

## **Recommendations related to breastfeeding by the 64th COMMITTEE ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD:**

The 64th session of the Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC Committee) took place in Geneva from 16 September to 4 October 2013. The Committee reviewed the progress of the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child in 7 countries: **China, Kuwait, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Monaco Sao Tome and Principe and Tuvalu.**

IBFAN submitted 4 alternative reports on the situation of infant and young child feeding for China, Kuwait, Lithuania and Luxembourg. The reports were written in collaboration with IBFAN groups in the countries.

We regret to see that in its concluding observations, the CRC Committee referred specifically to **breastfeeding** in only 2 out of the 7 countries (China and Tuvalu). In the case of Luxembourg, even if breastfeeding was largely mentioned in the discussion between the CRC Committee and the government delegation, Luxembourg did not receive any recommendation concerning breastfeeding.

Some of the recommendations on health care and on the business sector and its impact on child rights are of relevance for infant and young child feeding and are reported below.

The CRC Committee recommended China and Tuvalu to **promote exclusive breastfeeding**. It has also stressed the need to establish **Baby-Friendly Hospitals** (China) and to adopt **the International Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes and resolutions** (China, Tuvalu). It also urged Tuvalu to provide training to all health workers about breastfeeding.

The Committee particularly addressed the issue of children affected by contaminated formula in China and recommended the government to strengthen its legislative framework on food and health standard and ensure sanctions and remedies in cases of violation.

An Emphasis has been put on the importance of **respecting the right of the child to the enjoyment of the highest standard of health** (China, Lithuania, Monaco, Sao Tome and Principe). Countries have been reminded to pay attention to the **2013 General Comment 15** on the right of the child to health, which explicitly recognizes the importance of breastfeeding for the achievement of the right of the child to health. It urges States, in the effort of diminishing infant and child mortality, to devote particular attention to neonatal mortality and suggests, inter alia, to *“pay particular attention to ensuring full protection and promotion of breast! feeding practices”*. Moreover, *“Exclusive breastfeeding for infants up to 6 months should be protected and promoted and breastfeeding should continue together with appropriate complementary foods preferably until two years of age as feasible. States’ obligations in this area are defined in the “protect, promote and support framework”, adopted unanimously by the World Health Assembly”* in the [Global Strategy for Infant and Young Child Feeding](http://www.who.int/nutrition/topics/global_strategy/en/). ([http://www.who.int/nutrition/topics/global\\_strategy/en/](http://www.who.int/nutrition/topics/global_strategy/en/) )

Some of the countries are recommended to provide quality training for the health care personnel (and to increase the budget for health programs in general. China is urged to improve health infrastructure as well as availability and accessibility to emergency obstetric and neonatal care, especially in rural and poor areas, in order to prevent child and maternal mortality. Sao Tome and Principe is recommended to undertake surveys in order to understand the causes of maternal mortality and to intensify its efforts to improve access to

safe drinking water and sanitation. Lithuania is demanded to ensure maternal care for women who choose to deliver at home and finally, it recommended Monaco to ensure that all children, including non-nationals, enjoy the same access and quality to health services.

A great focus was placed on the need to regulate **the impact of the business sector on children's rights**. The CRC Committee drew attention to **the 2013 General Comment 16**, which specifically calls on States *“to implement and enforce internationally agreed standards concerning children's rights, health and business including the [...] International Code of Marketing of Breast-milk Substitutes and relevant subsequent World Health Assembly resolutions”*.

Countries are recommended to ensure the implementation by companies of both international and national environment and health standards and ensure appropriate sanctions in cases of violations. Countries are also recommended to require companies to undertake assessments of the environmental health-related and human rights impact of their business activities. The CRC Committee also focused on the need to prevent mother-to-child HIV/AIDS transmission by improving access to treatment, follow-up treatments and by ensuring early diagnosis, as well as early initiation of treatment.

For the full report, please visit <http://www.ibfan.org/CRC/Post-session-report-session64.pdf>

For detailed information on each of the countries please visit our [Breastfeeding and Human Rights blog](http://breastfeedingandhr.blogspot.ch/). ( <http://breastfeedingandhr.blogspot.ch/> )