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Committee on the Rights of the Child**Concluding observations on the sixth and seventh periodic reports of Ethiopia*****I. Introduction**

1. The Committee considered the combined sixth and seventh periodic reports of Ethiopia¹ at its 2927th and 2928th meetings,² held on 26 January 2026, and adopted the present concluding observations at its 2936th meeting, held on 30 January 2026.

2. The Committee welcomes the submission of the combined sixth to seventh periodic reports of the State party and the written replies to the list of issues,³ which allowed for a better understanding of the situation of children's rights in the State party.⁴ The Committee expresses its appreciation for the constructive dialogue held with the delegation of the State party.

II. Follow-up measures taken and progress achieved by the State party

3. The Committee welcomes the progress achieved by the State party in various areas, including the adoption of the National Child Policy (2017) and its Implementation Strategy (2019), the Proclamation No. 1307/2024 that has provided for the establishment of a special division for women, children, and persons with disabilities, as well as the General Education Proclamation No. 1368/2025 that guarantees no child shall be denied to general education due to the absence of a birth certificate.

III. Factors and difficulties impeding the implementation of the Convention

4. The Committee takes note of the fact that the State party has been seriously affected by the complex emergencies including armed conflicts in northern Ethiopia, inter-ethnic conflicts, large-scale displacement, earthquakes in northern Ethiopia and severe effects of climate change resulting in recurrent droughts and floods, coupled with severe economic instability exacerbated by inflation, that have all had a negative impact on the realization of the rights and on the welfare of children in the country. The Committee also acknowledges and deeply regrets that the State Party has been confronted with considerable cuts in the

* Adopted by the Committee at its one-hundredth session (12 – 30 January 2026).

¹ CRC/C/ETH/6-7.

² See CRC/C/SR.2927 and 2928.

³ CRC/C/ETH/RQ/6-7.

support provided by the international cooperation that left millions of children and families in urgent need of food aid, which have provoked hundreds of hunger-related deaths, slowed the economic development and forced the State Party to focus on debt repayment at the expense of investment in basic social services.

IV. Main areas of concern and recommendations

5. The Committee reminds the State party of the indivisibility and interdependence of all the rights enshrined in the Convention and emphasizes the importance of all the recommendations contained in the present concluding observations. The Committee would like to draw the State party's attention to the recommendations concerning the following areas, in respect of which urgent measures must be taken: legislation (para. 8), birth registration and nationality (para. 23); abuse, neglect, sexual abuse and exploitation (para. 27), harmful practices (para. 30), health and health services (para. 38), and children in armed conflict (para. 52).

6. **The Committee recommends that the State party ensure the realization of children's rights in accordance with the Convention and the Optional Protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict and the Optional Protocol on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography throughout the process of implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It urges the State party to ensure the meaningful participation of children in the design and implementation of policies and programmes aimed at achieving all 17 Sustainable Development Goals as far as they concern children.**

A. General measures of implementation (arts. 1, 4, 42 and 44 (6))

Legislation

7. The Committee is concerned that the full text of the Convention has not yet been published in the Gazette, thus making it difficult for law enforcement officials, judicial personnel and other professionals working with and for children to have access to and an understanding of its provisions, and that the legislation is still not completely harmonized with the Convention and its Optional Protocols.

8. **The Committee reiterates its previous concluding observation and recommends that the State party:**

- (a) **Publish the full text of the Convention in the Official Gazette;**
- (b) **Expedite the adoption of a Federal Children's Act in accordance with to the Convention and its Optional Protocols, and clearly define a "child" as a person below the age of 18;**
- (c) **Harmonize and continue the review of existing laws related to children's rights to ensure that they are in full compliance with the principles and provisions of the Convention, particularly regarding inconsistencies in administration of child justice, corporal punishment and the minimum age of marriage, including in family laws of Afar and Somali region.**

Comprehensive policy and strategy

9. **The Committee notes the adoption of the National Children's Policy Implementation Strategy in 2025 and of several key child-related policies and recommends that the State party:**

- (a) **Establish an institutional and monitoring framework to support the effective implementation and assessment of the impact of the National Children's Policy and other child related policies;**
- (b) **Effectively address the gaps in performance of the National Social Protection Policy.**

Coordination

10. The Committee recommends that the State party:

- (a) Strengthen the intersectoral coordination within the Ministry of Women and Social Affairs and other relevant sectors to ensure that the Ministry is provided with the necessary human, technical and financial resources for its effective operation;
- (b) Enhance the coordination of children's rights policies and measures across federal and regional levels, particularly ensuring effective mechanisms in IDP and refugee settings.

Allocation of resources

11. The Committee recalls its general comment No. 19 (2016) on public budgeting for the realization of children's rights and its previous concluding observations⁵ and recommends that the State party:

- (a) Conduct a comprehensive assessment of the budget needs of children and allocate adequate budgetary resources, in accordance with article 4 of the Convention, for the implementation of children's rights and, in particular, increase the budget allocated to social protection, education, health, protection against violence, and address disparities on the basis of indicators related to children's rights;
- (b) Ensure transparent and participatory budgeting through public dialogue, especially with children and for proper accountability of local authorities;
- (c) Define budgetary lines for all children, with special attention to those in disadvantaged or vulnerable situations, such as children with disabilities, IDP and refugee children, that may require special social measures, and make sure that those budgetary lines are protected even in situations of economic crisis, natural or other emergencies.

Data collection

12. Recalling its general comment No. 5 (2003) on general measures of implementation, the Committee recommends that the State party:

- (a) In cooperation with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and UNHCR among other entities, continue to support the national roll-out of the Child Protection Information Management System Plus (CPIMS+) to ensure smooth referral of vulnerable children to the social services they need;
- (b) Expeditiously improve its data collection system, particularly at the federal and regional levels, and ensure that data collected on children's rights covers all areas of the Convention and the Optional Protocols thereto in order to facilitate analysis of the situation of children, particularly those in situations of particular vulnerability;
- (c) Ensure that statistical data and indicators on children's rights are shared among the ministries concerned and used for the formulation, monitoring and evaluation of policies, programmes and projects for the effective implementation of the Convention.

Access to justice and remedy

13. Welcoming the Free Legal Aid initiative, the Committee recommends that the State party:

- (a) Ensure that all children have access to: (i) confidential, child-friendly and independent complaint mechanisms in schools, foster care systems, alternative care settings and places of detention for reporting all forms of violence, abuse, discrimination and other violations of their rights; and (ii) legal support and age-

⁵ CRC/C/ETH/CO/4-5, para. 13

appropriate information on access to counselling and remedies, including compensation and rehabilitation;

(b) Raise awareness among children of their right to file a complaint under existing mechanisms;

(c) Ensure systematic and mandatory training for all relevant professionals working with children on child-friendly procedures and remedies, and children's rights.

Independent monitoring

14. The Committee recalls its previous concluding observations⁶ and recommends that the State party:

(a) Ensure the independence and effectiveness of the Ethiopian Human Rights Commission and of the Ethiopian Institution of the Ombudsman, including with regards to their funding, mandate and immunities, to allow them to allocate sufficient financial and human resources to the promotion and protection of children's rights;

(b) Ensure that human rights institutions and their departments dedicated to children operate free from government interference to effectively address violations of children's rights, and hold those responsible for maladministration accountable;

(c) Receive, analyse and implement the recommendations of the human rights institutions to the greatest extent possible.

Dissemination of the Convention and awareness-raising

15. The Committee recommends that the State party strengthen its awareness-raising programmes, including campaigns, in cooperation with civil society organizations, to ensure that the Convention and the Optional Protocols thereto are available in local languages and child-friendly versions accessible for children with disabilities, and are widely known by the general public, including parents and children themselves, and promote active involvement of children in public outreach activities, including in measures targeting parents, social workers, teachers and law enforcement officials.

Cooperation with civil society

16. The Committee notes with appreciation that the State party has amended the Civil Society Organizations Law in 2022. It urges the State party to:

(a) Develop clear guidelines for civil society organizations' registration;

(b) Lift the remaining restrictions in their work on sensitive issues such as LGBTQ rights, children in conflict related situation, and ensure transparency and safeguard their role in child rights advocacy by guaranteeing that they can operate freely and have access to conflict zones, prisons and alternative care centres;

(c) Increase resource allocation for their child-related initiatives in cooperation with development partners;

(d) Take all necessary measures to guarantee freedom of action of children as human rights defenders and build a climate of trust.

Children's rights and the business sector

17. The Committee recalls its general comment No. 16 (2013) on State obligations regarding the impact of the business sector on children's rights, the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights endorsed by the Human Rights Council in 2011, its

⁶ CRC/C/ETH/CO/4-5, para. 16

previous concluding observations⁷ and the Human Rights Committee's concluding observations.⁸ The Committee recommends that the State party:

- (a) Adopt and implement the draft National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights;
- (b) Introduce mandatory human rights due diligence requirements for businesses, with a specific focus on preventing child labour throughout supply chains, including in high-risk sectors;
- (c) Establish a clear regulatory framework for the industries, such as mining, operating in or managed from the State party to ensure that their activities do not negatively affect human rights or endanger environmental, health, labour and other standards, especially those relating to children's rights;
- (d) Ensure effective implementation by companies, especially mining companies, of international and national environment and health standards, effective monitoring of implementation of these standards and appropriately sanction and provide remedies when violations occur, as well as ensure that appropriate international certification is sought;
- (e) Require companies to undertake assessments, consultations, and full public disclosure of the environmental, health-related and children's rights impacts of their business activities and their plans to address such impacts.

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

Non-discrimination

18. Noting that children from disadvantaged and marginalised groups experience widespread discrimination, including in access to essential services, which in turn exacerbates their vulnerability and exclusion, the Committee recalls its previous concluding observations⁹ and recommends that the State party:

- (a) Strengthen the implementation of targeted policies and programmes to address the needs of children from disadvantaged and marginalised groups, particularly refugee, internally displaced children, children belonging to pastoralist, ethnic and indigenous minorities, children with disabilities, girls, children in rural areas, poverty and street situations, and children with HIV/AIDS, and ensure they have equitable access to education, healthcare, social services and documentation without discrimination;
- (b) Repeal all discriminatory laws and end practices and norms that perpetuate gender bias and harmful practices against girls, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex children, through legal reform and awareness efforts in families, communities, schools, and alternative care institutions;
- (c) Conduct media campaigns to change traditional attitudes, harmful social norms and behaviours that contribute to discrimination and promote tolerance and respect for diversity.

Best interests of the child

19. Recalling its general comment No. 14 (2013) on the right of the child to have his or her best interests taken as a primary consideration, the Committee recommends that the State party:

- (a) Ensure that the right of children to have their best interests taken as a primary consideration is appropriately integrated and consistently interpreted and applied in all legislative, administrative and judicial proceedings and decisions as well

⁷ CRC/C/ETH/CO/4-5, para.22

⁸ CCPR/C/ETH/CO/2, para. 48

⁹ CRC/C/ETH/CO/4-5, para.24

as in all policies, programmes and projects that are relevant to, and have an impact on, children;

(b) Develop procedures and criteria to provide guidance to all relevant persons in authority for determining the best interests of the child in every area as a primary consideration.

Right to life, survival and development

20. In view of the fact that millions of children are affected by overlapping crises, which are exacerbating their vulnerabilities, intensifying existing gender inequalities and risks for girls, food insecurity and malnutrition, the Committee urges the State party to:

(a) Address underlying determinants of infant and child mortality, including conflict, disease outbreak, natural emergencies, social and economic deprivation and inequality;

(b) Expand social services, safety net programs and ensure food accessibility for children and families in emergencies, focusing on children's unique vulnerabilities;

(c) Implement the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) technical guidance on the application of a human rights-based approach to the implementation of policies and programmes to reduce and eliminate preventable mortality and morbidity of children under 5 years of age (A/HRC/27/31).

Respect for the views of the child

21. Recalling its general comment No. 12 (2009) on the right of the child to be heard, the Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) Continue to ensure that the Children's Parliament is composed of a wide representation of all categories of children to reflect the reality of childhood and ensure that it is provided with a meaningful mandate and adequate human, technical and financial resources, in order to facilitate children's effective engagement with national legislative processes on issues that affect them;

(b) Take measures to ensure the effective implementation of legislation recognizing the right of the child to be heard in relevant legal proceedings, including by establishing systems and/or procedures for social workers and courts to comply with the principle;

(c) Promote meaningful participation of all children within the family, communities and schools and transform social norms and cultural attitudes that put barriers on effective and empowered child participation.

C. Civil and political rights (arts. 7–8 and 13–17)

Birth registration and nationality

22. The Committee notes the adoption of the Civil and Family Registration Proclamation No. 1370/2025. It is however seriously concerned that a large number of children under five remain unregistered, with stark disparities between urban and rural areas, particularly in the region of Somali, where the rates are particularly low.

23. Taking note of target 16.9 of the Sustainable Development Goals, the Committee recalls its previous concluding observations¹⁰ and urges the State party to:

(a) Remove legal barriers to birth registration, such as birth registration fees, time requirement of 90 days, the necessity of both parents to be present and the requirement to register the child in the habitual residence;

¹⁰ CRC/C/ETH/CO/6-7, para. 34

- (b) Raise awareness among the population of the importance of birth registration;
- (c) Strengthen mobile registration systems to reach remote and marginalized populations, such as children in street situation, children living in remote areas, orphanages, refugee camps and IDP sites, where health facilities or civil registry are not available within a short distance;
- (d) Strengthen interoperability between civil registration systems and health services to improve data management and service provision, ensuring prompt and accurate birth registration;
- (e) Strengthen the Civil Registration and Vital Statistics Agency so that it manage the high volume of registrations and is closer to remote population, identify and regularise the situation of children who have not been registered at birth or who do not have national identity documents;
- (f) Continue its efforts to reduce statelessness, consider ratifying the Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons of 1954 and the Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness of 1961 and continue seeking technical assistance from the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) among others, for the implementation of these recommendations.

Freedom of association and peaceful assembly

24. The Committee notes with concern the reports about alleged physical abuse, arbitrary arrests and unlawful detention during the students protest in Addis Ababa in 2023 and reports of more than 67 girls aged 11 -16 allegedly detained while protesting for their basic rights to education and healthcare in the region of Somali in December 2022. It urges the State party to prevent the arbitrary restrictions of the freedom of peaceful assembly and disproportionate use of force, investigate the allegation of violation of this right, ensure that those accountable are brought to justice and that children are not threatened, arrested and detained for expressing their views.

Access to appropriate information

25. Recalling its general comment No. 25 (2021) on children's rights in relation to the digital environment and the 2026 Joint Statement on Artificial Intelligence and the rights of the child, the Committee recommends that the State party:

- (a) Continue to improve digital inclusion for children in disadvantaged situations, such as children in remote areas, refugee and IDP children and children with disabilities, including by means of accessible and affordable online services and connectivity and by providing schools with affordable devices;
- (b) Adequately protect children from harmful content and materials and online risks, and provide for mechanisms to prosecute violations.

D. Violence against children (arts. 19, 24 (3), 28 (2), 34, 35, 37 (a), and 39 of the Convention and the Optional Protocol on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography)

Abuse, neglect, sexual abuse and exploitation

26. The Committee is seriously concerned about:

- (a) The lack of a unified and comprehensive child protection legislation;
- (b) High prevalence of violence against children, including domestic violence, abuse, neglect, sexual and gender-based violence, bullying and online sexual exploitation and abuse;

- (c) Reports of solitary confinement, beating, threat, withholding of mosquito nets, and forced labour in detention centres;
- (d) Lack of reliable data on violence against children, particularly girls;
- (e) Under-reporting, and lack of thorough investigations and inefficiency of court processes in handling cases of violence against children.

27. **In the light of its general comment No. 13 (2011) on the right of the child to freedom from all forms of violence, the Committee urges the State party to:**

- (a) Adopt a national comprehensive child protection legislation and provide adequate resources for the effective implementation of the national strategy on prevention and response to violence against women and children (2021-2026);
- (b) Establish a national database on all cases of violence against children, and undertake a comprehensive assessment of the extent, causes and nature of such violence;
- (c) Independently and thoroughly investigate all allegations of violence, including allegations of crimes related to gender-based violence, and ill-treatment in detention centres, bring the perpetrators to justice and ensure that they are duly sanctioned;
- (d) Provide regular substantive training for judges, lawyers, prosecutors, the police and other relevant professional groups on standardized, gender- and child-sensitive procedures for dealing with child victims;
- (e) Establish mechanisms, procedures and guidelines to ensure mandatory reporting, multiagency intervention, investigation and prosecution of all cases of sexual exploitation and abuse of children, with the aim of preventing the re-victimisation of such children;
- (f) Ensure that child victims and witnesses testimonies are promptly taken in child-friendly facilities and by respecting defenders rights, that this procedures are audio-visually recorded and allowed as evidence during court proceedings with the aim of avoiding the re-victimization and preserve the evidence;
- (g) Ensure that children have access to confidential and child-friendly complaint mechanisms for the reporting of cases;
- (h) Continue expanding the safe homes and one-stop-centres at regional levels and provide them with the necessary human, technical and financial resources for their effective operation;
- (i) Strengthen and expand the child-friendly three digits helplines with an effective referral mechanism;
- (j) Conduct awareness-raising activities to combat social and gender norms and traditional beliefs that perpetuate violence against girls.

Corporal punishment

28. Recalling its general comment No. 8 (2006) on corporal punishment, the Committee recalls its previous concluding observations¹¹ and urges the State party to:

- (a) Explicitly prohibit corporal punishment in law in all settings, including in the home, childcare institutions, alternative care settings and in the administration of justice, and repeal provisions, such as the right to administer “reasonable chastisement” under Article 68 (b), and Article 659 (2) of Criminal Code;
- (b) Strengthen the promotion of positive, non-violent and participatory forms of child-rearing and discipline;

¹¹ CRC/C/ETH/CO/4-5, para. 42

(c) **Conduct awareness-raising campaigns for parents and professionals working with and for children to promote attitudinal change, within the family and the community, with regard to corporal punishment.**

Harmful practices

29. The Committee notes that the State Party has implemented Community Awareness and Behavioral Change Programs to eliminate harmful cultural practices affecting children. It however remains deeply concerned that despite its previous recommendation:

- (a) Child marriage is still legal and prevalent in most rural areas, and is particularly widespread in Afar and Somali regions;
- (b) Girls are still widely subjected to female genital mutilation;
- (c) Harmful practices, such as leaving girls outside the house during menstruation, labor, and childbirth; abandoning children with epilepsy; abandoning or killing a child known as ‘Mingi child’; and ‘Asha’ (providing girls as compensation for murder cases) are still practiced with severe detrimental impact on the life, development, and survival of children.

30. **Recalling its joint general recommendation No. 31 of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women/general comment No. 18 of the Committee on the Rights of the Child (2019) on harmful practices, the Committee recalls its previous concluding observations¹² and urges the State party to:**

- (a) **Ensure that the minimum age of marriage is set at 18 years without exception and is enforced in all the regions of the State party;**
- (b) **Ensure effective implementation, monitoring, and progressive domestic financing of the National Response Plan on Violence against Children and Adolescents, specifically targeting child marriage and female genital mutilation;**
- (c) **Consider raising the fines related to female genital mutilation in the Criminal Code and strictly enforce its criminalization, particularly in the Somali and Afar regions, including by making its reporting mandatory; and support the victims and ensure that those performing it are prosecuted and punished in accordance with the severity of the offence;**
- (d) **Develop awareness-raising campaigns and programmes to eliminate underlying social and gender norms as well as traditional and religious beliefs that contribute to child marriage, the practice of female genital mutilation, “Mingi”, “Asha” and all other harmful practices that have detrimental effects on the physical and mental health and well-being of children, targeting households, local authorities, religious leaders, medical practitioners, teachers, social workers, parents as well as judges and prosecutors and other professionals in contact with children.**

Recovery and reintegration of child victims

31. The Committee notes the steps taken to ensure the rights of all child victims and witnesses and recommends that the State party put in place child-sensitive mechanisms to facilitate and promote the reporting of cases and ensure that complaints mechanisms are child friendly and available both online and offline, paying particular attention to children with disabilities, girls, children in alternative care settings, detention facilities and locations for refugee and internally displaced children; and ensure that child victims and witnesses of crimes are interviewed without delay by trained forensic professionals in child-friendly facilities, avoiding revictimization resulting from repetitive interviews.

¹² CRC/C/ETH/CO/3-4, para. 48

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

Family environment

32. The Committee draws the State party's attention to its statement under article 5 of the Convention,¹³ and recommends that the State party strengthen its efforts to assess and prevent the root causes of child abandonment and separation and provide adequate resources to effectively implement the Child Maintenance Guideline.

Children deprived of a family environment

33. The Committee notes the adoption of the directives on alternative, foster care and domestic adoption. Drawing the State party's attention to the Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children,¹⁴ the Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) Ensure that policies and practices are guided by the principle that financial and material poverty — or conditions directly and uniquely attributable to such poverty — should never be the sole justification for removing a child from parental care, for entrusting a child into alternative care or for preventing a child's family reintegration;

(b) Continue phasing out institutionalization and adopt, without delay, a strategy and action plan for deinstitutionalization, ensuring that it has adequate human, technical and financial resources for its implementation and includes systemic transformation of the childcare, welfare and protection systems;

(c) Ensure sufficient alternative family-based and community-based care options for children who cannot stay with their families, including by allocating sufficient financial resources for foster care and domestic adoption;

(d) Establish and regularly monitor quality standards for all alternative care settings, ensure periodic review of the placement of children in foster care and institutions, and provide accessible channels for reporting, monitoring and remedying maltreatment of children;

(e) Ensure adequate safeguards and clear criteria, based on the needs as well as best interests of the child, for determining whether a child should be placed in alternative care and ensure that decisions on child removal are subject to judicial review.

Adoption

34. Noting the revision of the Family Law that banned intercountry adoption and the subsequent decision of the Cassation Bench of the Federal Supreme Court of Ethiopia in relation to file number 189201 in March 2020, the Committee recommends:

(a) To strengthen training for actors involved in the adoption process, including social workers and judges on children's rights and the best interests of the child so that they can better assess families and support reunification or adoption processes;

(b) Enact measures to support and make it easier for adopted persons, including for past international adoptions, to access their birth records and biological background information.

Children of incarcerated parents

35. The Committee recommends that the State party:

¹³ Article 5

¹⁴ General Assembly resolution 64/142, annex.

(a) Ensure that children of incarcerated parents receive appropriate nutrition, access to health and other services and are provided with birth certificates when they are born in detention centres;

(b) Consider replicating good practices from Benishangul-Gumuz and Afar regional states, where special procedures allow for mothers detained with their children to be released on bail and from Kaliti High Security Detention Center, where children detained with their mothers are provided day care service within the prison.

F. Children with disabilities (art. 23)

36. Recalling its general comment No. 9 (2006) on the rights of children with disabilities, the Committee urges the State party to adopt a human rights-based approach to disability, set up a comprehensive strategy for the inclusion of children with disabilities and:

(a) Harmonize national legislation with the human rights model of disability, adopt comprehensive legal and institutional framework on disability and provide adequate resources for effective implementation of the draft Disability Policy;

(b) Organize the collection of data on children with disabilities and develop an efficient and harmonized system for disability assessment in order to facilitate access for children with all types of disabilities to services;

(c) Strengthen early identification, assessment, and rehabilitation of children with disabilities;

(d) Improve accessibility and quality of physical rehabilitation services and assistive devices, particularly in areas that have been affected by conflict;

(e) Establish strong legal and regulatory framework on standards for accessibility for public and private institutions;

(f) Undertake awareness-raising campaigns aimed at government officials, the public and families to combat the stigmatization of, and prejudice against, children with disabilities and promote a positive image of children with disabilities as rights-holders.

G. Health (arts. 6, 24 and 33)

Health and health services

37. The Committee is deeply concerned about:

(a) Serious interruptions in vaccinations, particularly in the conflict-affected regions, and the second highest number of zero-dose children in Africa (1.13 million), which has led to multiple outbreaks in preventable disease such as measles and polio in several regions;

(b) Infant mortality rates of 47 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2019, exacerbated by the outbreaks of cholera, dengue fever, tuberculosis and malaria;

(c) Disparities in accessing essential healthcare services, particularly in rural and conflict-affected areas, and issues related to enrolment in Community-Based Health Insurance, particularly for displaced children;

(d) The impact of the funding cuts to HIV/AIDS programmes for children living with HIV/AIDS;

(e) 39 per cent of children under five years of age being stunted, 22 per cent underweight, 11 per cent wasted and 6 per cent overweight, according to the National Food and Nutrition Survey preliminary report in 2023;

(f) Limited investment in long-term community-based resilience building, corruption, lack of technical expertise, human resources, and institutional capacity impeding the effectiveness of nutrition programme interventions;

(g) Reports of cases of medical negligence, particularly those affecting children;

(h) Conflict-related destruction and looting of health facilities and the displacement of trained health service providers.

38. Recalling its general comment No. 15 (2013) on the right of the child to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health and its general comment No. 3 (2003) on HIV/AIDS and the rights of the child, the Committee urges the State party to:

(a) Strengthen and expand community-level immunization services, especially for zero-dose children in underserved and conflict-affected areas, to prevent outbreaks such as measles and polio and conduct intensive campaigns to improve coverage rates;

(b) Continue improving the infant, under-5 and maternity mortality rates and address the leading causes of child mortality, particularly outbreaks of cholera, dengue fever, tuberculosis and malaria;

(c) Address disparities in healthcare access among different regions, particularly in remote and conflict-affected areas such as Somali, Gambella, and Benishangul-Gumuz regions;

(d) Improve access to and coverage of antiretroviral therapy and prophylaxis for HIV-infected pregnant women, strengthen measures in place to prevent mother-to-child transmission of HIV/AIDS and improve follow-up treatment for HIV/AIDS-infected mothers and their infants;

(e) Operationalize the food and nutrition policies and programs to enhance inter-departmental coordination and support for nutrition initiatives, increase resources and personnel for the National Nutrition Council, enhance transparency and effectiveness in nutrition program partnerships and financial tracking to prevent corruption and ensure efficient use of funds;

(f) Promote exclusive breastfeeding for at least six months, with appropriate guidance and support for breastfeeding by HIV-infected mothers;

(g) Effectively implement the Health Service Administration and Regulation Proclamation No. 1362/2025 that mandates every health institution to establish a Health Professional Ethics Committee responsible for monitoring professional misconduct;

(h) Increase efforts to reconstruct or establish health facilities and health service providers in conflict affected areas and IDP sites, and ensure their effective functioning and accessibility;

(i) Seek technical assistance from the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations in this regard.

Adolescent health

39. Recalling its general comment No. 4 (2003) on adolescent health and general comment No. 20 (2016) on the implementation of the rights of the child during adolescence, the Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) Adopt a comprehensive sexual and reproductive health policy for adolescents and ensure that sexual and reproductive health education is part of the mandatory school curriculum and targeted at adolescents, including girls with disabilities, with special attention on preventing early pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections;

- (b) Ensure that all adolescents, including those who are out of school, those in rural and conflict-affected areas and in IDP and refugee sites, have access to Youth-Friendly Reproductive Health Services and receive confidential and child-friendly HIV/AIDS, sexual and reproductive health information and services, including access to contraceptives;
- (c) Decriminalize abortion in all circumstances and ensure access to safe abortion and post-abortion care services for adolescent girls, making sure that their views are always heard and given due consideration as a part of the decision-making process;
- (d) Expand the availability of “Michu” clinics;
- (e) Invest in developing a qualified workforce of psychologists, psychiatrists, and social workers to provide the care and support for rising mental health issues, particularly for children in disaster- and conflict-affected areas;
- (f) Address the prevalence of the use of drug and other psychoactive substances by children and adolescents, including the chewing of Khat as well as the use of alcohol and tobacco, including around schools and by children in street situations, by, *inter alia*, effectively implementing the Narcotic and Psychotropic Medicine Control Directive No. 1121/2025, and providing children and adolescents with accurate and objective information and life skills education on preventing substance abuse;
- (g) Develop specialized and child-friendly drug-dependence treatment for children.

H. Standard of living (arts. 18 (3), 26 and 27 (1)–(3))

40. The Committee recommends that the State party:
- (a) Strengthen the provision of safe drinking water and equitable access to age-appropriate, gender-responsive sanitation and hygiene interventions, across all regions, particularly underserved and conflict-affected communities;
 - (b) Ensure that development projects, which could result in evictions and demolition of houses, consider the wellbeing of children, with a special focus on children in vulnerable situations;
 - (c) Ensure that children and their families living in poverty receive sufficient financial support and have free and non-discriminatory access to essential services, including health care, education, housing and social protection.

I. Children’s rights and the environment (arts. 2-3, 6, 12-13, 15, 17, 19, 24, 26-31)

41. The Committee recommends that the State party:
- (a) Assess the effects of polluted air, water and soil on children’s health as a basis for designing a well-resourced strategy to remedy the situation, and regulate the maximum concentrations of air and water pollutants;
 - (b) Urgently and effectively implement the action plan under the memorandum of understanding between the Oromia regional authorities and the MIDROC Gold Mine company regarding the Lega Dembi gold mine, including the resolution of social, health, and environmental impacts on children, payment of compensation and rehabilitation of affected children, and creation of an independent mechanism for transparency and accountability from the mining company;
 - (c) Implement the environmental health standards, indicators and definitions set by the World Health Organisation;
 - (d) Ensure that health professionals receive training in diagnosis and treatment of health impacts on children related to environmental harm.

Impact of climate change on the rights of the child and environmental health

42. Recalling its general comment No. 26 (2023) on children's rights and the environment with a special focus on climate change, the Committee recommends that the State party:

- (a) Ensure that children's special vulnerabilities, needs and views are taken into account in the National Adaptation Plan, the NDC 3.0, the Climate Resilient Green Economy strategy, and disaster risk reduction and sectoral strategies;
- (b) Increase children's awareness and preparedness for climate change and natural disasters by incorporating it into the school curriculum and teachers' training programmes;
- (c) Strengthen incentives for the private sector and regulatory authority to adopt child-centered climate adaptation and resilience building, expand and scale renewable energy access, including solarization of health facilities, schools and water points.

J. Education, leisure and cultural activities (arts. 28–31)

Education: aims and coverage

43. While commending the State Party for the adoption of the General Education Proclamation No. 1368/2025, the Committee recommends that the State party:

- (a) Expediently implement the General Education Proclamation No. 1368/2025 in all its provisions and throughout the territory;
- (b) Increase budget allocations, human and technical resources for the operationalization of the General Education Proclamation, the Education and Training Policy, the Sixth Education Sector Development Program, the multi-sectoral Early Childhood Development and Education policy framework and the Code of Conduct on the Prevention of School Related Gender Based Violence in Schools;
- (c) Ensure that all girls and boys complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes;
- (d) Improve enrolment and retention rates, particularly for girls and children with disabilities in primary schools, expand the national School Feeding Program (SFP) in view of improving children's health, education and cognitive development, and address, *inter alia*, teacher absence, bribery, favoritism, cultural and traditional barriers, inadequate infrastructure and resources, that hinder enrolment and contribute to drop-out;
- (e) Improve literacy and numeracy outcomes, particularly for marginalized groups and girls;
- (f) Consistently enforce the Manual on Positive Child Disciplining to prevent corporal punishment against children in schools and protect them from other harmful actions, continue ensuring that school discipline is administered in a manner which is consistent with the child's dignity as set out in article 28(2) of the Convention and develop guidance and training for teachers on positive discipline to address violence and other disturbances in schools;
- (g) Ensure that pregnant teenagers and adolescent mothers are supported and assisted in continuing their education in mainstream schools;
- (h) Take the necessary measures to improve accessibility and the quality of education, and provide quality training for teachers, with particular emphasis on rural areas;
- (i) Ensure that human rights education, the principles of the Convention and peace education are integrated into the mandatory school curriculum and in the

training of teachers and education professionals, taking into account the framework of the World Programme for Human Rights Education;

(j) Ensure water, sanitation and hygiene services in all schools;

(k) Develop and promote quality vocational training to enhance the skills of children, especially those who drop out of school;

(l) Expeditiously adopt national standards on early childhood care and the qualifications of educators and expand access to standardized, quality early childhood development for all children.

Inclusive education

43. The Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) Ensure that all children with disabilities benefit from early childhood intervention, have access to inclusive education in mainstream schools, ensuring that schools are equipped with trained teachers, accessible infrastructure and teaching materials;

(b) Provide adequate human, financial and technical support to families of children with disabilities so that cost is not an obstacle for children in accessing education and specialised care;

(c) Continue to recover and speed up reconstruction of educational infrastructure in conflict-affected areas, ensure the safety of students and educators in schools and provide children in areas affected by conflict and humanitarian crisis, particularly in Amhara, Oromia, and Tigray regions, full reintegration into the educational system.

Rest, leisure, play, recreational activities, cultural life and the arts

44. Recalling its general comment No 17 (2013) on the right of the child to rest, leisure, play, recreational activities, cultural life and the arts, the Committee recommends that the State party provide children, including those with disabilities, girls, children in remote and refugee /IDP sites and in marginalized and disadvantaged situations, with safe, accessible, inclusive spaces for play and socialization.

K. Special protection measures (arts. 22, 30, 32–33, 35–36, 37 (b)–(d), and 38–40 of the Convention and the Optional Protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict)

Asylum-seeking, refugee and internally displaced children

45. The Committee notes the adoption of the Refugees Proclamation No. 1110/2019 and the National Comprehensive Refugee Response Strategy, which integrates child protection as a core component of refugee response and service delivery. Recalling the joint general comments No. 3 and No. 4 of the Committee on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families/No. 22 and No. 23 of the Committee on the Rights of the Child (2017) on the human rights of children in the context of international migration, and its General Comment No. 6 (2005) on treatment of unaccompanied and separated children outside their country of origin, the Committee recalls the concluding observations of the Committee against Torture¹⁵, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women¹⁶ and its previous concluding observations¹⁷ and urges the State party to:

(a) Strengthen referral and case management frameworks for asylum seeking, internally displaced and refugee children, particularly unaccompanied and

¹⁵ CAT/C/ETH/CO/2 (adopted in 2023), para. 29

¹⁶ CEDAW/C/ETH/CO/8 (adopted in 2019), para. 52

¹⁷ CRC/C/ETH/CO/4-5 (adopted in 2025), para. 68

separated children, including specialized mental health and psychosocial support, education, healthcare, food, protection-related services and social protection schemes, as well as increased access to self-reliance opportunities;

(b) Process cases involving unaccompanied asylum-seeking and refugee children in a positive, humane and expeditious manner as a means of identifying durable solutions, in line with article 10 (1) of the Convention;

(c) Ensure that migrant children are not detained on the basis of their or their parents' migration status and that alternatives to detention are available through the timely provision of safe and dignified accommodation while keeping the family unity;

(d) Address the vulnerabilities of refugee and internally displaced children, particularly those affected by sexual and gender-based violence.

Children belonging to minority and Indigenous groups

46. Recalling its general comment No. 11 (2009) on indigenous children and their rights under the Convention, the Committee urges the State party to prevent evictions and displacement of Indigenous peoples, including pastoralists, provide redress to those evicted or displaced from their lands, and improve child protection, infrastructure and social services, educational and healthcare access, address environmental challenges, combat severe malnutrition, and prevent sexual and gender based violence among children of pastoralists.

Economic exploitation, including child labour

47. The Committee recommends that the State party prevent the involvement of children in hazardous work and eliminate the worst forms of child labour and economic exploitation, including in agriculture, mining, domestic services, manufacturing as well as begging, and strengthen labour inspection mechanisms with specific focus on child labour and rigorously enforce existing laws and regulations.

Children in street situations

48. Drawing attention to its general comment No. 21 (2017) on children in street situations, the Committee recalls its previous concluding observations¹⁸ and urges the State party to assess the number of children in street situation, ensure their access to adequate nutrition, health care, clothing, housing and educational opportunities, promote and implement programmes aimed at the physical, psychological recovery and social reintegration, and facilitate their reunification with their families taking into account the best interests of the child.

Trafficking

49. The Committee recommends that the State party:

(a) Enact laws criminalizing all forms of child trafficking, improve protection of children at risk of trafficking and hold traffickers accountable, particularly in conflict-affected regions;

(b) Implement targeted prevention programs addressing the root causes of child trafficking, and raise awareness among vulnerable groups;

(c) Ensure the effective provision of referral and support services to children who are victims of trafficking.

Administration of child justice

50. Recalling its general comment No. 24 (2019) on children's rights in the child justice system, the Committee urges the State party to assess its child justice system and

¹⁸ CRC/C/ETH/CO/4-5, para. 66

bring it fully into line with the Convention and other relevant international instruments. In particular, the Committee urges the State party to:

- (a) **Draft a comprehensive juvenile justice law and expand specialised child justice including child friendly benches in court;**
- (b) **Raise the legal age of criminal responsibility to at least 14 years of age and, for those who are below this age, develop child-friendly and multidisciplinary responses to the first signs of behaviour that would, if the child were above this age, be considered an offence;**
- (c) **Actively promote non-judicial measures such as diversion and mediation for all children under the age of 18, alleged as, accused of or recognized as having infringed criminal law and, wherever possible, the use of non-custodial sentences for children, such as probation or community service, and ensure that health and psycho-social services are provided to such children;**
- (d) **Ensure that detention is used as a measure of last resort and for the shortest appropriate period of time and is subject to a judicial review on a regular basis with a view to the release of the child;**
- (e) **For the few situations where deprivation of liberty is justified as a measure of last resort, ensure that the children are not detained together with adults and that detention conditions are compliant with international standards, including with regard to access to education and vocational training, health services, food, water and recreational activities.**
- (f) **Strengthen the training of judges, as well as prosecutors, lawyers, police officers, child probation officers and all other professionals in the child justice system and ensure that it is continuous and covers all areas of the Convention.**

Children in armed conflict including implementation of the Optional Protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict

51. The Committee welcomes the progress in the national dialogue, transitional justice and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration processes but remains deeply concerned about the significant increase in grave violations against children, including the killing and maiming of children, sexual violence against children and the abduction of children, as well as incidents of the denial of humanitarian access.

52. **The Committee urges the State party to comply with applicable international law and to:**

- (a) **Adopt a national prevention strategy on children and armed conflict;**
- (b) **End and prevent grave violations against children, including sexual and gender-based violence, abduction and arbitrary detention, and allow and facilitate safe, timely and unimpeded humanitarian access, and urgently facilitate access to encampments to enable the identification of children and their transfer to civilian child protection actors;**
- (c) **Hold perpetrators accountable and provide assistance, medical care, including reproductive health, psychosocial support, and legal aid to conflict-affected children;**
- (d) **Facilitate the clearance of explosive ordnance, in particular in and around schools, and provide mine risk education activities for children;**
- (e) **Prioritize the prompt release, disarmament, rehabilitation and reintegration of child victims of recruitment and their family reunification;**
- (f) **Provide psychosocial support and rehabilitation services to all children who have been affected by conflict-related trauma, including specialized support for child victims of sexual and gender-based violence;**

(g) Protect children from recruitment and association with armed groups and forces by strengthening birth registration systems to ensure accurate age documentation;

(h) Protect schools and hospitals from attacks and from being used as military bases and endorse the Safe Schools Declaration.

L. Ratification of the Optional Protocol on a communications procedure

53. The Committee recommends that the State party ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention on a communications procedure. It also urges the State party to fulfil its reporting obligations under the Optional Protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict and the Optional Protocol on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, given that the related initial reports have been overdue since 14 May 2014.

M. Ratification of international human rights instruments

54. The Committee recommends that the State party, in order to further strengthen the fulfilment of children's rights, consider ratifying the following core human rights instruments:

(a) **Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights**

(b) **Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty**

(c) **Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights**

(d) **Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women**

(e) **Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment**

(f) **International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families**

(g) **International Convention for the Protection of all Persons from Enforced Disappearance**

(h) **Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.**

N. Cooperation with regional bodies

55. The Committee recommends that the State party cooperate with the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child of the African Union on the implementation of the Convention and other human rights instruments, both in the State party and in other States members of the African Union.

IV. Implementation and reporting

A. Follow-up and dissemination

56. The Committee recommends that the State party take all appropriate measures to ensure that the recommendations contained in the present concluding observations are fully implemented and that a child-friendly version is disseminated to, and made

widely accessible for, children, including those in the most disadvantaged situations. The Committee also recommends that the combined sixth and seventh periodic reports, the written replies to the list of issues and the present concluding observations be made widely available in the languages of the country.

B. National mechanism for reporting and follow-up

57. The Committee recommends that the State party establish a standing government structure and ensure that it has the mandate and the adequate human, technical and financial resources to effectively coordinate and prepare reports to international and regional human rights mechanisms and to coordinate and track national follow-up to, and implementation of, treaty obligations and the recommendations and decisions emanating from such mechanisms. The Committee emphasizes that such a structure should be adequately and continuously supported by dedicated staff and should have the capacity to consult systematically with the Ethiopian Human Rights Commission and civil society.

C. Next report

58. The Committee will establish and communicate the due date of the combined eighth and ninth periodic reports of the State party in due course, in line with the envisaged predictable reporting calendar, and following the adoption of a list of issues and questions prior to reporting, if applicable, for the State party. The report should be in compliance with the Committee's harmonized treaty-specific reporting guidelines¹⁹ and should not exceed 21,200 words.²⁰ In the event that a report exceeding the established word limit is submitted, the State party will be asked to shorten the report. If the State party is not in a position to review and resubmit the report, translation thereof for the purposes of consideration by the Committee cannot be guaranteed.

¹⁹ [CRC/C/58/Rev.3](#).

²⁰ General Assembly resolution 68/268, para. 16.