Child Rights References in the Universal Periodic Review

Summary:
A compilation of extracts featuring child-rights issues from the reports submitted to the first Universal Periodic Review. There are extracts from the 'National Report', the 'Compilation of UN Information' and the 'Summary of Stakeholder's Information'. Also included is the 'Final Report' and 'Conclusions and Recommendations' from the Review.

Albania - 6th Session - 2009
2nd December 2009, 2.30pm to 5.30pm

National Report

25. The National Steering Committee “On the elimination of child labor” (2001) which is chaired by the Minister of Labor is the highest structure in charge of the integration of child labor issue in the drawing up of national policies. “The Elimination of Child Labor Unit” is established near the Ministry of Labor, which monitors the expansion of the child labor phenomenon. These structures are set up within the framework of the International Program for the Elimination of Child Labor (IPEC). The National Employment Service monitors the law enforcement with relation to the employment, vocational training and qualification. The State Labor Inspectorate ensures the enforcement of the labor legislation by the state and private legal entities, including the inspection of child labor.

27. Ministry of Labor, by means of its respective structures is the key responsible, coordinating, supporting and supervising authority in the field of labor, social affairs, gender equality and domestic violence. The Directorate of Equal Opportunities Policies near this Ministry (Sector of Gender Equality and Sector for Measures against Domestic Violence) has the mission of drafting and developing the policies for the promotion of equality in such fields as gender equality, inequality in skills/abilities, minority issues, age, generation and race inequality, the prevention and reduction of domestic violence and gender-related violence. The Directorate of Social Services Policies has the mission of drafting and developing the policies and the legislation for the protection of the rights of the persons with disabilities, young peoples, elders and poor families. The State Social Service is the executive institution of the policies and legislation in the field of social protection.

57. The Constitution, envisages special provisions for the protection of the rights of children and juveniles. Within the framework of the protection of economic, social and cultural rights and freedoms, the state has the obligation to fulfill the children’s needs for well-being, well-bringing, education, employment, intellectual development, to guarantee facilitating procedures during the trial of children at courts, and to ensure the protection of children against violence, ill-treatment, their exploitation at work, especially when they are under the legal labor age which may harm their health, endanger their life or their normal development.

58. The Family Code, addresses broadly the issue of children’s rights protection and incorporates the general principles of the international instruments into the field of children’s rights protection. The Code pays special attention to the child’s treatment and care, parents’ obligations, exercise of parental responsibilities, permission of child labor, the care they are entitled to if they work, as well as the institutional obligations of the state toward the children who lack the parental care.

59. The Criminal Code envisages criminal offenses committed against the minors, as well as the severity of sentences rendered against persons who by virtue of a final judgment are pronounced guilty of a criminal offense committed against children. The Civil Code of the Republic of Albania stipulates the children’s legal defense and the recognition of their rights.

60. The Labor Code and the by-laws issued in its application guarantee the minors’ protection, define the minimum labor age of children (16 years old), the prohibition of all forms of forced labor, work duration, easy and difficult jobs, medical check up etc. The Law “On social benefits and insurance” provides for measures which ensure social benefits and insurance to the needy individuals and groups, because of their limited economic, physical, psychological and social abilities and opportunities, including children as well.

61. The health-related legislation provides for the provision of the necessary services to children as well as the benefits of health care for the children before and after their birth, regardless of their solvency. The law “On public health” aims at the protection of children’s health, their immunization and their protection against smoking and alcohol. The policies and strategies in this field aim at the continuous improvement of the health of women and children and of life quality, influencing the progressive decrease of their mortality.
62. Legislation, policies and strategies in the field of education aim at guaranteeing the access to all the education levels, a qualitative and comprehensive education, the curricula and structural reform of pre-university educational system. Special importance is attached to the ensuring of optimal education to the children coming from the needy strata, Roma children, disabled children, giving priority to the comprehensive education. Within the framework of the enhancing of attendance of elementary education it has to be emphasized that at the national level the school drop-out is increasingly falling. The school enrollment level for the compulsory education is 89 per cent, whereas for the high cycle of the compulsory education is 94 per cent. The school finishing level as well as the percentage of children who start the first grade and finish the fifth grade is 98 per cent.

63. A series of legal acts, such as the Law “On measures against domestic violence”, the Law “On the adoption procedures and Albanian Adoption Committee”, the Law “On legal aid”, the Law “On the rights and treatment of pre-trial detainees and prisoners”, provide for provisions guaranteeing the protection of children’s rights, the prevention of domestic violence, child’s ill-treatment, the child’s right to be raised in a family environment, granting of legal aid to juveniles who are in conflict with the law and the special treatment of juvenile convicts.

64. The Decree of the President of the Republic of Albania “On the establishment of special criminal sections for the prosecution of juveniles near the judicial district courts” (2007), in application of the Code of Criminal Procedure, stipulates that the prosecution and trial of juveniles shall take place in special sections.

65. In the National Strategy for Children (2005-2010), and its Action Plan, there have been set out concrete objectives and measures for the protection of children’s rights, to ensure equal opportunities to all the children, regardless of their age, gender, ethnicity, disability, birth status. The fields of this Strategy are: Children’s survival; children’s protection; Children’ development; Children’s participation and involvement.

66. Foster Care Strategy for the Children in Need (adopted in 2008) provides the foster care as an alternative service, in order to guarantee the rights of the child.

67. In 2008 Ministry of Labor, has undertaken the initiative to draft a specific law on the rights of the child.

85. In application of the Strategy objectives and its Action Plan, several measures have been taken in the field of social protection in order to enhance the access and social benefits, to implement the special programs for the promotion of Roma community employment, especially the employment of Roma women, vocational/professional training, establishment of community services for Roma children, integration of Roma street children, measures towards the prevention and fight against trafficking, protection against violence, informing of families to benefit from the social protection system, economic aid program, social care services, NGOs' supporting programs etc. Pursuant to the Decision of the Council of Ministers “On the compensation of the identity card fee of the needy strata”, the persons who belong to this community are provided with identity cards free of charge.

86. The Ministry of Education has undertaken the “Second Chance” initiative for the education of Roma children, which has enhanced the attendance of kindergartens and schools. The guideline on the enrollment of Roma children in schools even if they do not have a birth certificate has improved the school enrollment situation. There have been created the necessary opportunities for teaching of Roma language in the schools where the number of students is large, but there have been encountered difficulties due to the lack of pedagogic staff and lack of information on the part of this community. The Roma culture and tradition are incorporated into the national project package of cultural heritage.

87. Several measures are undertaken for offering of health service to this community as well as to the entire population, mother and child care, vaccination of Roma children, health education services, reproductive health, family planning etc.

94. The elimination of any discrimination form against women in the field of education constitutes a significant foundation on which gender equality can be broadly accomplished. Owing to the complete and contemporary legal framework in this field the law “On Pre-university Education”, the Law “On Education and Vocational Training in the Republic of Albania”, the Law “On Higher Education” as well as the measures undertaken in National Strategy for Education, the compulsory nine-year education is attended by 98 per cent of girls, whereas 53.4 per cent of them go to high schools. Another positive indicator is the fact that in the recent years, the number of graduated females from the Albanian universities is almost twice as that of graduated males.

97. The Criminal Code provides for a series of provisions which address the domestic violence, also defines the aggravating circumstances when the victim is a minor, a pregnant woman, as well as the consequences brought about by the committal of the criminal offense. The continuous amendments to the Criminal Code have envisaged not only specific provisions to protect children and women against ill-treatment, sexual abuse, trafficking, prostitution, pornography, indecent acts, but also the legal developments in continuation have laid down a considerable increase of the amount of punishment against the perpetrators of these criminal offenses.

98. Law “On the measures against domestic violence” (2006) aims at the prevention and reduction of domestic violence in all its forms by means of the appropriate legal measures, as well as the guarantee of legal measure protection of the family members who are victims of domestic violence, paying special attention to children, the elderly and the disabled. This law aims at the establishment of a coordinated network of institutions to react in due time to domestic violence cases, as well as the issuance of immediate protection orders by the court. This law was the outcome of the civil society initiative which was proposed to the Parliament of Albania by 20.000 electors. Special contribution to this law was given also by the governmental institutions involved in the prevention and fight against domestic violence. The law sanctions the state bodies that have obligations, competences related to the domestic violence, and it invests the courts with the power to issue protection orders against the violator, a mechanism in protection of domestic violence victims. The
governmental mechanisms that address the domestic violence issues are: the Ministry of Labor, Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Health and Ministry of Justice. The Cooperation Agreement between the responsible ministries for the implementation and enforcement of this law aims at the establishment of the coordination mechanism of the responsibilities of all the institutions. A series of by-laws has been adopted as regards the establishment of responsible structures for the domestic violence issues and measures to be taken on the prevention, identification and reduction of domestic violence.

100. Trafficking and exploitation of women for prostitution, one of the ugliest forms of the human rights violation was a very worrying phenomenon in Albania especially during the 90s. Owing to the establishment of a complete legal framework and the setting up of structures for the prevention, protection and rehabilitation of trafficking victims, Albania is not considered a transit or destination country of prostitution any longer, or a country under monitoring regime, but it is a state that has made a lot of progress in the fight against trafficking in human beings.

101. The legal measures in this field have aimed at the prevention of the phenomenon of women trafficking and prostitution and at the severe punishment of the perpetrators of these criminal offenses, specifying and broadening the aggravating circumstances of the criminal offense. Beginning from 2001 and in continuation the Criminal Code has stipulated as criminal offenses “Trafficking in persons”, “Trafficking in women”, “Trafficking in children”, “Pornography”, “Aid to the illicit border-crossing”, “Ill-treatment of minors”, which punishes the phenomenon of child exploitation to forced labor, begging and other services. Also the adoption of the Law “On the prevention and fight against the organized crime” (2004), Law “On the protection of witnesses and justice collaborators” (2004), Law “On the pronouncement of the moratorium on the sailing vessels in the Republic of Albania” (2006) has served this purpose as well.

102. The National Strategy for the Fight against the Trafficking in Human Beings (adopted in 2001 and which is being continually improved) is oriented towards these main directions: (a) Investigation and criminal prosecution of trafficking offenses; (b) Support and protection of victims and witnesses; (c) Undertaking of concrete measures on the prevention of trafficking and re-trafficking. The fight against trafficking in children and protection of children who are victims/ potential victims of trafficking remains a major concern of the Albanian Government. In addition, a strategy and an action plan against the trafficking in children is attached to the National Strategy for the Fight against the Trafficking in Human Beings, which addresses the issues of the trafficking in children. The National Strategy for the Fight against the Trafficking in Human Beings, the Strategy for the Fight against the Trafficking and Protection of Children who are Victims of Trafficking and their respective Action Plans (2008-2010) were drawn up in the course of comprehensive consultation process, with the participation of state structures, international donors and civil society which has played a very important role.

103. In application of this Strategy, the relevant structures for the identification and prosecution of the perpetrators of this criminal offense have been set up, as well as special structures for the protection and rehabilitation of victims and endangered social categories. In the entire country there operate administrative structures and agencies for the prevention and fight against the trafficking in human beings, in particular for the protection of children endangered by trafficking.

104. A series of activities about the prevention and fight against trafficking have been organized and awareness campaigns have taken place for the vulnerable groups (young people, women and girls, families facing social problems, families with a low educational level, Roma children etc.). With a view to preventing the trafficking in the endangered categories, several measures have been undertaken for their inclusion and integration into the society by implementing the law on compulsory education and their registration in the civil registry offices, offering vocational education/training to all the people who have dropped out of school. The Ministry of Education has incorporated in the curricula of high schools programs about the raising of awareness of the trafficking danger. Since 2007, the Ministry of Interior has put at the disposal of the citizens a phone number free of charge available 24 hours a day for the denunciation of trafficking cases. Also there have been taken measures for the training of law enforcement structures. The Code of Conduct for the prevention of children sex tourism, which is monitored by the Ministry of Tourism, has been adopted. In 2008 is established the Data Base for the Victims of Trafficking.

105. The Cooperation Agreement for the Establishment of the National Referral Mechanism for the Improved Identification and Assistance to the Victims of Trafficking in Human Beings (2005), aimed at the setting up of a national functional network among some governmental and non-governmental agencies to enable the identification, safety, referral, protection and rehabilitation of the victims of trafficking in Albania. Reception and rehabilitation centers for the trafficking victims are the major contributors to the support of trafficking victims and play a very important role in the identification of types of services the trafficking victims need.

106. Special contribution to the fight against trafficking in human beings and the prevention of this phenomenon has been given by the foreign and local NGO-s which offer rehabilitative and preventive services to all the victims of trafficking and endangered groups especially the children.

107. These legal and organizational measures in the fight against the organized crime and trafficking have brought about a concrete product which is the destruction of 200 criminal groups among which there were perpetrators of grave criminal offenses such as trafficking and prostitution. There have been achievements for the prevention of these criminal offenses, as well as in the rehabilitation of victims.

Compilation of UN information

1. The Committee against Torture (CAT) noted with appreciation the ratification of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court in 2002, and recommended that Albania consider making the declarations under articles 21 and 22 of the Convention.

2. The Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC) welcomed the ratification of ILO (International Labour Organization) Conventions Nos. 138 concerning the Minimum Age for Admission to Employment in 1998, and 182 concerning the Prohibition and Immediate
3. In 2004, the Human Rights Committee (HR Committee) welcomed the adoption of new legislation, inter alia, the Criminal Code and the Criminal Procedure Code. CAT recommended that the Criminal Code should be amended in order to adopt a definition of torture that covers all the elements contained in article 1 of the Convention. The HR Committee and CRC in 2005 welcomed the adoption of the new Family Code in 2003. The HR Committee also commended Albania for having abolished the death penalty in 2000.

4. The HR Committee and CAT in 2005 noted with appreciation the adoption of a Constitution in 1998 enhancing protection of human rights through, inter alia, the direct applicability of ratified international treaties and their superiority over domestic laws.

5. In 2006, the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR) noted with satisfaction the enactment of a law aimed at strengthening the authority of the People’s Advocate (the Ombudsman) in May 2005.

6. The United Nations Country Team (UNCT) stated that the Law on Gender Equality was adopted in 2008 and that the new Electoral Code Law includes temporary special measures, such as a 30 per cent quota for women candidates by political parties to increase women’s participation in decision-making. Other recent legal developments included the entry into force of the Domestic Violence Law in 2007 and the passing of secondary legislation on domestic violence in 2008.

7. CRC recommended that Albania take all necessary measures to clarify the definition of the child in Albania and that existing legislation be reviewed to ensure that all children receive the protection they need. In 2006, the Special Rapporteur on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography (the Special Rapporteur on the sale of children) stated that the legal framework lacks a definition of the crimes of sale of children and child pornography. He noted that prostitution is a crime in Albania.

8. In 2008, the ILO Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations (ILO Committee of Experts) noted the adoption of amendments to the Penal Code provisions on trafficking in human beings.

9. UNCT noted that Parliament had adopted the Law on the Organization of the Judiciary, which includes salary scales as well as merit-based criteria for the appointment of judges. The Law on Free Legal Assistance, adopted in December 2008, provides for free legal services to juveniles, witnesses and vulnerable persons.

10. UNCT noted that, in March 2009, Parliament adopted the Law on the Organization and Functioning of the Agency for Supporting Civil Society, which will support activities aimed at encouraging the sustainable development of civil society.

11. The People’s Advocate was accredited with “A” status by the International Coordinating Committee of National Human Rights Institutions for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights (ICC) in 2004, which was reconfirmed in 2008. The HR Committee, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), CRC and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on the situation of human rights defenders (the Special Representative on human rights defenders) welcomed the establishment of the People’s Advocate. In 2003, CEDAW welcomed the early establishment of a national machinery for the advancement of women and gender equality.

12. CRC also welcomed the establishment of the Sub-Section on Child Rights within the office of the People’s Advocate, and recommended that it allow for reporting on developments in the implementation of child rights.

13. CRC noted that a multitude of actors are involved in the implementation of the Convention at the national and local level, and urged Albania to ensure effective coordination among them. The Inter-Ministerial Committee for the Rights of the Child should be provided with adequate means for its efficient functioning.

14. UNCT noted that, included among its powers, the Constitutional Court reviews the compatibility of laws with the Constitution and international treaties, and provides final adjudication of individual complaints of violations of constitutional rights.


16. CRC recommended that Albania ensure that the revision of the National Strategy on Children 2006-2010 takes account of all areas of the Convention, that adequate financial and human resources are provided for its implementation, and that monitoring and coordination mechanisms are ensured.

17. The Special Rapporteur on the sale of children welcomed the fact that the National Strategy on Children 2006-2010 was designed on the basis of CRC’s recommendations and that a child specialist had been appointed in the Policy department of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs. UNCT stated that, in response to CRC’s concluding observations in relation to Albania’s initial report and dialogue through the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), the Government significantly revised the National Strategy on Children. The National Strategy for Fighting Child Trafficking 2008-2011 was approved in 2008 with a view to assisting and integrating child victims of trafficking as well as to protecting children in poor families.

18. UNCT noted that the National Strategy for Development and Integration 2007-2013 provides the framework to improve policy development and coordination, of particular relevance to the promotion and protection of economic, social and cultural rights.

19. To implement the World Programme for Human Rights Education (2005-ongoing), Albania has officially included human rights education in the teaching curricula of basic and secondary education as part of various subjects, including extra-curricular activities.
20. UNCT noted that a cross-cutting Anti-Corruption Strategy was adopted in 2008. The Special Rapporteur on the sale of children welcomed the Government’s stand against corruption

21. Albania contributed financially to OHCHR in 2009. In the context of the Delivering as One pilot programme in Albania, a Human Rights Adviser from the Action 2 Global Programme was deployed to UNCT in 2009.

22. The HR Committee, CESCR and CEDAW were concerned that women continue to face discrimination under customary law and traditional codes (Kanun). CESCR recommended that Albania step up necessary measures to promote equality between men and women and invited Albania to consider establishing an independent mechanism for the coordination and evaluation of activities relating to gender equality. CEDAW urged Albania to implement measures to eliminate the practice of customary law and traditional codes of conduct discriminating against women.

23. The HR Committee was concerned that the Roma community continues to suffer prejudice and discrimination, in particular with regard to access to health services, social assistance, education and employment. CESCR made the same comments. The HR Committee urged Albania to ensure that all members of ethnic and linguistic minorities, whether or not they are recognized as national minorities, are protected against discrimination. CESCR called on Albania to intensify its efforts to promote ethnic tolerance and to adopt a strategy for the integration of persons of a different ethnic origin. In 2003, CERD made similar comments.

24. The Special Rapporteur on the sale of children highlighted the fact that Roma and Egyptian communities are discriminated against in all spheres of life and the accumulation of disadvantages results in multiple forms of exclusion and marginalization.

25. CRC was concerned, as highlighted also by UNHCR, that discrimination persists in particular with respect to ethnic minorities, children with disabilities and children living in remote areas. CRC urged Albania, as highlighted also by UNHCR, to develop and implement policies aimed at countering the various forms of discrimination.

26. The 2004 Common Country Assessment (CCA) report noted that children with disabilities have no access to education and employment in conformity with their type and level of disability. They are not included in the compulsory schooling, and there is a very low level of integration of them in preschool education.

27. CESCR, the HR Committee and CRC were concerned at the impact of the legacy of the Kanun (customary law) and the persistence of vendetta or honour killings. CESCR recommended that Albania strengthen its efforts to eliminate the practice of vendetta killings and other forms of violence which originate from the Kanun. CRC made similar comments.

28. CESCR and CAT were concerned about the pervasiveness of domestic violence, abuse and ill-treatment against women and children. CESCR urged Albania to provide training to law enforcement officials and judges. CAT recommended that Albania adopt measures to combat sexual violence and violence against women, including domestic violence. The HR Committee, CRC and the Special Rapporteur on the sale of children made similar comments.

29. The HR Committee and CRC were concerned at allegations of arbitrary arrests and detention, excessive use of force by law enforcement officials, ill-treatment of detainees in police custody and the use of torture to extract confessions from suspects. The HR Committee regretted that acts of torture by law enforcement officials are considered as “arbitrary acts” only, and treated accordingly. CESCR was seriously concerned about the reports of ill-treatment and excessive use of force by law enforcement officials, vis-à-vis the Roma and Egyptian communities.

30. The HR Committee was concerned about inhumane conditions of detention, the number of persons on remand and conditions of detention, the condition of juvenile and female detainees as well as the lack of compensation for unlawful arrest or detention. CAT expressed concern at the conditions of detention and pretrial detention periods of up to three years. The HR Committee and CAT urged Albania to improve the conditions of detention for those held on remand and for convicted persons.

31. The 2004 CCA report noted that Albania is both a conduit and a source country for human trafficking, including trafficking of women and girls for the purpose of forced prostitution. The Special Rapporteur on the sale of children expressed similar concerns noting that many children are trafficked with some form of consent of their parents and family, including trafficking of newborn children for illegal adoption. He also noted that child trafficking hits more severely the Roma and Egyptian communities. He called attention to the problem of re-trafficking, mainly due to the failure to provide adequate support to reintegration and the strong ties between the victims and their traffickers.

32. The HR Committee expressed concern at reports on the involvement of police and government officials in trafficking, and about the lack of effective witness and victim protection mechanisms. CESCR and CEDAW made similar comments. In 2007, the ILO Committee of Experts requested the Government to take necessary measures to secure the prohibition of the use, procuring or offering of both boys and girls under 18 years of age for prostitution.

33. CRC recommended, inter alia, in accordance with article 32 of the Convention, and ILO Conventions Nos. 138 and 182, that Albania pursue measures, at the national and international level, to dismantle trafficking and exploitation networks, and establish control mechanisms to monitor the extent of child labour.

34. CESCR noted with concern the high percentage of children below the age of 16 who work, sometimes in hazardous conditions. Children, many of them Roma, work in the streets and are particularly vulnerable to exploitation. Albania was urged to take measures to ensure that legislation protecting minors against economic and social exploitation and their right to education are rigorously enforced. The ILO Committee of Experts requested the Government to indicate the measures taken or envisaged to prohibit the use of children for illicit activities, and to provide information on the measures taken to protect persons under 18 years of age living in the streets from the
35. The Special Rapporteur on the sale of children stated that a large number of children are employed in the formal sector but work in hazardous occupations under dangerous conditions.

36. CRC was concerned that corporal punishment continued to be used as a disciplinary method, and urged Albania to prohibit it by law.

37. The 2004 CCA report noted that the rule of law is weak despite efforts to improve the function of the judicial system. The lack of transparency and impartiality affects important aspects of judicial operations. The HR Committee remained concerned about alleged cases of executive pressure on the judiciary and persistent problems of corruption, lack of access to counsel and legal aid, and undue delay of trials. CESCR was concerned about the reported lack of independence, security and training of the judiciary, and strongly urged Albania to take measures on these issues.

38. CESCR urged Albania to provide specific training to law enforcement officers to ensure that they respect and protect human rights without distinction. Incidents of police violence should be thoroughly investigated and perpetrators promptly brought to justice.

39. The HR Committee and CRC were concerned that, despite several cases of investigations and punishment of those responsible for ill-treatment, many cases have not been investigated properly. CAT expressed concern that a climate of de facto impunity prevails for law enforcement personnel who commit acts of torture or ill-treatment, and recommended that Albania investigate all allegations of torture or ill-treatment with a view to prosecuting those responsible.

40. CESCR recommended that Albania take rigorous measures to prosecute those who engage or collaborate in vendetta or honour killings and other forms of violence.

41. CRC was concerned at the lack of an effective juvenile justice system of specialized police prosecutors, judges and social workers. UNCT noted that interventions on legislative reform in the area of juvenile justice remain fragmented.

42. The Special Rapporteur on the sale of children was concerned at the way the media portray children: without respecting the children's right to privacy, the media disclose or make recognizable the identity of victims of trafficking.

43. The 2004 CCA report noted that true respect for freedom of expression in Albania requires changes in practices and legislative reforms. The Special Representative on human rights defenders shared the concerns expressed by the HR Committee, in particular with regard to “instances of harassment and physical violence against journalists as well as about threats of defamation suits against them” and asked for information on this issue.

44. The HR Committee was concerned about the low level of participation of women in public affairs, and in the political and economic life, particularly in senior positions of public administration. 133 CEDAW 134 expressed similar concerns in 2003.

45. In 2007, the ILO Committee of Experts noted that persons who have served or have been candidates in bodies or functions of the previous regime were excluded from the right to serve in certain public functions and engage in certain professions. The Committee considered that the criteria for exclusion were not sufficiently well defined and delimited to ensure that they do not lead to discrimination in employment and occupation based on political opinion. UNCT noted that, in February 2009, the Constitutional Court suspended the implementation of the Lustration Law, a law passed on 22 December 2008, which prohibits people who worked during the communist era in the areas of the secret police, the judiciary or as prosecutors from government employment.

46. CESCR expressed concern about the high levels of unemployment that continue to persist, especially in rural areas and among members of ethnic minorities, including the Roma and the Egyptian communities. The Special Rapporteur on the sale of children highlighted that the high unemployment rate affects the Roma disproportionately. CESCR urged Albania to increase its efforts to combat unemployment through special targeted programmes and recommended taking measures to stimulate rural development.

47. CESCR was concerned that the current minimum wage, and its absence in the private sector, was insufficient to provide an adequate standard of living, and invited Albania to consider introducing a legal minimum wage that is applicable to all workers. A 2008 International Monetary Fund (IMF) report indicated that men earned around double the hourly earnings of women in the agriculture and mining sector. CESCR recommended taking appropriate measures to amend the Labour Code so as to liberalize the existing limitations on the right to strike.

48. In 2007 the ILO Committee of Experts requested the Government to provide information on the measures taken or envisaged to ensure that self-employed workers under 18 years of age are protected against types of work which are likely to harm their health, safety or morals.

49. UNCT stated that data from the most recent Living Standards Measurement Survey (LSMS) show that the overall poverty rate declined from 25.4 per cent in 2002 to 18.5 per cent in 2005, and 12.4 per cent 2008. However, there has been a slowdown in the reduction of poverty in mountainous areas where poverty tends to be highest with little change since 2005. The 2004 CCA report noted that unequal access to basic social services is an issue to be emphasized, especially between rural and urban regions. CESCR urged Albania to take remedial measures to address the regional disparities that affect the equal enjoyment of economic, social and cultural rights.

50. A 2006 United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) report stated that poverty rates among Roma are particularly high (78 per cent), especially in relation to the majority (22 per cent). CESCR remained concerned about the extent of poverty, especially in rural areas and among the Roma and members of other ethnic minorities. The Special Rapporteur expressed similar views.
51. The Special Rapporteur on the sale of children urged the Government to adopt measures to facilitate procedures for birth registration. CRC recommended that Albania, as highlighted also by UNHCR, take appropriate measures to promote the registration of all children, paying particular attention to the most vulnerable and marginalized groups.

52. CESCR recommended that Albania consider enacting legislation that ensures the right to housing and adopting a national plan of action on housing. CESCR also encouraged taking necessary steps to legalize the existing Roma and Egyptian settlements.

53. CRC noted that, despite marked improvement in infant mortality rates, these remained very high, and marked disparities in health services between different regions of the country exist. CRC recommended that Albania strengthen its efforts to ensure allocation of resources, including training of sufficient numbers of health-care professionals, and investments in health-care infrastructure, especially in the most disadvantaged areas. UNCT noted that psychiatric institutions provide poor standards of care to persons with disabilities.

54. The 2004 CCA report noted that the present educational system is not able to fulfil everybody’s right to access to different levels of education. A 2006 UNDP report noted that while 87 per cent of urban children in Albania complete the fifth grade, only 77 per cent of rural children do so. UNCT noted that in areas densely populated by Roma communities, access to education can be as low as 13 per cent. CESCR urged Albania to continue to take effective measures to increase school attendance by Roma children, especially girls, including, inter alia, through the grant of scholarships.

55. CRC noted that it is widely acknowledged that children in Albania work in the streets, within the family, or elsewhere in exploitative situations or to such an extent that regular school attendance is impeded. The 2004 CCA report noted that water and sanitation facilities in public schools are quite problematic especially in rural areas. CRC urged Albania to, inter alia, strengthen its ongoing efforts to address the problems relating to the training of teachers and to increase budget allocations with a view to improving the quality of education and physical conditions in schools.

56. The 2004 CCA report indicated that Roma children are the most deprived cultural and ethnic group from the point of view of educational attainment.

57. CESCR remained concerned that Albania has not granted the Egyptian community the status of a minority group, thus denying them the same guarantees and protective measures enjoyed by other minority groups. CESCR invited Albania to reconsider its position with regard to the recognition of the Egyptian community in accordance with recognized international standards.

58. The HR Committee urged Albania to ensure that all members of ethnic and linguistic minorities, whether or not they are recognized as national minorities, may enjoy their own culture and use their own language, have access to all social rights, participate in public affairs, and are provided with effective remedies against discrimination.

59. CRC welcomed, as highlighted also by UNHCR, 170 the progress made in establishing a clearer legal framework governing the treatment of refugees and the prevention of statelessness. CRC recommended that pre-screening procedures of foreigners be extended to the border points with a view to guaranteeing maximum protection to child asylum-seekers and trafficked children.

60. CRC noted, as highlighted also by UNHCR, that the departure of children from Albania to neighbouring countries is a significant problem, and recommended that Albania, as highlighted also by UNHCR, strengthen its efforts to, inter alia, determine and address the causes of such large-scale departure of unaccompanied children and introduce safeguards to reduce the phenomenon.

61. The Special Rapporteur on the sale of children was particularly concerned at the situation of unaccompanied children who are returned to Albania, and the lack of infrastructure to host children at the border.

62. The HR Committee welcomed the progress accomplished in legislative and institutional reform, notably the restoration of the freedom of conscience and belief. The Special Representative on human rights defenders and CAT noted with appreciation the ongoing efforts aimed at strengthening human rights in Albania.

63. UNCT noted that one of the key achievements of Albania has been the level of ratifications of United Nations and regional human rights treaties, as well as the introduction of laws and strategies aimed at implementing international standards within national law and policy. Another achievement has been the work of the People’s Advocate, which has maintained its “A” status” before the ICC and continues to contribute to the promotion and protection of human rights.

64. The Special Representative on human rights defenders noted that cooperation between the State and civil society has improved, allowing the human rights community to offer and provide legal assistance, and to be consulted on draft law and law implementation. NGOs have the right to file complaints before the Constitutional Court for violations of rights in legal proceedings.

65. CRC noted that Albania continues to face economic, social and political challenges, including high rates of unemployment and poverty, and the brain drain depriving the country of active young people.

66. UNCT and UNICEF submitted that, despite the broad legislative reform related to children’s rights, the existing mechanisms of social policy were inadequate to significantly reduce social exclusion among vulnerable and marginalized children. UNICEF stated that a comprehensive system of data collection that allows for disaggregation by income level, geographic location, ethnicity, and gender has to be established. 185

67. In 2006, Albania pledged to advance human rights both at the national and international level, including by: increasing public awareness of human rights; continuing to promote a human rights-based approach; prioritizing respect for and promotion of minority human rights; and establishing a National Committee on Minorities under the Prime Minister, with the objective of observing the protection and respect of human rights of minorities.
68. UNCT noted that the National Committee on Minorities has been established. Albania also pledged: to ratify the Optional Protocol to ICCPR and the Optional Protocols to CRC as well as amendments to CAT, CEDAW and CRC; to support strongly the efforts to strengthen OHCHR, and to cooperate fully with the Human Rights Council and its special procedures. Notably, since making the pledges, Albania has ratified the Optional Protocols to ICCPR and the Optional Protocols to CRC.

69. CESCR requested Albania to provide in its next periodic report detailed information on the extent of domestic violence, and the legislative measures and policies adopted to address that phenomenon, including facilities and remedies provided for victims.

70. The HR Committee requested Albania to provide, within one year, information on the assessment of the situation and the implementation of the Committee’s recommendations related to the low representation of women in public and political life; to the arbitrary detentions and excessive use of force by police officers; the conditions of detention and the lack of compensation for the victims of unlawful arrest and detention. In its response, Albania stated that administrative measures have been taken to overcome violence and maltreatment and to safeguard the constitutional rights of persons pre-detained. Albania also stated that it has taken measures to improve the living conditions of inmates, in particular, the separation of minors from adult inmates, and that, with regard to pre-detention situations, legal proceedings and guarantees are respected.

71. Replying to CAT’s request, Albania stated that cases have been brought to evidence concerning the use of violence on inmates, and that recommendations were made by the Ombudsman to the Prosecution Office concerning claims of maltreatment for the initiation of criminal proceedings. In addition, a mechanism was set up to guarantee the protection of the rights of persons deprived of their liberty and prison visits by different organizations are allowed without any authorization.

72. The Special Rapporteur on the sale of children recommended that the Government give priority to the implementation of the national strategies on children and on combating child trafficking, to allocate adequate resources, and to establish a monitoring system.

73. The Special Rapporteur on the sale of children recommended that Albania consider the possibility of decriminalizing prostitution, defining the crimes of the sale of children and child pornography, and adopting a law on accessible procedures enabling victims of trafficking to obtain compensation.

74. With regard to education, CRC urged Albania to consider seeking technical assistance from UNICEF. On refugees and asylum-seekers, CRC recommended that Albania consider seeking assistance from the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. Regarding the economic exploitation of children, CRC recommended continuing ongoing cooperation with ILO-IPEC. On juvenile justice, CRC recommended seeking technical assistance from, among others, OHCHR and UNICEF.

**Summary of Stakeholder information**

1. Defence for Children International (DCI) indicated that Albania ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) on 28 March 2002, and that although Albania is not a member of the European Union (EU), it signed the Memorandum of Stabilisation and Association (MSA) with the EU, obligating itself to meet international standards for criminal juvenile justice. DCI noted that knowledge and understanding of the CRC and other conventions to which Albania is party, however, remain low even among officials that work with juveniles on a regular basis. This problem persists despite the fact that the 1998 Constitution mandates the publication of such international conventions and the Committee on the Rights of the Child highlighted this issue in paragraphs 19-20 of its Concluding Observations in 2005.

2. The Albanian Coalition “All Together Against Child Trafficking” (ATACT) indicated that Albania is still far from adequately protecting and promoting children’s rights. One positive change, as reported by ATACT, was the ratification in February 2009 by the Albanian Parliament of the Convention of the Council of Europe on sexual abuse and exploitation.

3. DCI noted that, in theory, in Albania ratified international agreements become domestic law upon their publication in the Official Gazette, avoiding the need for the promulgation of new law. This practice, however, can lead to confusion and contradiction between domestic and international legislation, as laws are often not accompanied by the appropriate legislative instrument containing rules to ensure their implementation.

4. DCI also noted that Albanian law has undergone continuous reform since the early 1990s, particularly with the emergence of a new constitution in 1998. Provisions related to the rights of children, however, remain scattered across numerous codes and statutes, sometimes in a contradictory manner. DCI recommended the development of a more unified, holistic and coherent approach to juvenile justice. The first step in this process is to adopt a comprehensive child rights code that recognizes children as distinct rights holders and contains provisions specific to their level of physical, mental and emotional development in society. ATACT noted that the Albanian Government has initiated a draft framework law on children’s rights.

5. Human Rights Watch (HRW) referred to the law “on the lustration of the figure of high functionaries of the public administration and elected officials”, passed by the Albanian National Assembly in 2008, which bans from Government employment those who worked during the communist-era (1944-1990) in the secret police, the judiciary or prosecutors’ offices. HRW expressed particular concern at the broad categories of officials who may be affected, as well as the fairness and due process of the proceedings and the severity of the foreseen sanctions. HRW further noted that the opposition Socialist Party, the judges’ association and the Albanian Helsinki Committee had filed complaints, arguing that the law is inconsistent with at least 18 articles of the constitution. HRW further reported that on 16 February 2009, the Constitutional Court decided to suspend the implementation of the law pending its decision on the submitted complaints. It also decided to send the law to the Council of Europe Venice Commission for an amicus curiae opinion.

6. Amnesty International (AI) urged Albania to take active steps to amend the Criminal Code and introduce a specific offence of domestic violence.
7. AI reported that there continues to be a lack of mechanisms and procedures to ensure the effective implementation of the law “On Measures Against Violence in Family Relations”, which entered into force on 1 June 2007, accompanied by the “National Strategy on Gender Equality and the Eradication of Domestic Violence 2007-2010”, published by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs. 11 AI urged the Government to ensure that a nation-wide system of recording reports of domestic violence is established; that statistics are regularly made public and this information is used to inform government policy in combating domestic violence; to ensure, in partnership with ministries and municipal authorities, awareness of the provisions in the Domestic Violence Law for the issuance of protection orders; to adopt measures to ensure that the protection order mechanism is more effective; to complete the introduction of all remaining supporting legislation required to implement the Domestic Violence Law, and to make funds available to centres providing legal and other assistance to victims of domestic violence.

8. In its third report issued in 2004, the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) of the Council of Europe (CoE) noted that a “National Strategy for the Improvement of Living Conditions of the Roma” that seeks to eliminate discrimination towards Roma has been developed and a Special State Committee on Minorities, mandated to make recommendations to the Government with respect to the promotion of the rights of minorities, has been established. ECRI further reported on a pre-screening procedure that has been put in place in order to determine the status of non-citizens in the country illegally, and ensure that persons who are trafficked, asylum seekers and those seeking repatriation are treated in a manner appropriate to their situation. ECRI also referred to a National Strategy to Combat Trafficking that has also been adopted and indicated that police at all levels have been provided with training in human rights.

9. HRW referred to recent reports documenting human rights violations based on sexual orientation and gender identity in Albania which have been published by the European Commission, the Council of Europe’s Commissioner for Human Rights and The International Lesbian and Gay Association Europe (ILGA). HRW hoped the upcoming Universal Periodic Review will recommend that the Albanian authorities introduce to Parliament a comprehensive, all-inclusive anti-discrimination law, including protection against discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity.

10. According to DCI, articles 86 and 87 of the Albanian Criminal Code are incompatible with the definition of torture set out in the UN Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Degrading or Inhuman Treatment or Punishment.

11. The Global Initiative to End All Corporal Punishment of Children (GIEACPC) indicated that corporal punishment in Albania is lawful in the home. Provisions against violence and abuse in the Criminal Code, the Family Code and the Law on Measures Against Violence in Family Relations are not interpreted as prohibiting all corporal punishment in childrearing. GIEACPC also indicated that corporal punishment is prohibited in schools and in the penal system, but noted that research on juveniles in prisons by the Children’s Human Rights Centre of Albania found that corporal punishment was commonly used as a punishment when internal prison rules were broken. There is no explicit prohibition of corporal punishment in alternative care settings, as further noted by GIEACPC.

12. DCI reported that Albanian law mandates that prisoners be separated by sex and age. In reality, overcrowdation in prisons and pre-trial detention centres has led to many juveniles being imprisoned with adults. Imprisonment of adults and children together, inadequate sanitation, lack of educational and recreational services, lack of psychologists and social workers, and chronic scarcity of resources are problems throughout the detention system in Albania. Juveniles held in pre-trial detention centres suffer from very poor living conditions and occasionally families are not even made aware of the whereabouts or state of their children.

13. In its 2008 report to the Albanian Government on its visit to Albania, the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CPT) of the CoE, recommended, inter alia, (i) with regard to establishments under the authority of the Ministry of Interior: to redouble efforts to combat ill-treatment by the police; take immediate steps to ensure that persons remanded in custody are always promptly transferred to a pre-trial detention centre or remand prison; review material conditions in all police establishments and; (ii) with regard to establishments under the authority of the Ministry of Justice: to devise and implement a comprehensive regime of out-of-cell activities for remand prisoners in all the pre-trial detention centres visited, as well as at Prison No. 313, and, as appropriate, in other prison establishments in Albania; implement without further delay the provision of outdoor exercise for male adult prisoners at Prison No. 313; take the necessary steps to ensure that all prisoners at Prison No. 313 have acceptable conditions of detention; steps should be taken in all pre-trial detention centres visited to provide more recreational activities to juveniles; take the necessary steps in all prison establishments to ensure a comprehensive medical examination on admission and that all prisoners are provided with information regarding the prevention of transmissible diseases; all medical examinations of prisoners are conducted out of the hearing and –unless the concerned doctor requests otherwise in a particular case – out of the sight of prison officers; individual medical file is opened for each prisoner and upon request, the doctor’s conclusions be made available to the prisoner and his/her lawyer; special training be offered to prison doctors on the manner in which medical screening of newly-arrived prisoners is performed and observed injuries recorded.

14. With regard to involuntary hospitalization in psychiatric establishments, the CPT requested information on: confirmation that a judicial review procedure has been carried out in respect of all forensic patients who have been subject to involuntary treatment under Section 46, paragraph 1, of the Penal Code for more than a year, as well as information on the outcome of these procedures; clarification as to whether psychiatric patients always receive a copy of the court decision on involuntary placements; and progress made in preparing draft legislation to amend the Mental Health Act.

15. ATACT indicated that exploitation of children for labour, in particular through begging, has long been an issue in Albania. A majority of these children are not registered at the civil status office and, as a consequence, do not attend school and lack access to public services such as healthcare. There are no official statistics on the number of children who work and beg in the streets. The Albanian legal framework against child exploitation has not been implemented so far and child protection mechanisms at both institutional and community levels are weak or nonexistent, and in most cases fail to protect children from such risks. ATACT also noted that the
registration of a child can be extremely complicated in cases where the legal systems of more than one State have to be applied, as is the
case for many Albanian children born and/or living abroad. Moreover, the registration of Roma community/children is still a problematic
issue.

16. HRW indicated that the Albanian authorities have failed to investigate properly allegations that the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA)
abducted and transferred prisoners to Albania after the 1998-1999 Kosovo war. HRW hoped the upcoming Working Group on Universal
Periodic Review will recommend that the Albanian authorities a) to conduct a prompt and independent investigation into allegations that
the KLA illegally detained Albanians, Serbs and Roma from Kosovo in detention facilities in Albania, where the captives were beaten,
tortured, and in some cases killed; b) cooperate with ongoing investigations into the same allegations by the Council of Europe and the
War Crimes Prosecutor of Serbia; c) prosecute anyone in Albania found to be party to such crimes, including those who gave the orders.

17. DCI noted that the Criminal Procedure Code entered into force in 1996, but Albania has still not succeeded in creating separate
courts for juveniles. DCI indicated that, largely due to the fact that it does not have a separate juvenile justice system, Albania suffers
from a severe lack of specialised judges, prosecutors, police, lawyers, social workers and other officials trained in working with juvenile
offenders.

18. DCI further indicated that the 1998 Constitution does not specify an age of legal responsibility, which is a troubling gap given that
persons under the age of eighteen years make up 40% of the Albanian population. DCI noted that juvenile offences in Albania increased
between 2002 and 2004 before declining slightly in 2005. DCI also noted that there is discrimination in tackling juvenile delinquency,
and a disproportionately large number of juveniles apprehended are of Roma, Egyptian, or other ethnic minority origin.

19. According to DCI, article 46 of the Criminal Code mandates the provision of education to children under 14 convicted of any
criminal offence, and those under 16 convicted of petty crimes.

20. According to information cited by ATACT, the number of children not registered at the civil registry is still a big concern. Many
children in Albania remain unregistered because they were born outside of health centres, and did not obtain the Act of Birth Certificate.
Other reasons for the lack of registration are: declaration of false/wrong identity of parents; lack of economic means to follow the court
procedure in cases where the deadlines provided by the law have not been respected; limited awareness of parents of the importance of
registering their child; and an inappropriate registration scheme which is unable to cope with internal migration and other phenomena.

the status of orphan are entitled to various supports, such as financial payments, scholarships and free access to other basic services. In
reality, the available economic support is insufficient and there is also poor implementation regarding support services for orphans.
After-care services are not available once they leave public residential institutions, and there are no follow-up processes to monitor
progress or support educational, employment, or welfare and housing. AI urged Albania to fulfil the rights of orphans to “special
protection” throughout their childhood (that is, up to age of 18), as well as their other rights, including to education, and to protection
from neglect, ill-treatment and sexual abuse or exploitation, as set out in the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

22. ATACT also reported on the lack of any legal definition for “children at risk of losing parental care”. In the absence of such a
definition, it is not possible to properly identify and collect relevant data, and to consequently support families or children at-risk due to
poverty.

23. In 2008, the Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (ACFC) of the CoE noted
the following efforts to enhance the implementation of the Framework Convention: establishment of a State Committee on
Minorities to formulate recommendations on improvements of minority protection; agreements, signed between central and local
authorities, in order to find solutions regarding place names and topographical indications in minority languages. The Advisory
Committee also noted that in the field of non-discrimination, an amendment to the Criminal Code was adopted, making racial
motivation for criminal offences an aggravating factor. More recently, a law on personal data protection, which provides legal guarantees
in relation to future ethnic data collection, was also adopted.

24. The ACFC indicated that more resolute action in the field of minority protection is still required, there are no reliable statistics as yet
on the ethnic composition of the country or on the socio-economic position of national minorities; the practice of the mandatory
recording of ethnic belonging still appears to occur in respect of some minorities (Greeks and Macedonians), raising problematic issues,
in particular with regard to the principle of self-identification; territorial restrictions de facto restricting access to minority rights outside
“minority zones”. This is particularly the case with regard to the Greeks and the Macedonians, as well as the Serbs and Montenegrins,
whose requests for minority language education are still pending. Persons belonging to the so-called “ethno-linguistic” minorities, the
Roma and the Vlachs/Aromanians, face particular difficulties to maintain their cultural and linguistic identity and, as persons belonging to
“ethno-linguistic” minorities, are subject to different treatment.

25. The ACFC indicated that further dialogue is needed between the authorities and the Egyptian and Bosnian communities to
accommodate their protection needs adequately. The Albanian legislative framework needs to be completed and made sufficiently clear,
inter alia, with regard to minority language use in relations with administrative authorities, place names and topographical indications
and broadcasting in minority language. The ACFC noted that implementation of the National Strategy on Roma is regrettably slow and
lacks overall adequate State funding, effective involvement of local authorities, proper coordination and evaluation tools. Lack of civil
registration of the Roma is still reported to be widespread in Albania, has negative repercussions for their access to social and other
rights, and increases the risk of their children becoming victims of trafficking. Participation of persons belonging to national minorities
in public administration is still reported to be low. While the authorities appear to have taken steps to recruit minorities in the police,
efforts remain to be made to promote greater inclusion of national minorities in the public service. The institutional framework for
minority participation in public affairs needs to be revised: a better articulation of minority interests should be supported, promoting
26. In its 2004 report, ECRI called, inter alia, for a wide range of measures aimed at improving the participation and representation of members of some minority groups in political decision-making bodies and political processes at national and local level. ECRI recommended that measures be taken to ensure the full inclusion of Roma and Egyptians in all aspects of social, economic and political life; urged the authorities to take further measures to combat the trafficking of Roma and Egyptian children. It recommended ensuring that Roma are consistently involved in all aspects of the implementation and evaluation of the “National Strategy for the Improvement of Living Conditions of the Roma” at national and local level. In addition, ECRI recommended consideration of the adoption of a specific National Strategy aimed at improving the situation of Egyptians in Albania; the collection of data enabling the situation of different minority groups in the country to be assessed; and the introduction of further measures to ensure the thorough investigation of allegations of ill-treatment by police and to ensure that the rights of asylum seekers and migrants continue to be guaranteed.

Final Report

10. Egypt commended Albania’s achievements in combating trafficking in human beings, and efforts made in protecting children’s rights, including combating child labour. Egypt asked for further information on progress made and lessons learned related to protection of children’s rights and feedback on how measures on combating child labour work. Egypt made recommendations.

14. Turkey appreciated the consistent efforts of Albania towards the establishment of democratic institutions and the steady progress in the field of human rights. It noted the adoption of the National Strategy for Children for 2005-2010 and its action plan, and the establishment of the Inter-ministerial Committee of Children’s Rights in 2007. In relation to the establishment of the National Council on Disability Issues in 2005, Turkey enquired whether Albania considered becoming a party to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. It encouraged Albania to maintain its human rights-related efforts, particularly in the field of gender equality and prevention of child labour. Turkey made a recommendation.

15. Brazil enquired about: 1) the main steps taken and the shortcomings identified by Albania regarding economic, social and cultural rights, especially in the areas of unemployment and combating poverty and migration; 2) the main steps taken in the fulfillment of the rights of the child, the rights of women and the combat of all forms of discrimination; 3) the main steps to address the issue of customary law and traditional codes of Kanun; and 4) the urgent need identified in the area of cooperation focused on human rights. Brazil made recommendations.

30. Mexico noted the legal and institutional progress in several areas, including promotion of gender equality, protection of rights of minorities, persons with disabilities and children, combating domestic violence, torture and trafficking in human beings, and establishment of an ombudsman institution. Mexico made recommendations.

38. Uruguay welcomed the establishment of the Inter-ministerial Committee on the Rights of the Child and stressed the importance of coordination, particularly with civil society. Uruguay requested more details on concrete measures and the results achieved under Albania’s National Strategy for Children (2005-2010) and the 2008 Strategy for foster care for needy children. Uruguay noted the Law (8143) on the situation of orphans, girl children and adolescents, under which they have the right to have support of various types such as financial assistance, fellowships, and free access to services. Uruguay enquired about measures taken to ensure resources that are available to implement these types of support and to carry forward effective policies of public care for these children until the age of 18 years. Uruguay made a recommendation.

56. The Syrian Arab Republic welcomed Albania’s efforts made in the area of human rights, and further encouraged Albania to pursue their efforts in all areas, including health, the rights of women, children and minorities, as well as other areas, depending on the national needs and international commitments. It made a recommendation.

59. Kyrgyzstan noted the broad public involvement in the drafting of the national report. It also noted Albania’s active efforts in combating corruption and the achievements made in combating human trafficking. It further noted the establishment of a national human rights protection system, including a functioning Ombudsman, a national committee for minorities, a committee for children’s rights, a committee to eliminate child labour, a committee for people with disabilities and the establishment of a government department concerned with domestic violence. It expressed hope that Albania would continue its comprehensive reform programmes in protecting human rights and share experience in the areas where it had achieved positive results, particularly in preventing human trafficking and countering corruption.

60. Senegal welcomed Albania’s efforts to improve its institutional framework for the protection of human rights, including children rights. It acknowledged the progress made in several areas, including the protection of rights of minorities and combating trafficking in human beings. Senegal requested further information on the draft Law on Children’s Rights mentioned in the national report and also on awareness-raising programmes to prevent discrimination. Senegal made recommendations.

Conclusion and Recommendations

12. Adopt the Law on the Rights of the Child and the Law against Discrimination as matters of priority, as well as measures to ensure the implementation of laws on birth registration
14. Pursue its efforts to bring national legislation into line with international human rights standards and take this element into account when adopting a law on the rights of children (Morocco).

16. Strengthen its policy for the full guarantee of the rights of the child, with attention to combating child labour and the implementation of the Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children, in accordance with Human Rights Council resolution 11/7 and draft resolution A/C.3/64/L.50 of the General Assembly. (Brazil);

17. Consider fostering policies on combating child trafficking and define the crimes of the sale of children and child pornography (Brazil);

29. Strengthen its national child protection system and ensure its full implementation; intensify its efforts to raise public awareness against trafficking in children for sexual exploitation and forced labour within its National Strategy for the Fight against Trafficking in Human Beings as well as other policies and programmes; and adopt appropriate rehabilitation and reintegration mechanisms for the victims (Slovakia);

30. Take further measures to promote and protect the rights of women and children (Afghanistan);

31. Continue giving priority and allocating adequate resources to the implementation of the national strategies on children and on combating child trafficking (Malaysia);

55. Continue efforts directed towards protection of the rights of women and children (Russian Federation);

58. Intensify efforts to combat sexual violence and ill-treatment against women and children, including by providing specific training to law enforcement officers and judges (Malaysia);

71. Adopt further measures to ensure birth registration of all children (Czech Republic);

72. Facilitate and ensure registration of all children born in Albania (Mexico);

73. Take appropriate measures to promote the registration of all children, paying particular attention to the most vulnerable and marginalized groups (Azerbaijan);