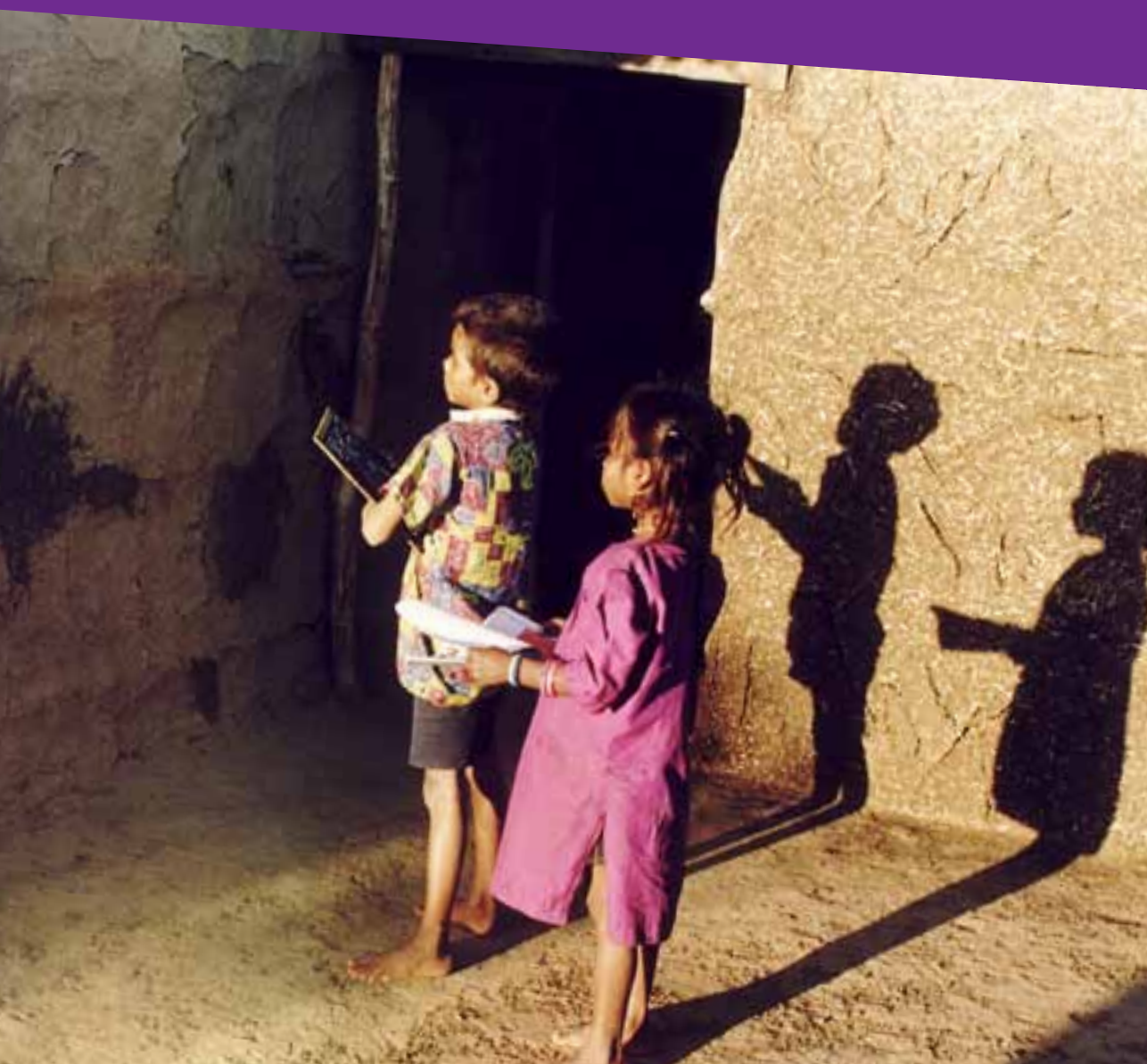

OVERVIEW OF THE CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD



THE BEST INTERESTS OF THE CHILD

“... in all actions concerning children ... the best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration.” [ARTICLE 3]

“The Convention on the Rights of the Child stands as a universal standard for building a better world – a world in which the best interests of children are a primary concern of all. The challenge for the next 20 years is to build on the progress already achieved, working together to reach those children who are still being denied their rights to survival, development, protection and participation.”

ANN M VENEMAN
UNICEF EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR





PROTECTION AGAINST DISCRIMINATION

“States Parties shall ... ensure rights ... without discrimination of any kind, irrespective of the child’s or his or her parent’s or legal guardian’s race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or other status.”

[ARTICLE 2]

“All children have the same rights everywhere. The 20th anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child reminds us of the power and importance of children’s rights. Governments have promised these rights to their children, without discrimination (Article 2): we must make sure they deliver.”

DAVID BULL
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, UNICEF UK



RESPONSIBILITIES, RIGHTS AND DUTIES OF PARENTS

“States ... shall respect the responsibilities, rights and duties of parents.” [ARTICLE 5]

“A child shall not be separated from his or her parents against their will.” [ARTICLE 9]

“A child ... shall have the right to maintain on a regular basis ... personal relations and direct contacts with both parents.” [ARTICLE 10]

“Both parents have common responsibilities for the upbringing and development of the child.” [ARTICLE 18]

“As Trinidad and Tobago strives towards developed country status and a culture of peace and human rights, the development and well being of our most precious human resource, our children, is a priority. I am therefore pleased that the Commonwealth is commemorating the anniversary of this Convention.”

THE HONOURABLE PATRICK MANNING
PRIME MINISTER OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO AND COMMONWEALTH CHAIR-IN-OFFICE

CHILDREN'S RIGHT TO LIFE

“Every child has the inherent right to life.”

[ARTICLE 6]



“All too often the rights of young people are overlooked and overshadowed as a group with little representation, so it is more important than ever, with a growing role for young people in society, that their rights are firmly established, supported and upheld.”

RUPERT BAILEY, AGED 17

DEPUTY MEMBER OF YOUTH PARLIAMENT FOR GLOUCESTER AND FOREST OF DEAN, UK

RIGHT TO PRESERVE IDENTITY, OWN CULTURE AND RIGHT TO ACQUIRE NATIONALITY

“The child ... shall have ... the right to acquire a nationality.”

[ARTICLE 7]

“States Parties undertake to respect the right of the child to preserve his or her identity.”

[ARTICLE 8]

“In those States in which ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities or persons of indigenous origin exist, a child ... shall not be denied the right ... to enjoy his or her own culture, to profess and practise his or her own religion, or to use his or her own language.”

[ARTICLE 30]

“Learning about my culture means I can follow in the footsteps of my ancestors”

TE ANIWA, AGED 12,
OTAKI SCHOOL, NEW ZEALAND





RIGHT TO FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION AND FREEDOM OF ASSOCIATION

“The child shall have the right to freedom of expression.”

[ARTICLE 13]

“States Parties shall assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child.”

[ARTICLE 12]

“States Parties recognize the rights of the child to freedom of association and to freedom of peaceful assembly.”

[ARTICLE 15]

“I’ve learned that children’s rights mean that my views are important and that adults should listen to me.”

ANNA, AGED 11
CHILDREN’S PARLIAMENT WESTERN ISLES, UK

RIGHT TO FREEDOM OF THOUGHT, CONSCIENCE AND RELIGION

“States Parties shall respect the right of the child to freedom of thought, conscience and religion.”

[ARTICLE 14]

“At school they teach us 5 + 5 equals 10. At Children’s Parliament they tell us why.”

CALUM, AGED 12
CHILDREN’S PARLIAMENT, FIFE, UK



PROTECTION AGAINST VIOLENCE, ABUSE AND EXPLOITATION

“States Parties undertake to protect the child from all forms of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse” and “all other forms of exploitation prejudicial to any aspects of the child’s welfare.”

[ARTICLES 34 AND 36]

“... protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation ... while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s) or any other person who has the care of the child.”

[ARTICLE 19]

“States Parties shall take all appropriate ... measures to prevent the abduction of, the sale of or traffic in children for any purpose or in any form.”

[ARTICLE 35]

“The CRC is already 20 years old! Yet children in several countries are being exploited and abused, and don’t have access to their fundamental rights. This anniversary should be dedicated to the call to states, having ratified the Convention, to account for their commitments.”

NAJAT MAALLA M’JID
UN SPECIAL RAPporteur ON THE SALE
OF CHILDREN, CHILD PROSTITUTION AND
CHILD PORNOGRAPHY



PROTECTION AND HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

“A child temporarily or permanently deprived of his or her family environment ... shall be entitled to special protection and assistance provided by the State.” [ARTICLE 20]

“States Parties shall take appropriate measures to ensure that a child who is seeking refugee status or who is considered a refugee ... whether unaccompanied or accompanied by his or her parents or by any other person, receive appropriate protection and humanitarian assistance.” [ARTICLE 22]



“I have seen first-hand the suffering of displaced children around the world and have been inspired by their unflinching spirit and hope. The CRC is a reminder to us all of our responsibilities to protect displaced children, so they can grow up in an environment of safety, protection and understanding.”

ANGELINA JOLIE
UNHCR GOODWILL AMBASSADOR



RIGHTS OF PHYSICALLY AND MENTALLY DISABLED CHILDREN

“States Parties recognize that a mentally or physically disabled child should enjoy a full and decent life” and “the right of the disabled child to special care.”

[ARTICLE 23]

“I congratulate all governments of the Commonwealth for ratifying the CRC. The Convention is not a list of aspirations; it is a list of rights. Our duties to our children cover their political, economic and social and cultural rights. Despite significant achievements made, children around the world are still victims of discrimination, violence, abuse, and exploitation. The anniversary of the CRC is a reminder to us all of how far we still need to go to achieve the true realisation of their rights. A renewed commitment is an obligation of every individual, every family, every state. It is an obligation of every single adult citizen.”

GRAÇA MACHEL
INTERNATIONAL ADVOCATE FOR WOMEN'S AND CHILDREN'S RIGHTS


“If it wasn't for my school, I would not have all the opportunities that I have right now.”

LULAMA MAKWA, AGED 17
BARTIMEA SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF AND BLIND, SOUTH AFRICA

RIGHT TO HEALTH

“States Parties recognize the right of the child to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health.”

[ARTICLE 24]



“With nearly 9 million children dying every year before the age of five mostly from preventable diseases, governments have clearly yet to deliver for children and to turn words into action. Additionally understanding the practical implications in particular for health care services, underlying conditions and social determinants of children’s health remains a challenge for many governments. In this context the nearly universal ratification of the CRC presents a unique opportunity to the world’s children.

This implies the universal commitment of governments to realizing the right to health to the children of the world. The CRC not only accepts the necessary goals for the realization of the right to children’s health, but also gives these goals legitimacy and makes them legally binding.”

ANAND GROVER
UN SPECIAL RAPPORTEUR ON THE RIGHT TO THE HIGHEST ATTAINABLE
STANDARD OF HEALTH

RIGHT TO AN ADEQUATE STANDARD OF LIVING

“States Parties recognize the right of every child to a standard of living adequate for the child’s physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social development.”

[ARTICLE 27]





RIGHT TO EDUCATION

“States Parties recognize the right of the child to education.”

[ARTICLE 28]

*“Education is neither a service nor a commodity.
It is a basic human right.”*

VERNOR MUÑOZ VILLALOBOS
UN SPECIAL RAPporteur ON THE RIGHT TO EDUCATION

*“I think children of all cultures should be educated and have the
right to be free to do what they want to do.”*

NEESON, AGED 10
OTAKI SCHOOL, NEW ZEALAND

RIGHT TO REST AND LEISURE

“States Parties recognize the right of the child to rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to the age of the child and to participate freely in cultural life and the arts.”

[ARTICLE 31]

“When children get involved in playing sport it can build their confidence and encourage them to be more tolerant and respectful – things that will last a lifetime. Children have a right to play and allowing them to have time and space for leisure and play helps their health, education and well being. As a UNICEF Ambassador I know that today, all over the world children’s rights are still being denied and this needs to stop. The world needs to stick to its promises to children and ensure that they have the best chances and opportunities in life.”

DAVID BECKHAM
UNICEF GOODWILL AMBASSADOR



PROTECTION AGAINST ECONOMIC EXPLOITATION

“States Parties recognize the right to the child to be protected from economic exploitation and from performing any work that is likely to be hazardous or to interfere with the child’s education, or to be harmful to the child’s health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development.” [ARTICLE 32]

“Freedom from child labour – from work that deprives children of their childhood, their potential and their dignity, and is harmful to their physical and mental development – also calls for action to support decent work for parents.

The ILO is pleased to bring its 90 years experience of protecting children from exploitation in the world of work to common efforts today to ensure respect in word and deed for the rights of girls and boys everywhere, as set out in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.”

JUAN SOMAVIA
DIRECTOR-GENERAL, INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANIZATION



PROTECTION AGAINST TORTURE OR OTHER CRUEL, INHUMAN OR DEGRADING TREATMENT

“No child shall be subjected to torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.”

[ARTICLE 37]



“I was scared ... If I made a mistake I was beaten with a stick. When I said I wanted to go home I was told I never would ... I never got anything, no money, nothing; my family also got nothing.”

AHMED

A VICTIM OF TRAFFICKING FROM BANGLADESH TO THE UNITED ARAB EMIRATES AT THE AGE OF FIVE. HE HAS NOW BEEN RETURNED TO BANGLADESH (ANTI-SLAVERY INTERNATIONAL).



CHILDREN IN ARMED CONFLICT

“States Parties undertake to respect ... rules of international humanitarian law applicable to them in armed conflicts which are relevant to the child.”

“States Parties shall take all feasible measures to ensure that [children] do not take a direct part in hostilities.” [ARTICLE 38]

“Children should not have their childhood brutally interrupted by adult wars. They must not be recruited or used as child soldiers to be cannon fodder. We must prevent their recruitment, punish those who are responsible and take all necessary measures to ensure that those who return are successfully reintegrated into their societies. We must remember to protect and care for our children even in the midst of war.”

RADHIKA COOMARASWAMY
SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UN SECRETARY-GENERAL
FOR CHILDREN AND ARMED CONFLICT

CHILD VICTIMS

“States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to promote physical and psychological recovery and social reintegration of a child victim of: any form of neglect, exploitation or abuse; torture or any other form of cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment; or armed conflicts.” [ARTICLE 39]

“Children have the right to live in safety. Imagine a world where that was true. Countless children were brutalised by the Sierra Leone civil war. I was one of the lucky ones. I was able to realise my rights and create a life I could only have imagined. Help us protect child rights.”

ISHMAEL BEAH
UNICEF ADVOCATE FOR CHILDREN AFFECTED BY WAR



CHILDREN ACCUSED OF INFRINGEMENTS OF PENAL LAW

“States Parties recognize the right of every child alleged as, accused of, or recognized as having infringed the penal law to be treated in a manner consistent with the promotion of the child’s sense of dignity and worth ... which takes into account of the child’s age and the desirability of promoting the child’s reintegration and the child’s assuming a constructive role in society.”

[ARTICLE 40]

“How the international system of criminal justice meets the Convention duties to prevent such widespread suffering is surely one of the defining issues of this century. Article 40 reflects and differentiates the minimum rights of a child when accused of crime. Each of these protected rights is basic, necessary and non-negotiable. Individuals in each jurisdiction must act so as to ensure that these fundamental rights are achieved in practice and not simply rehearsed in theory.”

MOHAMED HUSAIN
PRESIDENT, COMMONWEALTH LAWYERS
ASSOCIATION





