

ECOSOC Resolution 2007/23

Supporting national efforts for child justice reform, in particular through technical assistance and improved United Nations system-wide coordination

The Economic and Social Council,

Recalling the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,¹ which entitles children to special care and assistance,

Recalling also the Convention on the Rights of the Child,² in particular articles 37 and 40 thereof, which commit parties to the Convention to, inter alia, using the deprivation of liberty of persons under the age of eighteen only as a measure of last resort,

Recalling further the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Administration of Juvenile Justice (the Beijing Rules)³ and other relevant United Nations standards and norms,

Bearing in mind that the aim of a child justice system is to ensure that any reaction to children in conflict with the law is always in proportion to the circumstances of both the child and the offence,

Noting the high risk of violence and abuse against children in the criminal justice system, as highlighted in the report of the independent expert for the United Nations study on violence against children,⁴ submitted to the General Assembly pursuant to Assembly resolution 60/231 of 23 December 2005,

Alarmed by the finding of the independent expert, contained in his report, that, in some countries, the majority of children in detention have not been convicted of a crime but are awaiting trial, including together with adults,⁵

Recalling its resolution 1997/30 of 21 July 1997, in which it welcomed the Guidelines for Action on Children in the Criminal Justice System,⁶ and recommended the establishment of a coordination panel on technical advice and assistance in juvenile justice,

Noting with satisfaction the work of the Interagency Panel on Juvenile Justice, in particular its various publications and its website, as well as the active participation of civil society, together with United Nations agencies, in the work of the Panel,

Noting the lessons learned from technical cooperation projects in the area of juvenile justice carried out, inter alia, by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime,

1. *Urges* Member States to pay particular attention to the issue of child justice and to take into consideration applicable United Nations

¹ General Assembly resolution 217 A (III).

² United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 15777, No. 27531.

³ General Assembly resolution 40/33, annex.

⁴ A/61/299.

⁵ *Ibid.*, paras. 61 and 63.

⁶ Economic and Social Council resolution 1997/30, annex.

standards and norms for the treatment of children in conflict with the law, particularly those deprived of their liberty, taking into account also the gender, social circumstances and development needs of such children;

2. *Invites* Member States to adopt, where appropriate, comprehensive national action plans on crime prevention and child justice reform containing, in particular, specific targets with regard to reducing the pretrial detention and imprisonment of children, including through the use of diversion, restorative justice and alternatives to imprisonment and ensuring that proper detention conditions prevail;

3. *Invites* Member States and their relevant institutions to provide or offer specialized training to criminal justice officers involved in the administration of child justice, including correctional officers, police officers, prosecutors, judges and lawyers, as well as to social workers, in order to raise their awareness of and their compliance with applicable international legal instruments and, as appropriate, relevant standards and norms;

4. *Invites* Member States to make use, as appropriate, of the *Manual for the Measurement of Juvenile Justice Indicators*,⁷ prepared jointly by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and the United Nations Children's Fund, and of the measures contained in the publication of the Interagency Panel on Juvenile Justice entitled *Protecting the Rights of Children in Conflict with the Law*, as well as of the website of the Panel;

5. *Encourages* Member States and international funding agencies to provide adequate resources to, inter alia, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime to enable it to carry out technical cooperation projects in the area of child justice;

6. *Requests* the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, subject to the availability of extrabudgetary resources, and the members of the Interagency Panel on Juvenile Justice to continue providing assistance to Member States, upon request, in the area of child justice;

7. *Urges* the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, within its mandates, taking into consideration the recommendations of the United Nations study on violence against children,⁸ to explore ways in which preventing and responding to violence against children can be incorporated in its technical cooperation activities in the area of children and the justice system, taking into account General Assembly resolution 61/146 of 19 December 2006;

8. *Requests* the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, subject to the availability of extrabudgetary resources, to provide technical assistance to Member States, upon request, in order to strengthen national capacities and infrastructure in the area of child justice;

9. *Also requests* the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, subject to the availability of extrabudgetary resources, to provide technical assistance to Member States, upon request, in setting up national data collection and criminal justice information systems regarding children in conflict with the law, using the *Manual for the Measurement of Juvenile Justice Indicators*;

⁷ United Nations publication, Sales No. 07.V.7.

⁸ A/61/299.

10. *Encourages* the members of the Interagency Panel on Juvenile Justice to further increase their cooperation, to share information and to pool their capacities and interests in order to increase the effectiveness of programme implementation;

11. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, at its eighteenth session, on the implementation of the present resolution.

*45th plenary meeting
26 July 2007*