

- ▶ launch a systematic information campaign, for both children and adults, on the Convention and consider incorporation of the Convention in the curricula of all educational institutions;
- ▶ direct efforts to provision of comprehensive training programmes for professional groups working with and for children;
- ▶ make special efforts to develop an effective system of birth registration, to ensure the full enjoyment of their fundamental rights by all children;
- ▶ prohibit by law corporal punishment and withdraw references to disciplinary measures using physical force, such as caning, from the Teachers Handbook;
- ▶ take all appropriate measures, including legal ones, to protect children from harmful information, including in the audio-visual media as well as in media using new technologies;
- ▶ with a view to fully protecting the rights of adopted children, review adoption laws and consider ratifying the Hague Convention on Protection of Children and Cooperation in Respect of Intercountry Adoption;
- ▶ undertake to prevent and combat the phenomenon of children working and/or living on the street by, *inter alia*, engaging in research and collection of data, promoting integration and vocational training programmes as well as guaranteeing equal access to health and social services;
- ▶ take all appropriate measures, including through international cooperation, to prevent and combat malnutrition;
- ▶ strengthen its information and prevention programmes to combat HIV/AIDS and sexually transmittable diseases (STD) as well as discriminatory attitudes towards children affected by or infected with HIV/ AIDS;
- ▶ continue and strengthen family planning and reproductive health programmes, including those for adolescents;
- ▶ noting that serious efforts are required to address harmful traditional practices such as early marriage, female genital mutilation and Trokosi, on a priority basis, review all legislation to ensure its full compatibility with children's rights and develop and pursue;
- ▶ public campaigns involving all sectors of society with a view to changing attitudes;
- ▶ continue efforts to make primary education free, compulsory and available to all and implement measures to improve school enrolment and pupil retention, especially of girls, and incorporate education on the rights of the child in school curricula;
- ▶ make all appropriate efforts to ensure easy and full access to basic services, including education, health and social services, to all children living under its jurisdiction;
- ▶ give specific attention to monitoring the full implementation of labour laws in order to protect children from being economically exploited;
- ▶ adopt explicit legislation and measures to protect children from exploitation through child labour in the informal sector and consider ratifying ILO Convention No. 138 on minimum age for employment;
- ▶ take all appropriate measures to prevent and combat drug and substance abuse among children, such as public information campaigns, including in schools and support rehabilitation programmes dealing with child victims of drug and substance abuse;

- ▶ reinforce its legislative framework to protect fully children from all forms of sexual abuse or exploitation, including within the family;
- ▶ consider undertaking a comprehensive reform of the juvenile justice system, with particular attention paid to protecting the rights of children deprived of their liberty, to raising the minimum age of criminal responsibility, and to improving the quality and adequacy of alternative measures to imprisonment; and,
- ▶ organize training programmes on the relevant international standards for all professionals involved with the juvenile justice system.

## THEMATIC REPORTS

### *Mechanisms of the Commission on Human Rights*

#### **Sale of children, child prostitution, child pornography, Special Rapporteur on the:** (E/CN.4/1997/95, para. 42)

The report notes that there are several thousand female ritual slaves as a result of the practice of "trocosi", whereby families give away girls and young women to serve as slaves in religious shrines as a way to appease the gods for crimes supposedly committed by relatives. The report refers to the case of a 12-year-old girl who had become a "trocosi" wife to a priest to atone for her father's crime of raping his niece, which was how the girl was conceived. The report notes that because of the religious nature of the practice, many Ghanians who advocate abolition of the bondage are sceptical about the ability of a new law to end the practice. Moreover, because it is believed that, if the gods are not appeased, one person's offence may cause vengeance to be visited on the entire community, some have expressed the fear that, if the "trocosi" are returned home, they would suffer all kinds of punishment

#### **Violence against women, Special Rapporteur on:** (E/CN.4/1997/47, Section III)

In the section on rape and sexual violence, the report cites the law in force in Ghana which specifies that rape is considered a first degree felony punishable by a sentence of not less than three years' imprisonment in addition to a fine not exceeding 500,000 cedis (less than US\$ 500). The law stipulates that default of the payment of the fine will result in a further term of imprisonment.

### *Mechanisms and Reports of the Sub-Commission*

#### **Contemporary forms of slavery, Working Group on:** (E/CN.4/Sub.2/1997/13, para. 74)

The report refers to information received on the trafficking of children from Togo to Ghana and other countries and the need to draw up a regional plan of action to combat the exploitation and trafficking of children in West Africa.

#### **Traditional practices affecting the health of women and children, Special Rapporteur on:** (E/CN.4/Sub.2/1997/10, para. 15)

The report refers to the practice of "Trocosi" girls and notes that, although individuals and groups in Ghana have met with some success in convincing priests to put an end to this practice, the religious nature of the practice suggests that it will take a long time for changes to have any effect.