

Joint oral statement by 25 NGOs

Protecting the rights of the child in humanitarian situations

Thank you Mr President.

Across the world, children are suffering from the effects of armed conflict, civil unrest, displacement and environmental disasters.

To prevent further crises, promote peace and ensure that the 2030 Agenda leaves no one behind, **human rights, including children's rights, should be put at the heart of humanitarian action.**

We therefore call on Member States, the UN and all humanitarian actors to:

Firmly ground their humanitarian action in and uphold international humanitarian, refugee and human rights law, including the UNCRC and its guiding principles;

- Ensure children are empowered to have their voices heard and taken into account in all decisions directly and indirectly affecting them, in a safe, relevant and meaningful way reflecting their evolving capacities;
- End discrimination against children on the grounds of age, gender, gender identity and sexual orientation, ethnicity, religion, social and personal identity, disability, geographical location or socioeconomic status, and take into account the complex intersectionality between these different statuses;
- Develop inclusive, independent and effective monitoring, follow-up and accountability mechanisms that reinforce existing human rights mechanisms and linkages to the 2030 Agenda;
- Ensure disaggregated data, to better address the challenges faced by the most deprived children;
- Prioritise access to safe and quality education and play as a critical part of humanitarian response from day one, recognising that denial of access to education, including as a result of attacks on or military use of schools, increases the risk of harm and exposure to threats of trafficking, child labour, child marriage, and child recruitment in the context of armed conflict;
- Prioritise violence prevention and protection against sexual exploitation, including through age-appropriate and gender-sensitive psychosocial support and the implementation of the UN Guidelines on Alternative Care;

- Ensure the fulfilment of the child's right to health, including sexual and reproductive health and rights, nutrition interventions such as the Operational Guidance on Infant Feeding in Emergencies and other assistance;
- Deprivation of liberty should be used as a measure of last resort for children detained in the context of armed conflict. In the context of immigration detention, children are never to be detained.

Thank you.

Co-signatories

- Child Rights Connect
- Defence for Children International
- ATD Fourth World
- International Catholic Child Bureau
- War Child
- ECPAT International
- CECODAP
- International Social Service
- International Play Association
- Grupo de Iniciativa Nacional por los Derechos del Niño
- ERDA Foundation
- International Federation of Educative Communities (FICE International)
- Women's World Summit Foundation
- Geneva Infant Feeding Association (GIFA)
- International Baby Food Action Network (IBFAN)
- Eurochild
- Association for Childhood Education International
- Save the Children
- International Council of Women
- International Association of Youth and Family Judges and Magistrates
- CRC Asia
- Child Soldiers International
- Terre des Hommes
- International Child Rights Center
- Plan International



