

**Statement**

**By**

**H.E. W/ro. Ubah Mohamed  
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**On**

**The meeting held to consider  
the 3<sup>rd</sup> Periodic Report of the  
Federal Democratic Republic  
of Ethiopia**

**September, 2006  
Geneva**

constitution and international conventions, which Ethiopia has ratified. Here again, a number of regional states have legislated and amended their respective family laws.

The penal law is another subordinated law that deals extensively with problem of children. This law has been amended and will become enforceable as of May 2005. The amended penal law has removed the provision that allowed the court to order corporal punishment if it thinks such a punishment is necessary to reform the minor. The amended penal law has incorporated elaborated provisions pertaining to infanticide, sexual violence and sexual exploitation, abuse of all forms, trafficking of children, abduction and early marriage.

There is also a major progress in legal development towards the elimination of harmful traditional practices affecting the life, health and security of children. The amended penal law incorporated provisions dealing with the different forms of harmful practices. This law has included new sets of provisions on FGM and other harmful traditional practices.

The current Criminal Procedure Law is also going through reform. The draft amendment is being discussed at different levels. Many of the procedures have positive implication for the prosecution of any illegal act against children.

Apart from the legislative measures, national and sectoral development policies that give special emphasis to the well being of children, such as policies on education, health, water, population, and developmental social welfare policy have been adopted and implemented.

In order to enhance the implementation of these policies, the government has allocated significant budget to these sectors. Consequently, encouraging achievements have been registered in immunization, polio campaign and other related health care services. Infant and under five mortality rate decreased to 77/1000 and 123/1000 respectively.

Notable achievements have also been registered in enrolment rate of primary education, which has increased from 57.4% in 2000/2001 to 79.8% in 2004/2005. The gender dimension of this achievement is significant as female participation has increased from 40.6% to 71.5% in the same period. Gross enrolment rate in the secondary school has increased annually on average at a growth rate of 20%. Special programs have also been initiated to respond to the needs of children in pastoral areas in line with their way of life. More over, several alternative basic education centers have been established in various regions so as to fulfill the education needs of out-of-school children.

Mr. Chair person

The Government of Ethiopia has prepared and implemented a National Plan of Action (NPA), by focusing on the four priority areas identified during the may 2002 UN Special Session on Children, to improve the well being of the Ethiopian children and translate the Convention on the Rights of the Child into practice

Integration of the goals and objectives of the NPA into the government policies as well as national and sub-national development programs has been going well. Particularly, it has been possible to integrate childhood poverty reduction into the country's poverty reduction strategies. The New five Years Plan for Accelerated and Sustainable Development (PASDEP), the second phase of PRSP that runs

from 2006/2007-2010/11, is designed by taking into account the issue of childhood poverty reduction. As I mentioned above, specific goals and targets have been set in the fields of education and health to this end.

Furthermore, a program is introduced to control mother-to-child transmission of HIV/AIDS and sexually transmitted diseases. Various programs and projects have also been undertaken to care for AIDS orphans and people living with HIV/AIDS by various governmental and non-governmental organizations, and CBOs.

A National OVC Task Force has been established to coordinate all programs and projects undertaken by all concerned actors focusing on orphans and other vulnerable children. The establishment of the task force further enhanced coordination and multi-sectoral approach in tackling the problem of children living in especially difficult situations.

Mr. Chair person

Despite these developments, we still have a long way to go to create favorable conditions for our children. The dynamics of population growth, dependency on rain fed agriculture, HIV/AIDS and other related factors pose challenges to the government's efforts to accelerate progress as rapid as possible. Thus, it is understandable that extra-efforts are required to keep the pace of the progress. That is why the government chose to emphasize more on the problems than on the activities in the 3rd periodic report before the committee.

The report covers the period of 1999-2004 and prepared pursuant to provision of Article 44 paragraph one of the CRC. It is organized in accordance with the General Guideline developed by the CRC committee for the forms and context of the reports to be submitted by the

state parties to the UNCRC committee. Though the government played a prominent role in the preparation of the report, efforts were made to ensure the active participation of all stakeholders including relevant members of civic society.

We believe that the report and the feedback information given to the list of issues related to the report incorporated relevant information, and changes that have been made following the suggestions and recommendations forwarded by the UNCRC committee on the Second Periodic Report of Ethiopia. Furthermore, efforts made in different sectors to promote the implementation of children's rights are included in the report without repeating information provided in the Second Periodic Report.

Mr. Chair person

In conclusion let me reiterate my government's firm conviction to translate the Convention on the Rights of the Child into reality. But as we have to work together to succeed in this noble endeavor, I would like to call upon those who have the means to whole-heartedly support the efforts of my government. We strongly believe that bilateral and multilateral support to improve the life of the children will be strengthened.

We also hope that the constructive dialogue which will be held between the Ethiopian delegation and the committee on the Rights of the Child will help us identify strategic directions in this regard.

I thank you!