

Second intersessional meeting on human rights and the 2030 Agenda

Session 2: Reflections and conversation on human rights and accelerated action and transformative pathways: realizing the decade of action and delivery for sustainable development. Building on the pledge of the 2019 High-level Political Forum Declaration. “Leave No One Behind”: How promoting and protecting human rights can accelerate the realization of the SDGs.

Statement by Child Rights Connect

3 December 2019

We are increasingly witnessing children contributing to the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at the national, regional and international levels.

Two weeks ago, during the celebrations of the 30th anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, we heard from children themselves how they are experts on the SDGs and therefore, should be treated as equals in any of the related discussions.

In 2017, the Council requested the OHCHR to regularly provide inputs to the yearly thematic reviews of progress at the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) from a child rights perspective. In this framework, earlier this year, Child Rights Connect together with the OHCHR conducted three consultations with children, from the ages of 6 to 17, across all regions, to gather children’s views.

As a result, the OHCHR submitted to the HLPF the first global report on child rights and SDGs including a section based solely on children’s voices and opinions. The consultations showed that:

- Children all around the world are **key actors in promoting and contributing to SDG implementation and monitoring**, including through child-led initiatives;
- More needs to be done to **reach out to children in vulnerable or disadvantaged situations to ensure that their voices are heard**; and
- In general, children feel that their opinions are not heard and not taken into account in decision-making process relating to the SDGs and asked for additional **measures to be put in place to ensure a child’s right to be heard and exercise their civil and political freedoms**.

Against this background, the Council¹ has requested States “to facilitate, including through funding, the meaningful participation and active consultation of children in all issues affecting them related to the implementation, monitoring and follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda, taking into account the best interests of the child”. Yet today, we are having another discussion without children among us or without having consulted children in the lead up to this discussion.

We want to encourage all of you to continue your efforts to “Leave no one behind” and ensure that children voices are heard and taken into consideration in all current efforts to achieve the SDGs.

¹ HRC resolution 34/16 on the rights of the child and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development