizing the need to ensure that all digital policies and programmes are responsive to the changing needs of girls and the changing digital landscape, and recognizing in this regard the contributions of their families, communities and societies and the importance of implementing family-friendly and family-oriented policies towards achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all girls and their enjoyment of all their human rights in the context of innovation and technological change, and education in the digital age,

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

Noting with concern 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 rural and agricultural development aid includes 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, 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,

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

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 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, 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

¹⁸ A/76/204.

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

²⁰ *Ibid.*, vol. 2133, No. 37245.

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;

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 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 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;

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

²¹ Resolution 70/1.

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

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.

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 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 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

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

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 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 of, 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;

²⁵ Resolution 64/293.

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

²⁷ Resolution 217 A (III).

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;

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 eightieth session on the implementation of the present resolution, including a status analysis on the current and potential impact of digital and emerging technologies on the girl child, 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.
