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Declarations and Conventions
"We were all children once. And we all share the desire for the well-being of our children, which has always been and will continue to be the most universally cherished aspiration of humankind."

We the Children: End-decade review of the follow-up to the World Summit for Children
Report of the Secretary-General (2001)

Children in the IDP camp in Rakhine State, Myanmar. OCHA

By resolution 836(IX) of 14 December 1954, the General Assembly recommended that all countries institute a Universal Children's Day, to be observed as a day of worldwide fraternity and understanding between children. It recommended that the Day was to be observed also as a day of activity devoted to promoting the ideals and objectives of the Charter and the welfare of the children of the world. The Assembly suggested to governments that the Day be observed on the date and in the way which each considers appropriate. The date 20 November, marks the day on which the Assembly adopted the Declaration of the Rights of the Child, in 1959, and the Convention on the Rights of the Child, in 1989.

In 2000 world leaders outlined the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) – which range from halving extreme poverty to halting the spread of HIV/AIDS and providing universal primary education, all by the target date of 2015. Though the Goals are for all humankind, they are primarily about children. UNICEF notes that six of the eight goals relate directly to children and meeting the last two will also make critical improvements in their lives.

In 2012, the Secretary-General launched a new initiative Education First. The Initiative aims to raise the political profile of education, strengthen the global movement to achieve quality education and generate additional and sufficient funding through sustained advocacy efforts. Achieving gains in education will have an impact on all the Millennium Development Goals, from lower child and maternal mortality, to better health, higher income and more environmentally-friendly
Objectives

The Convention's objective is to protect children from discrimination, neglect and abuse. It is the principal children's treaty, covering a full range of civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights. It grants rights for children in peacetime as well as during armed conflict, and provides for the implementation of those rights. The Convention serves as both a rallying point and a useful tool for civil society and individual people, working to protect and promote children's rights. In many ways, it is an innovative instrument.

Key Provisions

The Convention is the first legally binding international treaty to give universally-recognized norms and standards for the protection and promotion of children's rights in a single text.

It is the most rapidly and widely ratified international human rights treaty in the world. This unprecedented wide participation clearly shows a common political will to improve the situation of children.

The Convention highlights the spirit of complementarity and the interdependence of human rights by combining civil and political rights with economic, social and cultural rights. It calls for a holistic approach in analysis, and recognizes that the enjoyment of one right cannot be separated from the enjoyment of others.

It creates a new vision of the child, combining provisions aimed at protecting the child through positive action by the child's country, parents and relevant institutions, with provisions that recognize the child as a holder of participatory rights and freedoms.

In this way it creates rights in areas not covered by previous international treaties, such as the right of the child to freely express views and have those views taken seriously, and the right of the child to a name and nationality from birth. The Convention also creates standards
for such issues as alternative care, the rights of disabled and refugee children; and the administration of juvenile justice. It also stresses the need for recovery and social reintegration of a child victim of neglect, exploitation or abuse.

While stressing the country's duty to help families care for and protect the child, the Convention acknowledges the primary role of family and parents in this task. It calls for positive action by institutions and the State or parents.

It serves as a useful tool for advocacy and greater awareness of the new understanding on children's rights, and attaches special importance to international cooperation and assistance as ways of protecting children's rights.

The Convention rests on a foundation of four general principles that express its philosophy and offer guidance to national programs for putting that philosophy into effect.

Key provisions focus on:

- Non-discrimination
- Best interests of the child
- Right to life, survival and development
- Views of the child

Article 43 of the Convention establishes the Committee on the Rights of the Child. The Committee is a monitoring body of ten experts who examining the progress that countries party to the Convention have made in realizing its provisions.
An “International Bill of Rights For Children”

1. Convention on the Rights of the Child

2. Optional protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict

Recent publications

**Building a World Fit for Children**

*Building* a World Fit for Children reports on the landmark United Nations Special Session on Children, held at UN headquarters in May 2002. [download](#)

**The United Nations Special Session on Children: A first anniversary report on follow-up**

This report presents a global picture of national follow-up mechanisms, highlights the actions already taken and their impact on fulfilling children’s rights and improving their well-being, and calls for renewed efforts to achieve a world fit for children.

Full document [PDF]  
Annex [PDF]

Now available: ‘A World Fit for Children’ final text

**English** (PDF, Acrobat Reader required.)

[Other UN languages](#).

**Newsletter**

See the latest [Special Session Newsletter (October 2002) (PDF)](#) for an overview of the Special Session on Children.

Looking for a page which you saw here previously?

Pages created before May 2002 are still available as background information.
Rep. Pete Hoekstra (R-Mich.) may be setting the stage for a "new conservative culture-wars issue" through his recently introduced bill (H.J.R. 42) to "stem the "slow erosion" of parents' rights and to circumvent the effects of a United Nations treaty he believes "clearly undermines parental rights in the United States," Politico reports. Hoekstra's bill, which proposes to amend the Constitution, has 70 co-sponsors, all of whom are Republicans. The bill is in part a response to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, a 20-year-old document that was signed by former President Clinton in 1995 but never ratified. The treaty establishes international standards for government obligations regarding children in areas such as protection from abuse and preservation of a child's right to free expression, Politico reports.

Michael Farris -- a conservative Christian and founder of the Home School Legal Defense Association -- said on his Web site parentalrights.org that under the U.N. treaty, a "child's 'right to be heard' would allow him (or her) to seek governmental review of every parental decision with which the child disagreed." Farris, who helped draft Hoekstra's bill, said the treaty is "really about government empowerment" and "has nothing to do ultimately with the rights of children."

Advocates for the treaty, including Girl Scouts of America and the Christian Children's Fund, argue that 193 other countries have successfully implemented the treaty and that opponents have misinterpreted the treaty's purpose and overblown its potential impact, Politico reports. Meg Gardinier, chair of the Campaign for U.S. Ratification of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, said the treaty "has been unfairly characterized as a kind of Big Brother apparatus, where countries could be shamed and penalized, but that was not the intent of it" (Coller, Politico, 4/8).


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About Us

The Campaign is a volunteer-driven network of academics, attorneys, child and human rights advocates, educators, members of religious and faith-based communities, physicians, representatives from non-governmental organizations, students, and other concerned citizens, dedicated to the ratification and implementation of this extraordinary human rights treaty that our country helped to create. Read more

Why Ratify?

The CRC, incorporates the full range of human rights — civil, cultural, economic, political, and social — into one text that promotes and protects the well-being of the world's children and their families. Read more

Campaign Events

Celebrate November 20, Universal Children’s Day!

On this date in 1990 the General Assembly approved the CRC.

Click here for information & suggestions

Ratification & Implementation

will help us to focus our energies and resources where our children need them the most.
will give added help to children in exercising their rights in the United States & other countries

will protect US parents’ rights to raise their children.

will provide a way to assess comprehensively the law and policy on children’s rights and well-being in the US.

will effective voice in discussions with other governments and in international organizations to improve parents’ and children’s rights and well-being.

will improving conditions for children everywhere.

will be in accordance with Federal and State Constitutions and statutes.

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