PARTICIPATION for CHILDREN and TEENS

2014 Day of General Discussion: Digital Media and Children's Rights
UN Committee on the Rights the Child

Are you under 18? Would you like to share your views about the Internet and how children use it? The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child wants to hear from you!

The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (the Committee) is holding its Day of General Discussion, or DGD, in Geneva on the 12th of September 2014. The topic for this year's discussion will be "Digital media and children's rights". The Committee is inviting children and teens (under 18 years old) to share their opinions and experiences before the day. You can also participate via Twitter and Facebook during the event.

What is the Committee and what is a DGD?

The Committee is a group of 18 people, who know a lot about children and have been selected from all over the world. They help governments to better respect and protect the rights of all children up to 18 years old. Their main tool is the Convention on the Rights of the Child, a set of rights that has been agreed by almost all countries. As a part of this work, the Committee holds Days of General Discussion about different topics every two years. In the DGD, the Committee learns from experts, organizations, and children themselves, so that it can better advise governments to do their jobs well.

What does "Digital media and children's rights" mean?

The Committee is interested in learning more about how children and teens use digital media - such as the Internet, social networking sites (like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Whatsapp, chat etc.), email, and other digital media. The Committee knows that today many children use digital media and the Internet every day. This can be good for education and for children to express themselves but using the Internet has risks. Becuase of this, the Committee wants to discuss about how children can better use the Internet and how adults can better help them.

HOW YOU CAN PARTICIPATE

There are several ways of making your voice heard and making sure that the Committee really understands the reality you live online:

Before the DGD:

- **You can write to the Committee**. This could be a short story or poem in writing (max 1 page), or a picture/drawing. We will display them during the day. ∗♣
- You can also send a report (max. 5 pages). All reports will be published on the Committee's website.∗
- **You can make a short film to be shown on the day.** In the film, you can tell, in the way you prefer, about how you or children in your country use the Internet and digital media. The

videos should be less than 5 minutes long. The Committee will try to play as many videos as possible during the day and we might also put these on the Committee webpage.∗
- 🔸 **We will create a [Storify](#) page** to collect all the input you send to OHCHR's social media channels (photos, videos, questions, comments, etc.) to show how you are participating.

∗ IMPORTANT! If you do not want the Committee to share your input, please clearly say that in the information that you send. Write the word "CONFIDENTIAL" at the top of each page.

♣ IMPORTANT! For all videos and pictures, please ask your parents or legal guardians to fill out and sign the attached form (one for each child in the video or photo). Send this form to us by email with your submission to allow the publication of your material on our website and during the day.

Send your written information or videos by e-mail to crc-dgd@ohchr.org. Include your city, country, age and gender information in your e-mail.

Please send all information by the 5th of September 2014

What types of topics can you talk about?

These are suggestions about things that you can talk about. You do not have to answer all the questions below or any of them.

*1. **Access to digital media and ICT** (working group 1 – see program of the day)*

- 🔸 Do you have access to the Internet and other digital technology or are you facing any problems?
- 🔸 Where do you use it?
- 🔸 What type of technology do you use?
- 🔸 What do you use the Internet for? Are you using social media?
- 🔸 How often do you access the Internet?
- 🔸 Would you like more or different ways to access the Internet?
- 🔸 Do you think other children have more or less access than you? Who are they and why?

*2. **Children's participation and education online** (working group 2 – see program of the day)*

- 🔸 Have you learned to use the Internet? If yes, how?
- 🔸 Would you like to learn more ways to use the Internet? If yes, why?
- 🔸 Who would you like to teach you and how would you like to learn?
- 🔸 Do you ever feel at risk or unsafe when you use the Internet? If yes, why?
- 🔸 Does using the Internet ever make you feel bad? If yes, why?
- 🔸 Do you feel able to express yourself online? If yes, how? If no, why not?
- 🔸 Do you feel that you can find information and experiences online that are important to you? If yes, give an expample. If no, what is missing?
- 🔸 Is it useful when adults help you to use the Internet? If yes, why? If no, why not?

During the DGD

The whole DGD will be webcast live on www.treatybodywebcast.org, so that you can follow the discussion even if you are not Geneva. During the day, you can also send questions and comments through Twitter and Facebook. The Committee will choose some and bring them up during the discussions in the room. The Committee will try to answer to as many as possible.

How the Committee will use your inputs?

The Committee will make recommendations on how better use the Internet for children's rights to governments and adults around the world. Information that you send before or during the day will help the Committee to make better recommendations. After the day, the Committee will share this information with you. You can discuss with other children, adults or your government about how to make the recommendations a reality.

The Committee looks forward to your valuable contributions before and during the day and thanks you in advance for helping to make sure that the discussions during the day are as relevant and useful as possible!

Need more information? Email crc-dgd@ohchr.org with your questions.

NOTES:

- The Committee on the Rights of the Child reserves the right to refuse inappropriate submissions. Although the Committee intends to display as many submissions as possible during the day, space and time concerns mean there is no guarantee that a submission will be shown during the DGD.

- A submission does not count as registration for participating during the day – this should be done separately through http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/CRC/Pages/Discussion2014.aspx under "registration".

- The Committee or OHCHR will not offer any remuneration or reimburse any cost related to the submission of documentation.