



25 years of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

Open letter by the International Falcon Movement-Socialist Educational International (IFM-SEI)

Dear Jean-Claude Juncker,

As a socialist movement that defends and promotes children rights, we would like to bring to your attention the anniversary of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. In November 2014 we are celebrating the 25th anniversary of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, but children from all over the world still don't have access to their set of rights.

- In a world that produces enough food to feed all who are in hunger, it is evident that poverty affects children more than any other group. One billion children - every second child - live in poverty, making them the most vulnerable social group. Around 16% of all children in developing countries are underweight, and 25% show signs of stunted growth¹.
- Every minute of every day 13 children under the age of five die of preventable causes².
- Worldwide, 120 million girls under the age 20 have experienced forced intercourse or other kinds of sexual abuse³.
- One third of the world's girls are married under the age of 18⁴.
- 35 million children and young people under the age of 20 are international migrants⁵.
- Over 168 million children between 5 and 17 years are child labourers, out of which 85 million undertake hazardous work. 121 million children in the same age bracket are out of the formal education system⁶.
- Children are the first victims of the absence of peace throughout the world. They are affected by violence in their homes; suffer under terrorism, state violence and war.

¹ MDG Report 2014, <http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/pdf/report-2013/mdg-report-2013-english.pdf>

² UNESCO 2014, http://www.unicef.org/media/files/Levels_and_Trends_in_Child_Mortality_2014.pdf

³ UNICEF 2014,

http://files.unicef.org/publications/files/Hidden_in_plain_sight_statistical_analysis_EN_3_Sept_2014.pdf

⁴ International Centre for Research on Women, <http://www.icrw.org/child-marriage-facts-and-figures>

⁵ UNICEF 2013,

<http://www.un.org/esa/population/migration/documents/Factsheet%20Children%20and%20Adolescent%20Migrants%2009062013.pdf>

⁶ ILO-IPEC 2013, <http://www.ilo.org/global/topics/child-labour/lang--en/index.htm#a1>

These statistics show drastically how vulnerable children are and how much we risk the future and sustainability of our societies.

Children care about the world they live in. With their great understanding of current problems, their creativity and their ability to see beyond what divides people, they are important agents for social change in the world.

If children had access to the full set of rights outlined in the Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), which has been ratified by more than 150 and signed by 194 member states of the United Nations, they would be able to contribute to a world of peace, solidarity and prosperity for everyone.

Child- and youth-led organisations such as IFM-SEI contribute day after day to solve the problems outlined above and often have to assume their government's responsibilities in providing care and education to children.

Through nonformal education, we educate children about their rights and empower them so they can assure they are respected. In our activities, children and young people develop a sense for solidarity and equality; they learn democratic behaviour and how to participate in society.

We urge national governments and international institutions to **work together with child- and youth-led movements and recognize the importance of non-formal education as a way to promote human rights and end discrimination**. However, although we see education as an important tool to change the world, we also need to see action from governments!

As an educational and socialist movement, we demand national governments to **fully implement the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and its Optional Protocols, and to ensure every child's access to it**. Children can support and advice you in adopting and implementing effective children's rights policies, but in the end it is up to you as decision-makers to guarantee the access to children rights to all children in the world in equal conditions.

We strongly demand UN member states to **make the UNCRC part of their national legal framework**. We also urge national decision-makers to fulfil their obligations and **regularly report on their progress on the implementation of national policies under UNCRC ratification**. This is not just an obligation towards the international community; this is an obligation towards the children living in their country and in the whole world, so that they can hold you accountable and know where you need help to ensure provision and protection for and participation of all children.

With best regards,



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For the IFM-SEI Presidium

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