

such as girls, disabled children, children born out of wedlock, and children affected by or infected with HIV/AIDS, including orphans.

The Committee commented on: insufficiencies in steps taken to ensure the registration of children after birth and the fact that the state registration procedure is hampered in practice by the lack of registration desks, especially in rural areas; inadequate facilities for the registration of refugee children; the provision that children may lodge complaints only through their parents or legal guardians, thereby failing to secure the right to adequate recourse and complaint procedures for child victims of abuse, including sexual abuse and neglect or ill-treatment within their families; lack of guarantees of the right of children to participate actively in the promotion of their own rights; the low levels of school enrolment and the high drop-out rates, especially among girls; the lack of learning and teaching facilities and the shortage of trained teachers, in particular in rural areas; the fact that school curricula are divorced from cultural and social realities, and do not yet include a programme of education on human rights and children's rights; the failure to make primary education compulsory; the systems of national and inter-country adoptions which are not fully in conformity with the provisions of the Convention; and, the situation of children in especially difficult circumstances, including children living and/or working in the street, and the incidence of child labour, in particular in the informal sector.

The Committee expressed deep concern over the present system of juvenile justice in Ethiopia and considered it not to be in conformity with provisions of the Convention, particularly in the areas of the age of criminal responsibility (9 years) and the provision that, as from the age of 15, children are treated as adults. The Committee noted that the government's report and dialogue with the Committee did not make clear whether the latter meant that children over 15 years of age may be sentenced to life imprisonment or detained together with adults. Concern was reiterated at provisions in the Penal Code under which: children may be sentenced to corporal punishment at the sole discretion of the judge; consideration in determining the penalty for a child offender is given to the "bad or good character" of that child; and, limitations may be imposed on the right to legal counsel.

The Committee expressed concern, as well, at the insufficient measures taken by the authorities for the physical and psychological recovery and social reintegration of child victims of war.

The Committee recommended that the government:

- ▶ publish the full text of the Convention in the *Official Gazette*;
- ▶ publish training manuals, incorporating the text of the Convention, for professional groups working with or for children;
- ▶ continue efforts aimed at promoting awareness and understanding of the principles and provisions of the Convention, in particular by ensuring the translation and publication of the text in all national languages;
- ▶ coordinate the policies designed to implement the Convention between central and local authorities;

- ▶ provide systematic training on the principles and rights set out in the Convention to the professional groups working with and for children such as law enforcement officials, judicial personnel, personnel in child care institutions, teachers, social workers and medical personnel, as well as to the personnel entrusted with the task of ensuring data collection in the areas covered by the Convention;
- ▶ give attention to incorporating the Convention in school curricula;
- ▶ strengthen coordination between various governmental mechanisms involved in children's rights, at both the national and local levels, with a view to developing a comprehensive policy on children and ensuring effective evaluation of the implementation of the Convention in the country;
- ▶ consider establishing an independent mechanism, such as an Ombudsperson on the Rights of the Child or a Human Rights Commission, to ensure observance of children's rights;
- ▶ improve the system of data collection at the central and local levels and ensure that it comprises all the areas covered by the Convention, including all groups of children and with a particular emphasis on vulnerable groups of children and on children in especially difficult circumstances;
- ▶ initiate, with the technical assistance of UNICEF if necessary, additional studies and follow-up surveys on vulnerable groups of children;
- ▶ continue the process of bringing existing legislation into line with the provisions of the Convention and take fully into account the best interests of the child in the drafting of new legislation;
- ▶ abolish as a matter of priority provisions for the minimum age of marriage for girls at 15 years, the sentencing of children to corporal punishment, the "light bodily punishment" as an educational measure within the family, and the limitation of the right to legal counsel of children;
- ▶ allocate budgetary resources to the maximum extent possible to give priority to the realization of the economic, social and cultural rights of children, including the rights to health, education and rehabilitation, and pay particular attention to children belonging to the most disadvantaged groups, such as girls, disabled children, children living in rural areas, children living and/or working in the street, children involved in the administration of the juvenile justice system and children affected by or infected with HIV/AIDS, including orphans;
- ▶ accord greater attention to the development of a primary health-care system, which would develop a culture of nutrition, hygiene and sanitation education;
- ▶ make special efforts to guarantee an effective system of birth registration;
- ▶ establish an adequate system of registration of refugee children to ensure that their rights are protected;
- ▶ make greater efforts to promote the participation of children in family, school and social life, and the effective enjoyment of their fundamental freedoms, including the freedom of opinion, expression and association;