



Joint UNIACC Statement for the World Day Against Child Labour 2009

The United Nations General Assembly in its resolution 59/113A of 10 December 2004 proclaimed the World Programme for Human Rights Education (WPHRE) to begin on 1 January 2005 with a view to encouraging the elaboration and implementation of human rights education initiatives at the national level. The focus for 2005-2009 is on the integration of human rights education in the primary and secondary school systems. A related Plan of Action was adopted by the General Assembly in 2005. The UN Inter-Agency Coordinating Committee on Human Rights Education in the School System (UNIACC), established in accordance with the Plan of Action adopted by General Assembly resolution 59/113B and composed of 12 UN entities and affiliated organizations, is responsible for promoting coordinated United Nations support to the national implementation of the Plan of Action.

*Celebrated on June 12 each year, the **World Day Against Child Labour** calls the world's attention to the plight of millions of girls and boys around the world who are victims of child labour. It highlights the dangers and hazards faced by children who work at an early age, and the action necessary to tackle child labour.*

In 2009, the World Day marks the tenth anniversary of the adoption of the landmark ILO Convention No. 182, which calls for immediate action to abolish the worst forms of child labour. Whilst celebrating progress made during the past ten years, the World Day will highlight the continuing challenges, with a focus on the exploitation of girls in child labour. Around the world, an estimated 100 million girls are involved in child labour. Many of these girls undertake similar types of work as boys, but often also endure additional hardships and face extra risks. Moreover, girls are all too often exposed to some of the worst forms of child labour, often in hidden work situations, including those involving sexual exploitation.

Education, especially human rights education, is one key measure to protect children, in particular girls, from exploitation. Efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals – in particular, Millennium Development Goal 2 to achieve universal primary education for both girls and boys by 2015, and Millennium Development Goal 3 to eliminate gender disparity in all levels of education by 2015 – cannot be achieved without the progressive elimination of child labour.

Education for All (EFA) is about providing quality basic education to all, with special attention to the most vulnerable and marginalized groups. Inclusion, however, remains a major challenge with at least 75 million children not attending primary school, a number of whom are involved in child labour. Ensuring access to quality education is one of the most powerful ways to reduce child labour, as well as to protect health and other human rights. As the 48th Session of the International Conference on Education (November 2008 in Geneva) underlined, an inclusive and intersectoral approach to education policy must be adopted. Education for All cannot be achieved without taking bold measures to eliminate child labour.

We, members of the UN Inter-Agency Coordinating Committee on Human Rights Education in the School System, call on the Member States to take immediate and appropriate actions to end the worst forms of child labour, including through strict policy and legal frameworks, institutions, as well as through programmes. In these times of global economic crisis it is more important than ever to promote and respect human rights values and principles and to protect the most vulnerable children in need.

We also call upon all Governments to utilise the new statistical definition of child labour passed by the International Conference of Labour Statisticians in December 2008 which for the first time explicitly includes hazardous household chores. Given the overwhelmingly female responsibility for household chores globally this is a unique opportunity for states to actively collect and analyse data regarding hazardous household chores to support the identification of female child labour rates which too often are invisible and undermine global education initiatives.

We urge Member States to further promote human rights education to foster the attitudes and behaviours needed to uphold human rights for all members of society, and as a concrete response to child labour. The political commitment expressed in the Dakar Framework of Action on the

Education for All (EFA) and in the proclamation of the World Programme for Human Rights Education should result in national actions. Human rights should be integrated in educational policies, processes, methodologies and tools, and should be practiced in the learning environments within which education takes place.

For more information on the UN Inter-Agency Coordinating Committee on Human Rights Education, please visit:

<http://www2.ohchr.org/english/issues/education/training/programme.htm>

For more information on the World Day Against Child Labour, please visit:

www.ilo.org/ipec