

**ALPHABET OF LAW**

**ACTIVITY MANUAL FOR TEACHERS**

ABA/CEELI and USAID  
logos

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## Introduction

Welcome to the Alphabet of Law Activity Manual for Teachers and Street Law Instructors. We hope that you will find this manual useful when teaching the topics depicted in ABA/CEELI's Alphabet of Law animated film series.

This manual is designed for teachers and street law instructors to use in classes in conjunction with the Alphabet of Law films. It provides various interactive activities and role play exercises that build on the material presented in the films and will encourage classroom discussion on the government, legal, and human rights topics presented in the films. The activities vary in complexity and are designed for use in the seventh through tenth classes. Each activity could be completed within a 45 minute class period, with some of the activities requiring advance preparation by the students.

We invite you to use the Alphabet of Law films in your civic education or street law classes, and to follow each film with an activity that will broaden your students' knowledge and enhance their interest in these important topics. We hope that the films and this manual will make a meaningful contribution to your classes. Please share your comments and ideas regarding this manual and the Alphabet of Law series, as well as suggestions for future civic education and street law projects that ABA/CEELI can develop to better educate students. We wish you good luck and success.

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## **PART 1. Branches of Government**

### **Activity 1**

#### Choose the Branch

Take three pieces of flip chart paper and label each one with a different branch of government – executive, legislative, and judicial. Prepare two envelopes with folded papers in each envelope (post-it notes work best). The first envelope should contain names of different Armenian and foreign government positions (e.g. foreign minister, regional governor, judge, speaker, member of parliament, vice-president etc.) as well as names of current position holders (e.g., justice minister, parliament speaker, presidents of different countries, etc.). The second envelope should contain activities typical for each of the three branches (e.g. adopting a law, hearing trials, proposing legislation, etc.). The third envelope should contain names of different national and foreign government agencies (Duma, Rada, Cabinet, Senate, Constitutional Court, National Assembly, Marzpet's Office, City Hall, etc.)

Each student, one at a time, should choose a folded paper from an envelope and stick it to the flip chart paper with the correct name of the branch of government. After all of the papers are placed into a branch of government, the whole group will discuss whether any of the papers were placed in the incorrect branch of government.

### **Activity 2**

#### Our Government at Work

Students should look for newspaper or magazine articles that illustrate each of the branches of government – executive, legislative, and judicial. For instance, an example of the legislative branch would be a vote on a law in Parliament. Students will create a scrapbook in which they place the articles, a short summary of each article, and explaining what government function was performed. Students could share their scrapbooks with each other or give a brief oral report to the class on one of the articles that they found, explaining why the activity discussed in the article is unique to that branch of government. This activity could also be conducted over a longer period of time (e.g. – have students collect articles over one month or even one semester). Students can receive grades based on their scrapbooks.

### **Activity 3**

#### Which Branch is Responsible?

Divide students into six groups. Give each group Chapter 1, Articles 1-11 of the Constitution. Assign each group a purpose of government listed in Articles 1-11 (e.g. Article 2 – free elections). On flip chart paper, instruct each group to specify who in the government, and to which branch they belong, is responsible for fulfilling each

purpose. Ask each group to select a spokesperson to explain their list to the class. Discuss each answer and point out that sometimes more than one group will have responsibility for fulfilling a governmental purpose.

#### **Activity 4**

##### **The Contribution of Government**

Divide the class into three groups. Assign each group a branch of government – executive, legislative, and judicial. Next, give the class a national issue that the government needs to solve. For example, how to discourage teenagers from smoking. Have each group list different ways that their branch of government could contribute to solving the problem. Each group should then present their ideas to the entire group for discussion.

#### **Activity 5**

##### **Explain it to the King**

Break the class into two groups and read the following quotation from Victor Hugo:

“During a monarchy justice originates from a king. During a republic it has to come from the people.” Have a brief discussion about the meaning of the quote and then present the following scenario to the class.

A king appears in the 21st century but he thinks as an absolute monarch. It’s important to explain to him that nowadays he does not possess all branches of government. The groups have 10 minutes to discuss how to present the situation so the king understands that he can not make decisions for the court cases and he can not make changes in the legislative code any more.

Suggest that the class present their responses in a role play format where group members can play the roles of president, parliament members, ministers, judges, journalists and etc, while explaining the concept of “branches of government” to the king. During the presentations, the king’s role can be performed by the teacher or by one of the most aware students. The king should be very critical about the group presentations and insist that a monarchy is a better form of government. He or she also can ask confusing questions or show that the class’s explanations are not acceptable in order to make groups explain themselves more. After the presentations, the king will announce which presentation is the most understandable and illustrative, and will explain the meaning of the term “branches of government” and why it is needed to show what he or she learned from the class presentations.

During the last 5-10 minutes of the lesson, the discussion, a brainstorming session will be held. The students will speak about whether it was easy to explain to the king

about the branches of the government, what was well performed, and what could have been done better.

## **Activity 6**

### **The Media Briefing**

Chose students to perform the following roles: President, Member of the National Assembly, the Prime Minister, Constitutional Court member, and judge of the First Instance Court.

The other students will play the roles of journalists. The “journalists” ask questions to the “authorities”, but should deliberately ask questions intended for one authority to a different one (i.e. – ask the Constitutional Court representative about a law about to be enacted by the National Assembly). The questions can be prepared in advance at home and even can be taken from the discussed topics of the press. It is important for the students to know who is responsible for solving each problem.

The “Authorities” task is to answer the questions of their duties and redirect the questions not involving their duties to the right addressee for further discussions and clarifications. (The students may not be able to correctly answer the questions, but it is important for them to determine who is responsible for addressing each issue).

It is necessary to hold a discussion after the de-briefing, where students will present their notes on the arguable questions, difficulties, problems and their solutions.

If it is difficult for “journalists” to think of questions, you can prepare a list of questions for the class to ask:

- Why the construction of Highway A remains unfinished (executive branch )
- Whether decision A of the National Assembly is in compliance with the Constitution (judicial branch)
- Why the meeting in front of the NA was prohibited (executive branch )
- Is there a Law on UFO’s (legislative branch)
- Who is responsible for environmental pollution (legislative, executive, judicial , it can be mentioned what each branch can do in its turn)
- Why there are violations of freedom of speech (judicial branch)

## **PART 2. Constitutional Rights**

### **Activity 1**

#### **Freedom of Speech**

Have students keep a 24 hour log of every example of the exercise of free speech or violations of the right to free speech that they witness. Then have students come together in small groups and brainstorm how our lives would be different if we lost this right or if this right was more stringently enforced. How would the lives of individuals be different? The lives of students? Of musicians and other kinds of artists? Of political activists? Of advertisers? Of teachers? Of members of religious minorities? How would democracy grow or be threatened? Small groups could report their discussion to the class.

## **Activity 2**

### **Writing a Constitution**

Write on the blackboard or distribute a list of rights contained in the Constitution to the students in your class. Tell the students that they are citizens of a newly established country and that they have been selected to choose which rights of individual citizens will be included in the country's new constitution. The students should consider the rights contained in the Armenian Constitution. However, the students may only choose ten of the rights to be included in the new constitution. The students must decide which ten rights are the most important and will be included in the new constitution.

You can facilitate the discussion, which will probably result in the students finding that all of the rights are important and it is very difficult to exclude any rights included in the Constitution. To shorten the lesson, provide the students with a list of fewer rights to choose from in creating the new Constitution.

## **Activity 3**

### **Constitutional Rights Parachute Game**

Draw a large picture of a parachute on the blackboard or a flip chart and have the students fill it with several rights contained in the Constitution. Explain to the students that the Parachute is going to fall down because it is too heavy to hold all of the rights contained in the Constitution. The task is to decide which are the less important rights that can be taken out so that the parachute can carry only the most important constitutional rights. Have the students discuss which rights are the most important. If the students cannot agree, have them vote on the most important rights or have a discussion leading to the conclusion that it is very difficult to agree on a consensus, since all of the rights are important.

## **Activity 4**

### **Constitutional Rights Activity Chart**

Before the activity, prepare the handout shown below for each member of the class. During class, distribute a handout to each student in the class. Explain that each student should ask each question on the sheet to twelve different students in the class. The key words of the answer and the name of the student answering each question should be noted down in the relevant box. When the students have completed this activity, conduct a discussion by taking the question in each box and asking the students to share the answers they received.

Proposed Handout – Feel free to change any of the questions to tailor the activity to the interest and level of your class.

|   |  |  |   |
|---|--|--|---|
| An example of discrimination                                      | A special constitutional right that all children should have | A constitutional right that has been denied to you personally    | A constitutional right denied to some people in this country    |
| The name of an organization that fights for constitutional rights | A right sometimes denied to women                            | An example of how someone's right to privacy may be violated     | A violation of the right to life                                |
| A constitutional right of someone charged with a crime            | A duty we have as citizens under the Constitution            | An example of how someone's right to free speech may be violated | An example of how someone's freedom of movement may be violated |

### **Activity 5**

#### **Constitutional Pantomime**

Before the activity, write the names of different constitutional rights on pieces of paper and put them into a bag. At the beginning of the lesson, split the class into

two groups. Have one group select a person to perform a pantomime. That person will select a constitutional right out of the bag and act it out so that the rest of his or her group can name the right. The guessing group has three chances to guess the right, if they guess correctly, they win a point. If they do not guess correctly, they receive zero points. Alternate groups until all of the rights have been used.

### **PART 3. Gender Equality**

#### **Activity 1**

##### The Dilemma Game \*

Prepare 3 or 4 controversial statements relating to gender equality. For example, “men and women should equally share the housework at home.” Draw a line along the floor with chalk or tape. Explain that standing to the right of the line represents agreement with the statement and standing to the left represents disagreement. The distance from the line represents the strength of agreement or disagreement; the further from the line, the greater the agreement or disagreement. The walls of the room are the outer limit. Standing on the line shows that the person has no opinion.

Read out the first statement. Tell participants to stand at a point on either side of the line that represents their opinion about the statement. Now invite people to explain why they are standing where they are. Let everyone who wishes to, speak. Then ask if anyone wishes to change position. When all who wish to move have done so, ask them their reasons for moving. Repeat exercise with each controversial statement.

\* This exercise was taken from Compass: A Manual on Human Rights Education With Young People. A publication of the Council of Europe.

#### **Activity 2**

Ask the class to make two separate lists as a group. One list should be words or qualities that describe men and one list should be words or qualities that describe women. Once the lists are complete, starting with the first word or description on the men’s list, ask the class if that word or quality could also be used to describe women. Ask for specific examples from their lives to illustrate each word or quality. Repeat process for the rest of the men’s list and then use words or qualities from the women’s list, asking if they could be used to describe men.

#### **Activity 3**

##### Gender Role Reversal

Divide the class into two groups, with all of the boys in one group and all of the girls in the other group. Assign the groups hypothetical role play situations where the boys will play the roles of girls and the girls will play the roles of boys. Give each group time to think of their arguments regarding each role play, assign group members to play specific roles, and then have the groups conduct the role play activity. Following each role play, conduct a discussion on the arguments raised and how the students felt arguing their case from the “reversed” gender role.

#### Suggested Role Play Situations:

1. Stage a debate between the groups as to whether husbands should allow their wives to work.
2. Stage a role play between a husband and a wife. The wife always drove a car before she was married, but her new husband does not want her to drive any more. The wife disagrees and wants to continue driving.
3. Stage a role play where a 15 year old boy wants a job baby sitting 2 young children. He likes children and often cared for his younger brother and sisters because his mother worked two jobs to support his family and his father was dead. Additionally, the boy wants the money to pay for a summer trip with his friends and this is the only job in his small town that is available to him. The boy’s friends tease him for wanting to take care of children. The parents of the young children are not sure whether they should hire a boy to care for their young children because they do not know whether a boy can do the job.

#### **Activity 4**

##### Traditional Expressions

Divide the class into two groups. Ask one group to think of a traditional Armenian expression that discusses gender. For example, “women have long hair, but they are short on brains.” Ask the other group to think of a way to reverse the expression. For example, “women have long hair which makes it easier for them to connect to the biosphere, which means they are more intelligent.” Repeat with other expressions.

#### **Activity 5**

##### Gender in Advertising

For homework, ask the students to pay attention to advertisements on television or in a newspaper or magazine. The students should choose one advertisement that depicts women in a stereotyped role and one advertisement that depicts men in a stereotyped role. For each advertisement, the students should note to whom the advertisement is directed – a male or female audience. Select students to describe or show the advertisement to the entire class and explain whether they think the advertisement will sell the product. Also, have the student explain whether the gender role depiction in each advertisement is a fair depiction of men or women.

## **PART 4. If All Followed the Law**

### **Activity 1**

#### **If All Followed the Law Film Discussion**

After showing the film ask the students the following questions (the teacher may come up with her/his own ones) in order to reinforce the information that the students received:

1. Which are the three constitutional obligations?
2. Which were the violations of law that you noticed in the film? Who broke the law?
3. What consequences can be caused if we do not follow our responsibilities and the laws?
4. Which characters from the film were not punished for the violations?
5. Were there any innocent victims in the film?

Divide the class into two groups and have them discuss the two situations from the film. The first group discusses the traffic situation, the second one the hospital/university situation. Discussion can last for about 10-15 minutes. The students will need to write their answers on flipchart paper for later presentations.

Traffic group discusses and gives reasoning as to:

- Why the driver violated the law
- Why the policemen violate the law
- How would a law-abiding driver act in a similar situation and why he/she wouldn't break the law
- How would a law-abiding policeman act in a similar situation and why he/she wouldn't break the law.

Hospital/university group discusses and gives reasoning as to:

- Why the doctor violated the law (being a student)
- Why the professor violated the law
- How would the law-abiding student act in a similar situation and why he/she wouldn't break the law
- How would the law-abiding professor act in a similar situation and why he/she wouldn't break the law.

Have each group make presentations of their discussion results and ask the opinion of the opposite group.

### **Activity 2**

#### **Interviews**

Have the students interview police, lawyers, judges, NGO representatives and other citizens on what they believe to be the principle causes of crime and corruption in your community. It may be helpful to briefly explain the rules of interviewing to the students before beginning this activity. Students should ask about programs that are operating to reduce crime and corruption. Students could also interview people operating anti-crime or anti-corruption programs and ask for an assessment of the effectiveness of these programs. Have the students give oral reports to the class about the interviews.

### **Activity 3**

#### **Rights and Responsibilities**

Begin the class by reading the information about rights and responsibilities stated in the box below. Next, ask the students to form pairs. Each student should write down five important rights which they think they should have in school and five important rights which they think they should have at home. For example, the right to have their own space. Ask each student to trade their list with their partner. Each student should think of the responsibilities which correspond with each right that their partner listed. For example, the responsibility to respect the space of the people with whom they live. Every pair reports to the rest of the class two rights and their corresponding responsibilities from their lists. The teacher should write the rights and responsibilities on the black board. Start a discussion of concrete situations where rights and responsibilities conflict. For example, people have a right to assembly, and a group may want to have a noisy protest meeting in a neighborhood until the early morning, but this would violate other peoples' right to rest (to sleep at night). As a result, the two rights conflict in this situation. Have students bring arguments as to which right is more important to be protected in the given situation or how the conflict can be solved.

#### **Information about Rights and Responsibilities**

Every right has a corresponding responsibility. For example, your right to freedom of speech is limited by your responsibility not to say untrue things which will degrade another person and abuse their right to dignity and good reputation.

The balance of our rights and our responsibilities to respect the rights of other people means that we usually have to exercise our rights within certain restraints.

There are many situations where rights and responsibilities of different people conflict. For example, some countries have laws making the wearing of seatbelts compulsory in cars, in order to avoid high accident rates and to prevent fatal injuries. However, many people oppose these laws, arguing that it is a restriction of their right to act freely.

#### **Activity 4**

##### **Who can fight corruption? \***

Divide the students into small groups and give them copies of the handout below. Have the students discuss which of the people or organizations listed below could most effectively fight corruption and what actions could they take. Have each group select the three people or organizations that would be the most effective in fighting corruption and report back to the entire class for discussion.

People or Organizations: President, Government, Parliament, Court System, Law Enforcement Authorities, Political Parties, Mass Media, the Church, Citizens, Public Organizations, Diaspora, International Organizations, Myself, Difficult to Answer.

\* Adapted from Project Harmony Armenia's Zang Manual.

#### **Activity 5**

##### **Corruption Scenarios \***

Divide the class into four groups and give each group one of the scenarios listed below. For each scenario, have the group discuss it and answer the following questions: 1. What is destructive in this situation? 2. What individual rights were violated? 3. Who lost in this situation? Next, have each group present their scenario to the entire class for discussion.

Scenario 1: Aram's father wanted to construct a garage in the yard, but the City would not allow commencing illegal construction. One day, however, Aram came home from school and saw the construction has been started. He tried to ask his father who had given the permission, but his father did not respond. Two months later the City officials were re-appointed and the garage was knocked down.

Scenario 2: Gagik, a tenth grade student of the high school, did not attend the school for the whole year. Not only did he receive an attestation without proper knowledge, he also went to medical school and graduated from it. With the same success, he now works at the best hospital in town.

Scenario 3: Arpenik and her father were hurrying to the school in her father's car. The traffic inspector stopped them for driving through the red traffic light. The father approached the policeman, suggested some cash, and, in a couple of minutes, they continued their ride. Arpenik asked her father if the policeman had written a report, but the father did not reply. One month later, the father ended up in a hospital due to the same violation.

Scenario 4: The parents of conscript Hakob paid a sum of money to their neighbor Sisak, who had connections at the Military Commissariat, a substantial sum of money with hope

that their son would be drafted to a Yerevan military camp. Hakob, however, was drafted to Meghri. When the parents demanded their money back from Sisak, he refused.

\* Adapted from Project Harmony Armenia's Zang Manual

## **1. Children's Rights**

### **Activity 1**

Based on the story of the "Gikor" novel

Gikor is a classic Armenian story about a poor boy from the village who moves to the big city in order to work as a servant for a rich man. The rich man is cruel and abusive towards Gikor. Many of Gikor's rights are violated and he dies at the end of the story. The teacher breaks the class into four groups and presents the following rights to which Gikor was deprived.

For instance:

- The Right to study
- The Right to rest
- The Right to healthcare
- The Right to life and etc.

Write each named right on the black board. Next, have each group choose 1-2 rights and prepare a role-play depicting these rights that the group will present to the entire class. First, each group should present the situations where Gikor's rights were violated and then present the situations where his rights were protected. The students should think over the changes in history where the rights are now protected, which new characters could appear, and how the old ones would have behaved.

Following the presentations, discuss with the entire class whether all the rights of children are protected today and how those rights are protected. Also discuss why it is important to protect the rights of children and what lessons we can learn from Gikor's story.

### **Activity 2**

Rights and Responsibilities

Divide the class into pairs. Ask each pair to list their views on:

1. the rights and responsibilities of children and 2. the rights and responsibilities of parents/caregivers (The UN Convention applies the term 'child' to all persons under 18. The class may wish to discuss when they think someone becomes an adult.).

Next, ask students to pick out three key rights and responsibilities for both children and caregivers to share with the entire class. After each pair presents their rights and responsibilities, have the entire class identify the main areas of concern that all can agree on. Also, discuss the difference between something which is a right and something which is simply good or useful to have (e.g., the right to play is a right, having toys to play with is simply something good and useful to have).

Finally, outline areas on which the UN Convention is based:

- participation
- provision
- protection

and explain the importance of working for a balance between all these areas.

### **Activity 3**

#### **Who can help?\***

Prior to class, prepare copies of the diagram below for each student in the class. At the beginning of the lesson, give each student a copy of the diagram. Divide the entire class in to pairs and ask each pair to consider the possible parties involved in 'making the world a better place for children.' The students can use the parties listed in the below chart and come up with their own ideas. After listing the possible parties, the students should put the parties in rank order. Next, have each pair match up with another pair. In the group of four, each pair should justify its party listing and ranking to the other pair.

Individuals  
Non-Governmental Organizations  
Charities  
Internet  
Leaders and Visionaries  
Communities  
Law Makers, Politicians  
Campaigning Groups  
Media  
Governments  
Others

\* Taken from the BBC World Service Website: [www.bbc.co.uk](http://www.bbc.co.uk).

### **Activity 4**

#### **Do You Know the U.N. Convention? \***

Before class, prepare the Somali Ballad handout below for every group in the class – there should be 9 groups. For the handout, do not include the article numbers. Additionally, make copies of the U.N. Convention for every group the class. Begin the

class by giving a brief background on the situation in Somalia: Somalia is a semi-arid region with frequent droughts. Since 1991, when the dictator Mohammad Siad Barre was ousted, Somalia has been without an effective government. The country is heavily dependent on foreign aid. Civil war has become a way of life. Somalia has not agreed to abide by the U.N. Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Next, divide the students into nine groups, hand out copies of the Somali Ballad and read it to the students and asking them to focus on the feelings of the boy who wrote it. For example, gratitude for relief given, grief for loss of a father, concern for a mother, etc. Assign each group a phrase listed in the Somalia ballad and ask them students to consider which rights listed in the U.N. Convention are being violated in Somalia according to that phrase in the Somalia Ballad. Have each group report which right was violated right back to the entire class during the discussion.

### **Somali Ballad**

We are lost and astray  
(Articles 7, 8, 9, and 10)

We cannot read and write  
(Articles 28, 29)

We are hungry and thirsty  
(Article 27)

We are surrounded by disasters  
(Article 6)

Victims of unkind treatment  
(Articles 20, 22, and 38)

We appeal to the international community  
Who look after and advocate human rights

Look and see the aggression  
(Articles 22)

Acknowledge all the disasters  
(Article 22)

If you do not help us, our future will be lost  
(Articles 1, 3, and 6)

and our existence will be at an end  
(Articles 1, 3, and 6)

\* Taken from the BBC World Service Website: [www.bbc.co.uk](http://www.bbc.co.uk)

## **Activity 5**

### **Children's Rights** \*

Start with a brief overview of children's rights using the U.N. Convention on the Rights of the Child. Next, ask the students to get into groups of three or four people and hand out the statement cards (listed below) to each group. Tell each small group to discuss the nine statements and consider how relevant each one is to their own lives. They should then arrange them in order of importance. When the small groups are finished, let every group read out their ranking. End the activity with a discussion regarding the rankings.

|  |
|--|
| The child has the right to express freely views on all matters affecting him/her, and the child's views should be given due weight. The child has the right of freedom of expression.  |
| The right of the child to freedom of thought, conscience and religion shall be respected. The child has the right to freedom of association and peaceful assembly.   |
| No child shall be subjected to arbitrary or unlawful interference with his/her privacy, family, home or correspondence. The child should be protected from unlawful attacks on his/her honor and reputation.   |
| Parents have the prime responsibility for the upbringing and development of the child.   |
| The child has the right to education. The State shall make primary education compulsory and available and free to all. School discipline shall be administered in a manner consistent with the child's dignity. Education should be directed towards the development of the child's personality, talents and abilities, towards the development of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, towards the development of a responsible life in a free society in the spirit of peace, friendship, understanding, tolerance and equality, and towards the development of respect for the natural environment. |
| The child has the right to rest and leisure, to play and participate freely in cultural life and the arts.   |
| The child shall be protected from economic exploitation and from performing work that is hazardous to his/her life and development. The child shall be protected from all forms of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse, the use of children in prostitution or other unlawful sexual practices, in pornographic performances and material.  |
| The State shall take all feasible measures to protect and care for children affected by armed conflict.  |
| Every child accused of having committed an offense or crime should be guaranteed to be presumed innocent until proven guilty, to have legal assistance in the presenting of his/her case, not to be compelled to give testimony or to confess guilt, to have his/her privacy fully respected, and to be dealt with in a manner appropriate to his/her age, circumstances and well-being. Neither capital punishment nor life imprisonment without possibility of release shall be imposed for offenses committed by children under the age of 18.  |

\* This exercise was adapted from Compass: A Manual on Human Rights Education With Young People. A publication of the Council of Europe.

## Appendix 1

### **Convention on the Rights of the Child**

**Adopted and opened for signature, ratification and accession by  
General Assembly resolution 44/25  
of 20 November 1989**

*entry into force 2 September 1990, in accordance with article 49*

#### *Preamble*

The States Parties to the present Convention,

Considering that, in accordance with the principles proclaimed in the Charter of the United Nations, recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world,

Bearing in mind that the peoples of the United Nations have, in the Charter, reaffirmed their faith in fundamental human rights and in the dignity and worth of the human person, and have determined to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom,

Recognizing that the United Nations has, in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and in the International Covenants on Human Rights, proclaimed and agreed that everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth therein, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status,

Recalling that, in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the United Nations has proclaimed that childhood is entitled to special care and assistance,

Convinced that the family, as the fundamental group of society and the natural environment for the growth and well-being of all its members and particularly children, should be afforded the necessary protection and assistance so that it can fully assume its responsibilities within the community,

Recognizing that the child, for the full and harmonious development of his or her personality, should grow up in a family environment, in an atmosphere of happiness, love and understanding,

Considering that the child should be fully prepared to live an individual life in society, and brought up in the spirit of the ideals proclaimed in the Charter of the United Nations, and in particular in the spirit of peace, dignity, tolerance, freedom, equality and solidarity,

Bearing in mind that the need to extend particular care to the child has been stated in the Geneva Declaration of the Rights of the Child of 1924 and in the Declaration of the

Rights of the Child adopted by the General Assembly on 20 November 1959 and recognized in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (in particular in articles 23 and 24), in the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (in particular in article 10) and in the statutes and relevant instruments of specialized agencies and international organizations concerned with the welfare of children, '

Bearing in mind that, as indicated in the Declaration of the Rights of the Child, "the child, by reason of his physical and mental immaturity, needs special safeguards and care, including appropriate legal protection, before as well as after birth",

Recalling the provisions of the Declaration on Social and Legal Principles relating to the Protection and Welfare of Children, with Special Reference to Foster Placement and Adoption Nationally and Internationally; the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Administration of Juvenile Justice (The Beijing Rules) ; and the Declaration on the Protection of Women and Children in Emergency and Armed Conflict,

Recognizing that, in all countries in the world, there are children living in exceptionally difficult conditions, and that such children need special consideration,

Taking due account of the importance of the traditions and cultural values of each people for the protection and harmonious development of the child,

Recognizing the importance of international co-operation for improving the living conditions of children in every country, in particular in the developing countries,

Have agreed as follows:

## **PART I**

### ***Article 1***

For the purposes of the present Convention, a child means every human being below the age of eighteen years unless under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier.

### ***Article 2***

1. States Parties shall respect and ensure the rights set forth in the present Convention to each child within their jurisdiction without discrimination of any kind, irrespective of the child's or his or her parent's or legal guardian's race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or other status.

2. States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure that the child is protected against all forms of discrimination or punishment on the basis of the status, activities, expressed opinions, or beliefs of the child's parents, legal guardians, or family members.

### ***Article 3***

1. In all actions concerning children, whether undertaken by public or private social welfare institutions, courts of law, administrative authorities or legislative bodies, the best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration.

2. States Parties undertake to ensure the child such protection and care as is necessary for his or her well-being, taking into account the rights and duties of his or her parents, legal guardians, or other individuals legally responsible for him or her, and, to this end, shall take all appropriate legislative and administrative measures.

3. States Parties shall ensure that the institutions, services and facilities responsible for the care or protection of children shall conform with the standards established by competent authorities, particularly in the areas of safety, health, in the number and suitability of their staff, as well as competent supervision.

#### ***Article 4***

States Parties shall undertake all appropriate legislative, administrative, and other measures for the implementation of the rights recognized in the present Convention. With regard to economic, social and cultural rights, States Parties shall undertake such measures to the maximum extent of their available resources and, where needed, within the framework of international co-operation.

#### ***Article 5***

States Parties shall respect the responsibilities, rights and duties of parents or, where applicable, the members of the extended family or community as provided for by local custom, legal guardians or other persons legally responsible for the child, to provide, in a manner consistent with the evolving capacities of the child, appropriate direction and guidance in the exercise by the child of the rights recognized in the present Convention.

#### ***Article 6***

1. States Parties recognize that every child has the inherent right to life.
2. States Parties shall ensure to the maximum extent possible the survival and development of the child.

#### ***Article 7***

1. The child shall be registered immediately after birth and shall have the right from birth to a name, the right to acquire a nationality and, as far as possible, the right to know and be cared for by his or her parents.
2. States Parties shall ensure the implementation of these rights in accordance with their national law and their obligations under the relevant international instruments in this field, in particular where the child would otherwise be stateless.

#### ***Article 8***

1. States Parties undertake to respect the right of the child to preserve his or her identity, including nationality, name and family relations as recognized by law without unlawful interference.
2. Where a child is illegally deprived of some or all of the elements of his or her identity, States Parties shall provide appropriate assistance and protection, with a view to re-establishing speedily his or her identity.

### ***Article 9***

1. States Parties shall ensure that a child shall not be separated from his or her parents against their will, except when competent authorities subject to judicial review determine, in accordance with applicable law and procedures, that such separation is necessary for the best interests of the child. Such determination may be necessary in a particular case such as one involving abuse or neglect of the child by the parents, or one where the parents are living separately and a decision must be made as to the child's place of residence.
2. In any proceedings pursuant to paragraph 1 of the present article, all interested parties shall be given an opportunity to participate in the proceedings and make their views known.
3. States Parties shall respect the right of the child who is separated from one or both parents to maintain personal relations and direct contact with both parents on a regular basis, except if it is contrary to the child's best interests.
4. Where such separation results from any action initiated by a State Party, such as the detention, imprisonment, exile, deportation or death (including death arising from any cause while the person is in the custody of the State) of one or both parents or of the child, that State Party shall, upon request, provide the parents, the child or, if appropriate, another member of the family with the essential information concerning the whereabouts of the absent member(s) of the family unless the provision of the information would be detrimental to the well-being of the child. States Parties shall further ensure that the submission of such a request shall of itself entail no adverse consequences for the person(s) concerned.

### ***Article 10***

1. In accordance with the obligation of States Parties under article 9, paragraph 1, applications by a child or his or her parents to enter or leave a State Party for the purpose of family reunification shall be dealt with by States Parties in a positive, humane and expeditious manner. States Parties shall further ensure that the submission of such a request shall entail no adverse consequences for the applicants and for the members of their family.
2. A child whose parents reside in different States shall have the right to maintain on a regular basis, save in exceptional circumstances personal relations and direct contacts with both parents. Towards that end and in accordance with the obligation of States Parties under article 9, paragraph 1, States Parties shall respect the right of the child and his or her parents to leave any country, including their own, and to enter their own country. The right to leave any country shall be subject only to such restrictions as are prescribed by law and which are necessary to protect the national security, public order

(ordre public), public health or morals or the rights and freedoms of others and are consistent with the other rights recognized in the present Convention.

#### ***Article 11***

1. States Parties shall take measures to combat the illicit transfer and non-return of children abroad.
2. To this end, States Parties shall promote the conclusion of bilateral or multilateral agreements or accession to existing agreements.

#### ***Article 12***

1. States Parties shall assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child.
2. For this purpose, the child shall in particular be provided the opportunity to be heard in any judicial and administrative proceedings affecting the child, either directly, or through a representative or an appropriate body, in a manner consistent with the procedural rules of national law.

#### ***Article 13***

1. The child shall have the right to freedom of expression; this right shall include freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing or in print, in the form of art, or through any other media of the child's choice.
2. The exercise of this right may be subject to certain restrictions, but these shall only be such as are provided by law and are necessary:
  - (a) For respect of the rights or reputations of others; or
  - (b) For the protection of national security or of public order (ordre public), or of public health or morals.

#### ***Article 14***

1. States Parties shall respect the right of the child to freedom of thought, conscience and religion.
2. States Parties shall respect the rights and duties of the parents and, when applicable, legal guardians, to provide direction to the child in the exercise of his or her right in a manner consistent with the evolving capacities of the child.
3. Freedom to manifest one's religion or beliefs may be subject only to such limitations as are prescribed by law and are necessary to protect public safety, order, health or morals, or the fundamental rights and freedoms of others.

### ***Article 15***

1. States Parties recognize the rights of the child to freedom of association and to freedom of peaceful assembly.
2. No restrictions may be placed on the exercise of these rights other than those imposed in conformity with the law and which are necessary in a democratic society in the interests of national security or public safety, public order (ordre public), the protection of public health or morals or the protection of the rights and freedoms of others.

### ***Article 16***

1. No child shall be subjected to arbitrary or unlawful interference with his or her privacy, family, home or correspondence, nor to unlawful attacks on his or her honour and reputation.
2. The child has the right to the protection of the law against such interference or attacks.

### ***Article 17***

States Parties recognize the important function performed by the mass media and shall ensure that the child has access to information and material from a diversity of national and international sources, especially those aimed at the promotion of his or her social, spiritual and moral well-being and physical and mental health. To this end, States Parties shall:

- (a) Encourage the mass media to disseminate information and material of social and cultural benefit to the child and in accordance with the spirit of article 29;
- (b) Encourage international co-operation in the production, exchange and dissemination of such information and material from a diversity of cultural, national and international sources;
- (c) Encourage the production and dissemination of children's books;
- (d) Encourage the mass media to have particular regard to the linguistic needs of the child who belongs to a minority group or who is indigenous;
- (e) Encourage the development of appropriate guidelines for the protection of the child from information and material injurious to his or her well-being, bearing in mind the provisions of articles 13 and 18.

### ***Article 18***

1. States Parties shall use their best efforts to ensure recognition of the principle that both parents have common responsibilities for the upbringing and development of the child. Parents or, as the case may be, legal guardians, have the primary responsibility for the upbringing and development of the child. The best interests of the child will be their basic concern.
2. For the purpose of guaranteeing and promoting the rights set forth in the present Convention, States Parties shall render appropriate assistance to parents and legal guardians in the

performance of their child-rearing responsibilities and shall ensure the development of institutions, facilities and services for the care of children.

3. States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure that children of working parents have the right to benefit from child-care services and facilities for which they are eligible.

### ***Article 19***

1. States Parties shall take all appropriate legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s) or any other person who has the care of the child.

2. Such protective measures should, as appropriate, include effective procedures for the establishment of social programmes to provide necessary support for the child and for those who have the care of the child, as well as for other forms of prevention and for identification, reporting, referral, investigation, treatment and follow-up of instances of child maltreatment described heretofore, and, as appropriate, for judicial involvement.

### ***Article 20***

1. A child temporarily or permanently deprived of his or her family environment, or in whose own best interests cannot be allowed to remain in that environment, shall be entitled to special protection and assistance provided by the State.

2. States Parties shall in accordance with their national laws ensure alternative care for such a child.

3. Such care could include, inter alia, foster placement, kafalah of Islamic law, adoption or if necessary placement in suitable institutions for the care of children. When considering solutions, due regard shall be paid to the desirability of continuity in a child's upbringing and to the child's ethnic, religious, cultural and linguistic background.

### ***Article 21***

States Parties that recognize and/or permit the system of adoption shall ensure that the best interests of the child shall be the paramount consideration and they shall:

(a) Ensure that the adoption of a child is authorized only by competent authorities who determine, in accordance with applicable law and procedures and on the basis of all pertinent and reliable information, that the adoption is permissible in view of the child's status concerning parents, relatives and legal guardians and that, if required, the persons concerned have given their informed consent to the adoption on the basis of such counselling as may be necessary;

(b) Recognize that inter-country adoption may be considered as an alternative means of child's care, if the child cannot be placed in a foster or an adoptive family or cannot in any suitable manner be cared for in the child's country of origin; (c) Ensure that the child concerned by inter-country adoption enjoys safeguards and standards equivalent to those existing in the case of national adoption;

(d) Take all appropriate measures to ensure that, in inter-country adoption, the placement does not result in improper financial gain for those involved in it;

(e) Promote, where appropriate, the objectives of the present article by concluding bilateral or multilateral arrangements or agreements, and endeavour, within this framework, to ensure that the placement of the child in another country is carried out by competent authorities or organs.

### ***Article 22***

1. States Parties shall take appropriate measures to ensure that a child who is seeking refugee status or who is considered a refugee in accordance with applicable international or domestic law and procedures shall, whether unaccompanied or accompanied by his or her parents or by any other person, receive appropriate protection and humanitarian assistance in the enjoyment of applicable rights set forth in the present Convention and in other international human rights or humanitarian instruments to which the said States are Parties.

2. For this purpose, States Parties shall provide, as they consider appropriate, co-operation in any efforts by the United Nations and other competent intergovernmental organizations or non-governmental organizations co-operating with the United Nations to protect and assist such a child and to trace the parents or other members of the family of any refugee child in order to obtain information necessary for reunification with his or her family. In cases where no parents or other members of the family can be found, the child shall be accorded the same protection as any other child permanently or temporarily deprived of his or her family environment for any reason, as set forth in the present Convention.

### ***Article 23***

1. States Parties recognize that a mentally or physically disabled child should enjoy a full and decent life, in conditions which ensure dignity, promote self-reliance and facilitate the child's active participation in the community.

2. States Parties recognize the right of the disabled child to special care and shall encourage and ensure the extension, subject to available resources, to the eligible child and those responsible for his or her care, of assistance for which application is made and which is appropriate to the child's condition and to the circumstances of the parents or others caring for the child. 3. Recognizing the special needs of a disabled child, assistance extended in accordance with paragraph 2 of the present article shall be provided free of charge, whenever possible, taking into account the financial resources of the parents or others caring for the child, and shall be designed to ensure that the disabled child has effective access to and receives education, training, health care services, rehabilitation services, preparation for employment and recreation opportunities in a manner conducive to the child's achieving the fullest possible social integration and individual development, including his or her cultural and spiritual development

4. States Parties shall promote, in the spirit of international cooperation, the exchange of appropriate information in the field of preventive health care and of medical, psychological and functional treatment of disabled children, including dissemination of and access to information concerning methods of rehabilitation, education and vocational services, with the aim of enabling States Parties to improve their capabilities and skills and to widen their experience in these areas. In this regard, particular account shall be taken of the needs of developing countries.

## ***Article 24***

1. States Parties recognize the right of the child to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health and to facilities for the treatment of illness and rehabilitation of health. States Parties shall strive to ensure that no child is deprived of his or her right of access to such health care services.

2. States Parties shall pursue full implementation of this right and, in particular, shall take appropriate measures:

(a) To diminish infant and child mortality;

(b) To ensure the provision of necessary medical assistance and health care to all children with emphasis on the development of primary health care;

(c) To combat disease and malnutrition, including within the framework of primary health care, through, inter alia, the application of readily available technology and through the provision of adequate nutritious foods and clean drinking-water, taking into consideration the dangers and risks of environmental pollution;

(d) To ensure appropriate pre-natal and post-natal health care for mothers;

(e) To ensure that all segments of society, in particular parents and children, are informed, have access to education and are supported in the use of basic knowledge of child health and nutrition, the advantages of breastfeeding, hygiene and environmental sanitation and the prevention of accidents;

(f) To develop preventive health care, guidance for parents and family planning education and services.

3. States Parties shall take all effective and appropriate measures with a view to abolishing traditional practices prejudicial to the health of children.

4. States Parties undertake to promote and encourage international co-operation with a view to achieving progressively the full realization of the right recognized in the present article. In this regard, particular account shall be taken of the needs of developing countries.

## ***Article 25***

States Parties recognize the right of a child who has been placed by the competent authorities for the purposes of care, protection or treatment of his or her physical or mental health, to a periodic review of the treatment provided to the child and all other circumstances relevant to his or her placement.

## ***Article 26***

1. States Parties shall recognize for every child the right to benefit from social security, including social insurance, and shall take the necessary measures to achieve the full realization of this right in accordance with their national law.

2. The benefits should, where appropriate, be granted, taking into account the resources and the circumstances of the child and persons having responsibility for the maintenance of the child, as well as any other consideration relevant to an application for benefits made by or on behalf of the child.

#### ***Article 27***

1. States Parties recognize the right of every child to a standard of living adequate for the child's physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social development.

2. The parent(s) or others responsible for the child have the primary responsibility to secure, within their abilities and financial capacities, the conditions of living necessary for the child's development.

3. States Parties, in accordance with national conditions and within their means, shall take appropriate measures to assist parents and others responsible for the child to implement this right and shall in case of need provide material assistance and support programmes, particularly with regard to nutrition, clothing and housing.

4. States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to secure the recovery of maintenance for the child from the parents or other persons having financial responsibility for the child, both within the State Party and from abroad. In particular, where the person having financial responsibility for the child lives in a State different from that of the child, States Parties shall promote the accession to international agreements or the conclusion of such agreements, as well as the making of other appropriate arrangements.

#### ***Article 28***

1. States Parties recognize the right of the child to education, and with a view to achieving this right progressively and on the basis of equal opportunity, they shall, in particular:

(a) Make primary education compulsory and available free to all;

(b) Encourage the development of different forms of secondary education, including general and vocational education, make them available and accessible to every child, and take appropriate measures such as the introduction of free education and offering financial assistance in case of need;

(c) Make higher education accessible to all on the basis of capacity by every appropriate means;

(d) Make educational and vocational information and guidance available and accessible to all children;

(e) Take measures to encourage regular attendance at schools and the reduction of drop-out rates.

2. States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure that school discipline is administered in a manner consistent with the child's human dignity and in conformity with the present Convention.

3. States Parties shall promote and encourage international cooperation in matters relating to education, in particular with a view to contributing to the elimination of ignorance and illiteracy throughout the world and facilitating access to scientific and technical knowledge and modern teaching methods. In this regard, particular account shall be taken of the needs of developing countries.

**Article 29**     *General comment on its implementation*

1. States Parties agree that the education of the child shall be directed to:

(a) The development of the child's personality, talents and mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential;

(b) The development of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and for the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations;

(c) The development of respect for the child's parents, his or her own cultural identity, language and values, for the national values of the country in which the child is living, the country from which he or she may originate, and for civilizations different from his or her own;

(d) The preparation of the child for responsible life in a free society, in the spirit of understanding, peace, tolerance, equality of sexes, and friendship among all peoples, ethnic, national and religious groups and persons of indigenous origin;

(e) The development of respect for the natural environment.

2. No part of the present article or article 28 shall be construed so as to interfere with the liberty of individuals and bodies to establish and direct educational institutions, subject always to the observance of the principle set forth in paragraph 1 of the present article and to the requirements that the education given in such institutions shall conform to such minimum standards as may be laid down by the State.

**Article 30**

In those States in which ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities or persons of indigenous origin exist, a child belonging to such a minority or who is indigenous shall not be denied the right, in community with other members of his or her group, to enjoy his or her own culture, to profess and practise his or her own religion, or to use his or her own language.

**Article 31**

1. States Parties recognize the right of the child to rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to the age of the child and to participate freely in cultural life and the arts.

2. States Parties shall respect and promote the right of the child to participate fully in cultural and artistic life and shall encourage the provision of appropriate and equal opportunities for cultural, artistic, recreational and leisure activity.

### ***Article 32***

1. States Parties recognize the right of the child to be protected from economic exploitation and from performing any work that is likely to be hazardous or to interfere with the child's education, or to be harmful to the child's health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development.

2. States Parties shall take legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to ensure the implementation of the present article. To this end, and having regard to the relevant provisions of other international instruments, States Parties shall in particular: (a) Provide for a minimum age or minimum ages for admission to employment;

(b) Provide for appropriate regulation of the hours and conditions of employment;

(c) Provide for appropriate penalties or other sanctions to ensure the effective enforcement of the present article.

### ***Article 33***

States Parties shall take all appropriate measures, including legislative, administrative, social and educational measures, to protect children from the illicit use of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances as defined in the relevant international treaties, and to prevent the use of children in the illicit production and trafficking of such substances.

### ***Article 34***

States Parties undertake to protect the child from all forms of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse. For these purposes, States Parties shall in particular take all appropriate national, bilateral and multilateral measures to prevent:

(a) The inducement or coercion of a child to engage in any unlawful sexual activity;

(b) The exploitative use of children in prostitution or other unlawful sexual practices;

(c) The exploitative use of children in pornographic performances and materials.

### ***Article 35***

States Parties shall take all appropriate national, bilateral and multilateral measures to prevent the abduction of, the sale of or traffic in children for any purpose or in any form.

### ***Article 36***

States Parties shall protect the child against all other forms of exploitation prejudicial to any aspects of the child's welfare.

### ***Article 37***

States Parties shall ensure that:

(a) No child shall be subjected to torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. Neither capital punishment nor life imprisonment without possibility of release shall be imposed for offences committed by persons below eighteen years of age;

(b) No child shall be deprived of his or her liberty unlawfully or arbitrarily. The arrest, detention or imprisonment of a child shall be in conformity with the law and shall be used only as a measure of last resort and for the shortest appropriate period of time;

(c) Every child deprived of liberty shall be treated with humanity and respect for the inherent dignity of the human person, and in a manner which takes into account the needs of persons of his or her age. In particular, every child deprived of liberty shall be separated from adults unless it is considered in the child's best interest not to do so and shall have the right to maintain contact with his or her family through correspondence and visits, save in exceptional circumstances;

(d) Every child deprived of his or her liberty shall have the right to prompt access to legal and other appropriate assistance, as well as the right to challenge the legality of the deprivation of his or her liberty before a court or other competent, independent and impartial authority, and to a prompt decision on any such action.

### ***Article 38***

1. States Parties undertake to respect and to ensure respect for rules of international humanitarian law applicable to them in armed conflicts which are relevant to the child.

2. States Parties shall take all feasible measures to ensure that persons who have not attained the age of fifteen years do not take a direct part in hostilities.

3. States Parties shall refrain from recruiting any person who has not attained the age of fifteen years into their armed forces. In recruiting among those persons who have attained the age of fifteen years but who have not attained the age of eighteen years, States Parties shall endeavour to give priority to those who are oldest.

4. In accordance with their obligations under international humanitarian law to protect the civilian population in armed conflicts, States Parties shall take all feasible measures to ensure protection and care of children who are affected by an armed conflict.

### ***Article 39***

States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to promote physical and psychological recovery and social reintegration of a child victim of: any form of neglect, exploitation, or abuse; torture or any other form of cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment; or armed conflicts. Such recovery and reintegration shall take place in an environment which fosters the health, self-respect and dignity of the child.

### ***Article 40***

1. States Parties recognize the right of every child alleged as, accused of, or recognized as having infringed the penal law to be treated in a manner consistent with the promotion of the child's sense of dignity and worth, which reinforces the child's respect for the human rights and

fundamental freedoms of others and which takes into account the child's age and the desirability of promoting the child's reintegration and the child's assuming a constructive role in society.

2. To this end, and having regard to the relevant provisions of international instruments, States Parties shall, in particular, ensure that:

(a) No child shall be alleged as, be accused of, or recognized as having infringed the penal law by reason of acts or omissions that were not prohibited by national or international law at the time they were committed;

(b) Every child alleged as or accused of having infringed the penal law has at least the following guarantees:

(i) To be presumed innocent until proven guilty according to law;

(ii) To be informed promptly and directly of the charges against him or her, and, if appropriate, through his or her parents or legal guardians, and to have legal or other appropriate assistance in the preparation and presentation of his or her defence;

(iii) To have the matter determined without delay by a competent, independent and impartial authority or judicial body in a fair hearing according to law, in the presence of legal or other appropriate assistance and, unless it is considered not to be in the best interest of the child, in particular, taking into account his or her age or situation, his or her parents or legal guardians;

(iv) Not to be compelled to give testimony or to confess guilt; to examine or have examined adverse witnesses and to obtain the participation and examination of witnesses on his or her behalf under conditions of equality;

(v) If considered to have infringed the penal law, to have this decision and any measures imposed in consequence thereof reviewed by a higher competent, independent and impartial authority or judicial body according to law;

(vi) To have the free assistance of an interpreter if the child cannot understand or speak the language used;

(vii) To have his or her privacy fully respected at all stages of the proceedings. 3. States Parties shall seek to promote the establishment of laws, procedures, authorities and institutions specifically applicable to children alleged as, accused of, or recognized as having infringed the penal law, and, in particular:

(a) The establishment of a minimum age below which children shall be presumed not to have the capacity to infringe the penal law;

(b) Whenever appropriate and desirable, measures for dealing with such children without resorting to judicial proceedings, providing that human rights and legal safeguards are fully respected.

4. A variety of dispositions, such as care, guidance and supervision orders; counselling; probation; foster care; education and vocational training programmes and other alternatives to

institutional care shall be available to ensure that children are dealt with in a manner appropriate to their well-being and proportionate both to their circumstances and the offence.

#### ***Article 41***

Nothing in the present Convention shall affect any provisions which are more conducive to the realization of the rights of the child and which may be contained in:

- (a) The law of a State party; or
- (b) International law in force for that State.

### ***PART II***

#### ***Article 42***

States Parties undertake to make the principles and provisions of the Convention widely known, by appropriate and active means, to adults and children alike.

#### ***Article 43***

1. For the purpose of examining the progress made by States Parties in achieving the realization of the obligations undertaken in the present Convention, there shall be established a [Committee on the Rights of the Child](#), which shall carry out the functions hereinafter provided.
2. The Committee shall consist of ten experts of high moral standing and recognized competence in the field covered by this Convention. The members of the Committee shall be elected by States Parties from among their nationals and shall serve in their personal capacity, consideration being given to equitable geographical distribution, as well as to the principal legal systems.  
(amendment)
3. The members of the Committee shall be elected by secret ballot from a list of persons nominated by States Parties. Each State Party may nominate one person from among its own nationals.
4. The initial election to the Committee shall be held no later than six months after the date of the entry into force of the present Convention and thereafter every second year. At least four months before the date of each election, the Secretary-General of the United Nations shall address a letter to States Parties inviting them to submit their nominations within two months. The Secretary-General shall subsequently prepare a list in alphabetical order of all persons thus nominated, indicating States Parties which have nominated them, and shall submit it to the States Parties to the present Convention.
5. The elections shall be held at meetings of States Parties convened by the Secretary-General at United Nations Headquarters. At those meetings, for which two thirds of States Parties shall constitute a quorum, the persons elected to the Committee shall be those who obtain the largest number of votes and an absolute majority of the votes of the representatives of States Parties present and voting.

6. The members of the Committee shall be elected for a term of four years. They shall be eligible for re-election if renominated. The term of five of the members elected at the first election shall expire at the end of two years; immediately after the first election, the names of these five members shall be chosen by lot by the Chairman of the meeting.
7. If a member of the Committee dies or resigns or declares that for any other cause he or she can no longer perform the duties of the Committee, the State Party which nominated the member shall appoint another expert from among its nationals to serve for the remainder of the term, subject to the approval of the Committee.
8. The Committee shall establish its own rules of procedure.
9. The Committee shall elect its officers for a period of two years.
10. The meetings of the Committee shall normally be held at United Nations Headquarters or at any other convenient place as determined by the Committee. The Committee shall normally meet annually. The duration of the meetings of the Committee shall be determined, and reviewed, if necessary, by a meeting of the States Parties to the present Convention, subject to the approval of the General Assembly.
11. The Secretary-General of the United Nations shall provide the necessary staff and facilities for the effective performance of the functions of the Committee under the present Convention.
12. With the approval of the General Assembly, the members of the Committee established under the present Convention shall receive emoluments from United Nations resources on such terms and conditions as the Assembly may decide.

#### ***Article 44***

1. States Parties undertake to submit to the Committee, through the Secretary-General of the United Nations, reports on the measures they have adopted which give effect to the rights recognized herein and on the progress made on the enjoyment of those rights:
  - (a) Within two years of the entry into force of the Convention for the State Party concerned;
  - (b) Thereafter every five years.
2. Reports made under the present article shall indicate factors and difficulties, if any, affecting the degree of fulfilment of the obligations under the present Convention. Reports shall also contain sufficient information to provide the Committee with a comprehensive understanding of the implementation of the Convention in the country concerned.
3. A State Party which has submitted a comprehensive initial report to the Committee need not, in its subsequent reports submitted in accordance with paragraph 1 (b) of the present article, repeat basic information previously provided.
4. The Committee may request from States Parties further information relevant to the implementation of the Convention.

5. The Committee shall submit to the General Assembly, through the Economic and Social Council, every two years, reports on its activities.

6. States Parties shall make their reports widely available to the public in their own countries.

#### ***Article 45***

In order to foster the effective implementation of the Convention and to encourage international co-operation in the field covered by the Convention:

(a) The specialized agencies, the United Nations Children's Fund, and other United Nations organs shall be entitled to be represented at the consideration of the implementation of such provisions of the present Convention as fall within the scope of their mandate. The Committee may invite the specialized agencies, the United Nations Children's Fund and other competent bodies as it may consider appropriate to provide expert advice on the implementation of the Convention in areas falling within the scope of their respective mandates. The Committee may invite the specialized agencies, the United Nations Children's Fund, and other United Nations organs to submit reports on the implementation of the Convention in areas falling within the scope of their activities;

(b) The Committee shall transmit, as it may consider appropriate, to the specialized agencies, the United Nations Children's Fund and other competent bodies, any reports from States Parties that contain a request, or indicate a need, for technical advice or assistance, along with the Committee's observations and suggestions, if any, on these requests or indications;

(c) The Committee may recommend to the General Assembly to request the Secretary-General to undertake on its behalf studies on specific issues relating to the rights of the child;

(d) The Committee may make suggestions and general recommendations based on information received pursuant to articles 44 and 45 of the present Convention. Such suggestions and general recommendations shall be transmitted to any State Party concerned and reported to the General Assembly, together with comments, if any, from States Parties.

### ***PART III***

#### ***Article 46***

The present Convention shall be open for signature by all States.

#### ***Article 47***

The present Convention is subject to ratification. Instruments of ratification shall be deposited with the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

#### ***Article 48***

The present Convention shall remain open for accession by any State. The instruments of accession shall be deposited with the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

#### ***Article 49***

1. The present Convention shall enter into force on the thirtieth day following the date of deposit with the Secretary-General of the United Nations of the twentieth instrument of ratification or accession.
2. For each State ratifying or acceding to the Convention after the deposit of the twentieth instrument of ratification or accession, the Convention shall enter into force on the thirtieth day after the deposit by such State of its instrument of ratification or accession.

#### ***Article 50***

1. Any State Party may propose an amendment and file it with the Secretary-General of the United Nations. The Secretary-General shall thereupon communicate the proposed amendment to States Parties, with a request that they indicate whether they favour a conference of States Parties for the purpose of considering and voting upon the proposals. In the event that, within four months from the date of such communication, at least one third of the States Parties favour such a conference, the Secretary-General shall convene the conference under the auspices of the United Nations. Any amendment adopted by a majority of States Parties present and voting at the conference shall be submitted to the General Assembly for approval.
2. An amendment adopted in accordance with paragraph 1 of the present article shall enter into force when it has been approved by the General Assembly of the United Nations and accepted by a two-thirds majority of States Parties.
3. When an amendment enters into force, it shall be binding on those States Parties which have accepted it, other States Parties still being bound by the provisions of the present Convention and any earlier amendments which they have accepted.

#### ***Article 51***

1. The Secretary-General of the United Nations shall receive and circulate to all States the text of reservations made by States at the time of ratification or accession.
2. A reservation incompatible with the object and purpose of the present Convention shall not be permitted.
3. Reservations may be withdrawn at any time by notification to that effect addressed to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, who shall then inform all States. Such notification shall take effect on the date on which it is received by the Secretary-General

#### ***Article 52***

A State Party may denounce the present Convention by written notification to the Secretary-General of the United Nations. Denunciation becomes effective one year after the date of receipt of the notification by the Secretary-General.

#### ***Article 53***

The Secretary-General of the United Nations is designated as the depositary of the present Convention.

***Article 54***

The original of the present Convention, of which the Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish texts are equally authentic, shall be deposited with the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

IN WITNESS THEREOF the undersigned plenipotentiaries, being duly authorized thereto by their respective governments, have signed the present Convention.