

PRESS RELEASE

The European Union reaches out to children for Universal Children's Day

November 17th 2014: November 20th of each year has been designated as Universal Children's Day by the United Nations (UN). This year, however, a special milestone has been reached - the 25th Anniversary of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. To observe this significant anniversary, the European Union Delegation to Trinidad and Tobago has partnered with the Ministry of Education, the United Nations and United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) to help children across the country better understand their rights. A special poster on the rights of the child has been created and will be distributed to primary schools across Trinidad and Tobago. In addition, the EU and its partners have planned a special event to speak with children about their rights and most importantly to listen to their experiences and perceptions on what it is like to be a child in Trinidad and Tobago today.

"Promotion and protection of the rights of children is very important to the EU, and we did not want this significant anniversary to go by without some special activity." states Daniela Tramacere, Chargé d'Affaires of the EU Trinidad and Tobago Delegation. "We hope that schools seize the opportunity of this anniversary to continue to educate students about their rights and also to teach them to seek help if they are in trouble or are being threatened."

The EU mainstreams the protection of the rights of the child in all of its policies and actions. This translates into programmes and activities to improve education, access to services and to resources, programmes that address the Rights of Women, including the protection of women and children from domestic violence, and challenging issues such as child labour or children's involvement in armed conflict. EU policies aim to protect children in vulnerable situations and fight violence against children both inside the Union and externally.



*Rights of the Child
Your Rights*



November 20, 2014: 25th Anniversary of the United Nations Convention on The Rights of the Child

What is a convention? A convention is an agreement. In this case, the countries of the world that have signed this Convention have agreed that children have the rights listed in it. Trinidad and Tobago is one of the countries that signed this Convention.

What are rights? "Rights" are things that every child should have or be able to do. All children have the same rights. These rights are given to children to protect them from harm and help them to have a good life. The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child lists a total of 54 rights.

Here are some of them that are good for you to know:

- You have the right to be alive.
- No one is allowed to punish you in a cruel and harmful way.
- You have the right to live with your parent(s), unless it is bad for you.
- You have the right to live with a family who cares for you.
- You have the right to give your opinion, and for adults to listen and take it seriously.
- You have the right to choose your own religion and beliefs. Your parents should help you decide what is right and wrong, and what is best for you.
- You have the right to choose your own friends and join or set up groups, as long as it isn't harmful to others.
- You have the right to get information that is important to your wellbeing, from radio, newspaper, books, computers and other sources. Adults should make sure that the information you are getting is not harmful, and help you find and understand the information you need.
- You have the right to be protected from being hurt and mistreated, in body or mind.
- You have the right to care and protection if you are adopted or in foster care.
- You have the right to special education and care if you have a disability, as well as all the rights in this Convention, so that you can live a full life.
- You have the right to help if you've been hurt, neglected, or badly treated.
- You have the right to food, clothing, a safe place to live and to have your basic needs met. You should not be disadvantaged so that you can't do many of the things other kids can do.
- You have the right to a good quality education. You should be encouraged to go to school to the highest level you can.
- You have the right to practice your own culture, language and religion - or any you choose. Minority and indigenous groups need special protection of this right.
- You have the right to play and rest.
- You have the right to protection from harmful drugs and from the drug trade.
- You have the right to be free from sexual abuse.
- No one is allowed to kidnap or sell you.
- You have the right to protection from any kind of exploitation (being taken advantage of).
- You have the right to the best health care possible, safe water to drink, nutritious food, a clean and safe environment, and information to help you stay well.



Do You Need Help?
Call: 800-4321 or 131 Childline



Despite all of the efforts, the EU is concerned that children around the world, including in Europe, remain vulnerable and exposed to situations which disrupt their lives and place their very survival at risk. From wars and disease to violence and abuse at the hands of trusted adults the situation shows protection of children remains critical.

Here in Trinidad and Tobago, there are many individuals and groups that continue to work hard to protect and nurture children. "We must recognise and applaud the work being done by the Government, civil society and international organizations in this regard," Ms. Tramacere said. "They are working hard, often quietly behind the scenes, to support and protect the children of Trinidad and Tobago. We look forward to the Children's Authority coming on stream in the near future as this will be an additional support for the vulnerable children of this country."

The Children's Rights Poster may be downloaded from the EU Delegation's website at http://www.eeas.europa.eu/delegations/trinidad/index_en.htm.

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