

Special Event of the Human Rights Council on the Draft UN Guidelines for the Appropriate Use and Conditions of Alternative Care for Children

Background

The Draft UN Guidelines is focused on the rights of children deprived of parental care. It aims at providing clear guidelines to those seeking to improve protection for children without parental care.

As stated in Par 1 – Purpose of the Draft “The present Guidelines are intended to enhance the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and of other relevant provisions of international human rights law, regarding the protection and well-being of children who are in need of alternative care or who are at risk of being so”.

The text is the result of a broad process of consultations, under the recommendation of UNICEF and the Committee on the Rights of the Child, which culminated in Expert and Intergovernmental Consultation Meeting to review the Draft UN Guidelines for the Protection of Children without Parental Care, held in Brasilia, in August 2006, which gathered more than 40 countries.

A Group of Friends of the Draft was established in order to raise support to the text. Under the Coordination of Brazil, it is currently integrated by Austria, Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Egypt, Finland, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, India, Italy, Mexico, Morocco, Nicaragua, Philippines, Portugal, Sudan, Sweden, Switzerland, Ukraine and Uruguay.

The Draft was also presented to the Committee on the Rights of the Child in May 2007 and several observations by the Committee were incorporated to the text.

The issue was addressed in a Common Statement made by Brazil, as Coordinator of the Group of Friends, at the 6th Session of the Human Rights Council. At that occasion, supportive statements were made by UNICEF and NGO representatives. A strategy of awareness-raising was set to call the attention and gain support of the Human Rights Council to the Draft. Resolution on the Rights of the Child 7/29, presented initially by GRULAC and the European Union, approved by consensus at the 7th Session of the HRC, mandated the Council to examine the issue at its 8th Session, in June 2008.

Date:

The event will take place on 6 June 2008, during the 8th session of the Human Rights Council.

Focus and objectives

The event shall focus on the Draft UN Guidelines for the Appropriate Use and Conditions of Alternative Care for Children. The purpose is to call the attention and the support of

the Human Rights Council to the Draft. Final aim is to take action on the Draft UN Guidelines and the HRC.

Format:

Opening:

- Ambassador Doru Costea, President of the Human Rights Council, will host the event.

Four initial statements will be made by the following panelists (5 min each):

- Patricia Lamego, Project Manager of the Cabinet of the Special Secretariat for Human Rights of the Presidency of the Republic of Brazil - National Authority for Adoption and Abduction of Children (Palermo Convention), as Coordinator of the Group of Friends.
- Moushira Khattab, Member Committee on the Rights of the Child.
- Alexandra Yuster, Senior Adviser - Social Welfare and Justice Systems Child Protection Section, Programme Division – UNICEF.
- Nigel Cantwell, Expert in the Rights of the Child, representative of civil society.

Brief interactive dialogue:

- Given the time limitations, it is proposed that a maximum of 15 governmental representatives (maximum of three from each regional group) participate from the floor to address the issue. (3 min. each, 45 min. total)
- Two additional civil society representatives will also participate from the floor. (3 min. each, total 6 min)

Concluding Remarks:

- Concluding remarks by the expositors. (2 min, 8 min total)
- Concluding comment by the President of the Human Rights Council

Publicity:

Given the importance of the full engagement of States, UN specialized agencies, civil society organizations and all relevant stakeholders on the issue, it is suggested that the event be widely disseminated among States, the OHCHR, UNICEF as well as NGO's.

OBS: Participants are encouraged to adopt an interactive approach in their contributions.