

On the issue of children affected by armed conflict, the Commission, *inter alia*: welcomed the appointment for three years of the Special Representative; called on states, in accordance with the norms of international humanitarian law, to integrate into their military programmes — including those for peacekeeping — instruction on responsibilities towards the civilian population, particularly women and children; called on states and relevant UN bodies to contribute on an ongoing basis to international mine-clearance efforts; urged states to take stronger action to promote gender- and age-appropriate mine-awareness programmes and child-centred rehabilitation; welcomed the adoption of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction; called on states and other parties to armed conflict to respect international humanitarian law; called on states to end the use of children as soldiers and to ensure their demobilization, and to implement effective measures for the rehabilitation and reintegration into society of child soldiers, child victims of armed conflict or foreign occupation, including victims of landmines and all other weapons, and victims of gender-based violence; called on states as well as UN agencies to ensure access of humanitarian aid and assistance to children affected by armed conflicts; reaffirmed that rape in the conduct of armed conflict is a war crime and may be a crime against humanity and an act of genocide; called on all states to take the required measures to protect children and women from all gender-based violence and strengthen mechanisms to investigate and prosecute perpetrators; reaffirmed that all humanitarian responses in armed conflict situations should emphasize the special reproductive health needs of girls and women; reaffirmed the importance of preventive measures such as early-warning, preventive diplomacy and education for peace to prevent conflicts; reaffirmed the importance of special attention for children in situations of armed conflict in such areas as health and nutrition, education and social reintegration; reaffirmed its support for an assessment and monitoring of the consequences of sanctions on children; requested the working group elaborating the optional protocol to continue its work prior to the 1999 session; and requested the Secretary-General, in cooperation with others, to consider modalities for organizing regional training programmes for members of the armed forces related to the protection of children and women during armed conflicts.

With regard to the protection of refugee and internally displaced children, the Commission, *inter alia*: called on states to protect refugee and internally displaced children, including through policies for their care, well-being and development, in such areas as health, education and psycho-social rehabilitation; called on UN bodies and agencies, in coordination with international humanitarian organizations, to ensure the early identification and registration of unaccompanied refugee and internally displaced children, give priority to programmes for family tracing and reunification and continue monitoring care arrangements for such children; and called on other parties to armed conflicts to recog-

nize that refugee and internally displaced children are particularly exposed to risks of injury, exploitation and death.

On the elimination of the exploitation of child labour, the Commission, *inter alia*: called on states that have not yet done so to ratify the ILO conventions related to the abolition of forced labour (No. 29) and the minimum age for admission to employment (No. 138); called on those states that are parties to these conventions, as a matter of priority, to eliminate all extreme forms of child labour such as forced labour, bonded labour and other forms of slavery; called on states to eliminate progressively and effectively all forms of child labour contrary to accepted international standards and support ILO efforts to finalize an instrument aimed at eradication of the most intolerable forms of child labour; and called on states to ensure that all children have access to free and relevant primary education and make secondary education generally available and accessible to all.

With regard to street children, the Commission, *inter alia*: called on states to continue actively to seek comprehensive solutions to the problems of children working and/or living on the street; called on all states to ensure the reintegration of street children into society and provide adequate nutrition, shelter, health care and education; and called on states to take urgent measures to prevent the killing of street children, combat torture and violence against them, and ensure that legal and juridical processes respect children's rights to protect them against arbitrary deprivation of liberty, mistreatment or abuse.

With regard to children with disabilities, the Commission, *inter alia*: welcomed the general debate by the Committee on the Rights of the Child focussing on the rights to life and development, self-representation, full participation and inclusive education for children with disabilities; called on all states to adopt the necessary measures to ensure the full enjoyment in equal conditions of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by children with disabilities, especially by ensuring effective access to education and health services; and, called on all states to develop and implement legislation prohibiting discrimination against children with disabilities.

Statement by the President of the Security Council

In June 1998 the Security Council agreed to a statement by the President (S/PRST/1998/18) on the issue of children affected by armed conflict. The Council, *inter alia*: expressed grave concern at the harmful impact of armed conflict on children; condemned the targeting of children in armed conflicts, including their humiliation, brutalization, sexual abuse, abduction and forced displacement, as well as their recruitment and use in hostilities in violation of international law; called upon all parties concerned to put an end to such activities and to comply strictly with their obligations under international law; stressed the obligation of all states to prosecute those