

# #THE REAL CHALLENGE

## FACTS & FIGURES

### #THEREALCHALLENGE THE UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

With the end of the Second World War and the creation of the United Nations, the international community vowed never again to allow atrocities like those of that conflict happen again. World leaders decided to complement the UN Charter with a road map to guarantee the rights of every individual everywhere.

#### TIMELINE OF CHILD RIGHTS...

- 1946 → The United Nations General Assembly establishes the **International Children's Emergency Fund, UNICEF**, with an emphasis on children throughout the world.
- 1948 → The United Nations General Assembly passes the **Universal Declaration of Human Rights**, in which Article 25 entitles mothers and children to 'special care and assistance' and 'social protection'.
- 1959 → The United Nations General Assembly adopts the **Declaration of the Rights of the Child**, which recognizes, among other rights, children's rights to education, play, a supportive environment and health care.
- 1978 → The Commission on Human Rights puts forth a **draft of a Convention on the Rights of the Child** for consideration by a working group of Member States, agencies and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations.
- 1989 → World leaders make a historic commitment to the world's children by adopting the **United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)** – an international agreement on childhood.

The Convention becomes the most widely ratified human rights treaty in history (**196 countries**) and helps transform children's lives around the world. The standards in the Convention were negotiated by governments, non-governmental organizations, human rights advocates, lawyers, health specialists, social workers, educators, child development experts and religious leaders from all over the world, over a 10-year period.

## ABOUT THE CONVENTION...

The CRC is one amongst **nine core human rights treaties** that became part of the **international human rights framework**, established by the United Nations. In total, its **final text contains 54 Articles**.

The Convention states that **childhood is separate from adulthood, and lasts until 18**; it is a special, protected time, in which children must be allowed to grow, learn, play, develop and flourish with dignity. It makes clear the idea that a basic **quality of life should be the right of all children**. The CRC offers a vision of the **child as an individual and as a member of a family and community**, with rights and responsibilities appropriate to his or her age and stage of development.

The **guiding principles of the Convention** are:

- Non-discrimination;
- The best interests of the child as a primary consideration in all actions concerning children;
- The child's inherent right to life,
- State Parties' obligation to ensure to the maximum extent possible the survival and development of the child;
- The child's right to express his or her views freely in all matters affecting the child, with those views being given due weight.

The CRC has inspired governments to change laws and policies and make investments so that more children finally get the health care and nutrition they need to survive and develop, and there are stronger safeguards in place to protect children from violence and exploitation. It has also enabled more children to have their voices heard and participate in their societies.

## MONITORING THE CONVENTION...

The **Committee on the Rights of the Child** is the body of **18 independent experts** that monitors implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child by its State parties. It also monitors implementation of two Optional Protocols to the Convention, on involvement of children in armed conflict and on sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography. Where necessary, the Committee calls for international assistance from other governments and technical assistance from organisations like UNICEF.

## CURRENT CHALLENGES...

The **Convention is still not fully implemented** or widely known and understood. **Millions of children continue to suffer** violations of their rights when they are denied adequate health care, nutrition, education and protection from violence. Childhoods continue to be cut short when children are forced to leave school, do hazardous work, get married, fight in wars or are locked up in adult prisons.

**Global changes**, like the rise of digital technology, environmental change, prolonged conflict and mass migration are completely changing childhood. Today's children face new threats to their rights, but they also have new opportunities to realise their rights.

## CONTACTS

### EUROPEAN EXTERNAL ACTION SERVICE

Julita BAS – Julita.BAS@eeas.europa.eu

Susana UCERO HERRERIA – Susana.UCERO-HERRERIA@eeas.europa.eu

Monika GAJOWY – Monika.GAJOWY@eeas.europa.eu

### UNICEF

Ricardo PIRES – rpires@unicef.org

Rebekka OPFERMANN – ropfermann@unicef.org

## MORE ON THE CAMPAIGN AND CONVENTION

### UNICEF

<https://www.unicef.org/child-rights-convention>

<https://www.unicef.org/child-rights-convention/frequently-asked-questions>

### EU

[https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/67794/every-single-child-should-get-every-single-right\\_en](https://eeas.europa.eu/headquarters/headquarters-homepage/67794/every-single-child-should-get-every-single-right_en)