Annex III

**Biographical data form of candidates to the Committee on the Rights of the Child**

Family name and first name: MEZMUR, Benyam Dawit

Date and place of birth: 22 MAY 1980, ADDIS ABABA

Nationality: ETHIOPIAN

Email address:

Working languages: ENGLISH

**Current position/function:**

Member and former Chairperson (2015-2017) of the *UN Committee on the Rights of the Child*, and the *African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child* (chairperson from 2012-2013, and 2015-2017, and currently its special rapporteur on children and armed conflict) of the African Union

Professor of Law, and Deputy Dean for Research and Postgraduate Studies, University of the Western Cape (UWC), Cape Town, South Africa and lecture/supervise on an *ad hoc* basis in Addis Ababa University, Ethiopia

Senior Researcher and Coordinator at the Children’s Rights Project, Dullah Omar Institute for Constitutional Law, Governance and Human Rights, UWC

Member of the *Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors* appointed by the Holy Father Pope Francis

**Other main professional activities, in particular related to children’s rights:**

Mr Mezmur is currently a member of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (and served as its Chairperson from May 2015 until May 2017) and the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child of the African Union (and served as its Chairperson twice from 2012-2014, and 2015-2017). As an academician, Mr Mezmur has lectured (and supervised) on children’s rights, children’s rights and climate change, the rights of persons with disabilities, international protection of human rights, international family law, and the African human rights system in a number of academic institutions in Africa (Ethiopia and South Africa) and Europe (Belgium, Switzerland, Italy, The Netherlands, UK etc). Mr Mezmur conducts research on law and policy development on children’s rights in a number of African countries and beyond, and has been involved as a resource person in institutional efforts aimed at providing technical support to governments through UN agencies such as UNICEF and UNHCR. In addition, he has been involved in advocacy work on the rights of the child with treaty bodies and special procedures (on torture, environment, minority issues, sale and sexual exploitation of children, etc) at the UN, as well as at the Human Rights Council.

**Educational background:**

Doctorate in Law (LLD), (2010), University of Western Cape, (research paper on child rights in intercountry adoption);

Masters in Law (LLM) in Human Rights and Democratization (CHR), (2005), University of Pretoria, South Africa (research paper on child soldiers);

Postgraduate Diploma in international protection of human rights, (2007), Abo Akademi, Finland;

Bachelor of Laws (LLB), (2003), Addis Ababa University, Ethiopia; and Certificates in mental disability law (CEU, Budapest); development law; international criminal and humanitarian law; ESC rights; etc.

**Relevant expertise on children’s rights.**

**Please elaborate on your areas of expertise under the Convention on the Rights of the Child and related experience:**

Mr Mezmur is serving/has served as the Coordinator of the CRC Committee’s Working Groups on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (since 2017), Optional Protocol on a communications procedure (OPIC) (2019-2020), and is also the Focal Person for UNICEF (since 2017). He also served as Coordinator of the Committee’s Working Group that drafted the Joint General Comment on children’s rights and migration; has taken part in the negotiations to draft the 3rd Optional Protocol; and has made submissions to, or participated in, the Human Rights Council, and its Day on the Rights of the Child. Mr Mezmur also serves/served in Expert Groups/Meetings/Task Forces/Advisory Boards such as on the UN Global Study on Children Deprived of Their Liberty; children’s rights and digital media; budgeting for children; children’s rights and the business sector; commercial sexual exploitation (ECPAT); violence against children including harmful practices (SRSG VAC); and the right to education. Mr Mezmur has also been invited as a speaker/moderator to more than 100 international and regional meetings/conferences/workshops in the last decade including recently to the World Statelessness Conference (June 2019, The Hague), the Social Forum of the Human Rights Council, the UN Forum on Minority Issues (2018, 2019), and the Annual High-Level Panel of the Human Rights Council on human rights mainstreaming (Feb 2020). Mr Mezmur has also been invited to engage with the European Parliament and Council of Europe (on child marriage, migration, child participation etc), and the Pan African Parliament.

Mr Mezmur is a member of the Governing/Advisory Boards of the Children’s Institute (South Africa), Keeping Children Safe (UK), and All Survivors Project (Liechtenstein). He is also a member of the Advisory Board on Travel and Tourism, ECPAT International (Thailand), Institute on Statelessness (Eindhoven, The Netherlands and London, UK); Expert Committee of the International Children’s Prize (Netherlands); Special Advisor to the Supervisory Board Child Helpline International (The Netherlands); and Member of the Advisory Committee for the Development of Principles on Citizenship Stripping as a Security Measure (since 2016). Formerly Mr Mezmur was a Legal Officer (2003-2005) at the ACPF (Ethiopia) and continues to serve on its International Board of Trustees, which is chaired by Mme Graça Machel.

**List of most recent publications in the field of children’s rights:**

Mr Mezmur has more than 60 published academic and lay publications/reports/ etc on child/human rights in the last few years including:

(1) “Reflections on family law issues in the jurisprudence of the UN CRC Committee: The Convention on the Rights of the Child @ 30:” (with O Khazova) (2019) *The International Survey of Family Law* 305-327

(2)“Technology changing @ a dizzying pace: Reflections on selected jurisprudence of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child” (with A Skelton) (2019) 3 *Peace Human Rights Governance* 275-305

(3)“ ‘Every ‘i’ dotted, and every ‘t’ crossed?: The Joint General Comments on the rights of children in the context of international migration in the Horn of Africa” (2019) IV *Ethiopian Journal of Human Rights* 1-33

(4) “No second chance for first impressions: The first amicable settlement under the African Children’s Charter” (2019) 19 *African Human Rights Law Journal* 62-84

(5) “Taking measures without taking measurements? An insider’s views on monitoring the implementation of the African Children’s Charter in the context of armed conflict” (2019) 905 *International Review of the Red Cross*

(6) ‘The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child’ in Boezaart CJ (ed.) *Child Law in South Africa* (Juta) (2017) 401-423