



COMMITTEE ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

Fortieth session

CONSIDERATION OF REPORTS SUBMITTED BY STATES PARTIES UNDER ARTICLE 8 OF THE **Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict**

Concluding observations: Finland

1. The Committee considered the initial report of Finland (CRC/C/OPAC/FIN/1) at its 1069th meeting (see CRC/C/SR.1069), held on 22 September 2005, and adopted at its 1080th meeting (see CRC/C/SR.1080), held on 30 September 2005, the following concluding observations.

A. Introduction

2. The Committee welcomes the submission of the State party's report, which gives detailed information on the implementation of the Optional Protocol.

B. Positive aspects

3. The Committee welcomes the fact that recruitment of persons below the age of 18 into the Armed Forces, including on a voluntary basis, is prohibited under Act 364/2000 amending the Conscription Act. It is further noted with appreciation that the same Act makes the use of persons under 18 in hostilities a possible war crime punishable under the Penal Code.

C. Principal areas of concern and recommendations

Assistance for physical and psychological recovery

4. The Committee notes that the State party is a country of destination of asylum-seeking and migrant children coming from war-torn countries who may have been victims of traumatic experiences.

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5. The Committee invites the State party to provide information in its next periodic report on refugee and migrant children within its jurisdiction who may have been involved in hostilities in their country of origin and on the assistance provided, if any, for their physical and psychological recovery and social reintegration. Furthermore, the State party is also invited to provide additional information on technical cooperation and financial assistance projects aimed at preventing the involvement of children in armed conflicts as well as assisting the recovery of child victims of armed conflict.

Training/dissemination of the Optional Protocol

6. The Committee recommends that the State party continue to develop ongoing and systematic education and training in all relevant languages on the provisions of the Optional Protocol for all relevant professional groups, in particular military personnel, and make them widely known to the public at large and, in particular, to children and parents in all relevant languages, through, inter alia, school curricula.

Dissemination of documentation

7. In light of article 2, paragraph 2, of the Optional Protocol, the Committee recommends that the initial report submitted by the State party and the concluding observations adopted by the Committee be made widely available to the public at large in order to generate debate on and awareness of the Optional Protocol, its implementation and monitoring.

Next report

8. In accordance with article 8, paragraph 2, the Committee requests the State party to include further information on the implementation of the Optional Protocol in its next (fourth) periodic report under the Convention on the Rights of the

Child, in accordance with article 44 of the Convention, due on 19 July 2008.
