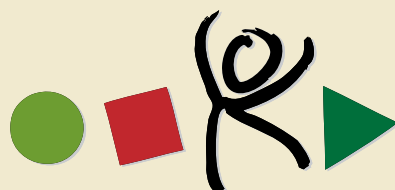


# Annual Report 2010



NGO Group for the Convention  
on the Rights of the Child

The NGO Group is a global network of seventy-seven national and international NGOs committed to ensuring that all children fully enjoy their rights as defined by the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The NGO Group provides a coordinated platform for NGO action and plays a central role in key child rights developments at the international level.

The NGO Group works through its secretariat and thematic working groups to fulfil its mission to facilitate the promotion, implementation and monitoring of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). It advocates for and raises public awareness of the importance of the CRC and its two Optional Protocols. In addition, the NGO Group promotes the full implementation of the CRC and its Optional Protocols through its work with national and international NGOs throughout the world.

It is governed by an Executive Committee, which is elected by the members of the network. The Executive Committee provides the strategic direction and supervises the work of the Secretariat and the working groups.

### **Objectives**

Through its Secretariat and its members, the NGO Group works to:

- Enhance the effective engagement of NGOs and other relevant partners in the CRC reporting process and other activities of the Committee on the Rights of the Child.
- Mainstream child rights in relevant activities of other United Nations human rights mechanisms and procedures.
- Promote the realisation of child rights at national level through the effective implementation of the recommendations and other outputs of the Committee and other relevant international human rights mechanisms.
- Pursue and support international advocacy on priority child rights issues through coordinated action with members and partners.

### **NGO Group for the CRC Secretariat**

1, rue de Varembé

1202 Geneva

Switzerland

Tel: +41 22 740 47 30

Fax: +41 22 740 46 83

E-mail: [secretariat@childrightsnet.org](mailto:secretariat@childrightsnet.org)

Website: [www.childrightsnet.org](http://www.childrightsnet.org)

Cover photograph: © 2008 Douglas J. Klostermann, Courtesy of Photoshare.

A group of first graders enjoys recess at their school in Altos de los Mores, Peru. Altos de los Mores is an impoverished community in Peru's northern desert near Piura.

In Article 28 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, States parties recognize the right of the child to education, and with a view to achieving this right progressively and on the basis of equal opportunity.



# Contents

<b>Preface</b>	<b>iii</b>
<b>Introduction from the President</b>	<b>v</b>
<b>1. Enhancing NGO engagement with the Committee on the Rights of the Child</b>	<b>1</b>
Strengthening reporting by national NGOs	1
Reporting on the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)	2
Reporting on the Optional Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography (OPSC)	2
Reporting on the Optional Protocol on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict (OPAC)	3
Working closely with the Committee on the Rights of the Child	3
Enhancing NGO influence in the elections of Committee members	3
CRC elections: advocating for the nomination and election of the most qualified experts	3
Mobilising key stakeholders in the nomination and election processes	4
<b>2. Ensuring effective legal redress: Assisting NGOs to campaign for a new Optional Protocol to the CRC</b>	<b>5</b>
A drafting mandate	5
Influencing the provisions of the draft Optional Protocol	5
Strengthening the international campaign	6
<b>3. Enabling effective NGO engagement with the broader UN human rights system</b>	<b>7</b>
Strengthening and harmonizing treaty body processes for increased effectiveness	7
Working to build the utility of the Human Rights Council as a mechanism for improving child rights	7
Contributing to the review of the Human Rights Council's work and functioning	8
Assisting child rights NGOs to effectively engage with the Universal Periodic Review mechanism	8
<b>4. Capacity Building at National, Regional and International Level</b>	<b>10</b>
Outreach to local child rights activists	10
Regional level	10
International level	12
<b>5. Campaigns and activities of thematic Working Groups</b>	<b>13</b>
Children without Parental Care	13
The Human Rights Council	13
Sexual Exploitation of Children	13
Violence against Children	14
Indigenous Children	14
Juvenile Justice	14

<b>6. Tools and Publications</b>	<b>15</b>
Strengthening the reporting on the OPAC and OPSC	15
Making Session proceedings widely available	15
Bringing Child Rights reporting to the wider Human Rights audience	15
More on the Web	15
<b>7. Organisational Development</b>	<b>16</b>
Executive Committee elections and appointment of new President	16
New members join the NGO Group	16
Facilitating the participation of members through changes to legal statutes	16
A newsletter is born	16
<b>8. Accounts and Funding</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>9. Organizational Structure and Governance</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>10. Membership</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>11. Thanks</b>	<b>22</b>



## PREFACE

# Keeping the rights alive in a changing world: a joint efforts perspective



Today's world, in which children are born and grow up, brings opportunities and challenges to their survival and development that were virtually unknown when the Convention on the Rights of the Child was being shaped more than two decades

ago. Dramatic and emergent global changes in socioeconomic, technological, political and environmental arenas have radically affected the traditional concept of childhood. For millions of the world's children, their formative years increasingly imply a perpetual struggle to thrive and attain their full potential.

Amidst such global realities, Asia remains one of the most dynamic and diverse regions. Sixty per cent of the world's children live in the region. With its striking contrasts of rapidly advancing economic progress co-existing with overwhelming poverty, gaps between the underprivileged and the wealthy are broadening even further. In such a complex and intricate milieu, opportunities for children's involvement in matters affecting their lives are still few and far between. As weak implementation and enforcement of relevant laws remains pervasive throughout the region, civil society organizations play a critical role. They strengthen mechanisms aiming to ensure the individual and collective rights of the child are respected, protected and fulfilled. Child rights Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and national coalitions therefore create a vibrant fabric within most Asian societies, which reminds governments of the obligations that they voluntarily accepted when they ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC).

Given the lack of well-established regional human rights bodies and mechanisms, the role of the NGO Group for the Convention on the Rights

of the Child in Asia is especially significant. For many years, the NGO Group has been tireless in raising awareness, and building the capacity of civil society organizations to effectively monitor children's rights. At the same time, additional targeted support to NGOs and coalitions preparing alternative reports (i.e. providing civil society's perspective on situations of children's rights) has been extended. Working together in this way has strengthened the links with the Committee on the Rights of the Child and complemented national efforts to effectively translate child rights into daily realities. Particularly important are the NGO Group's efforts to produce resources and practical tools for monitoring the implementation of child rights, as well as its advocacy to mobilize global involvement in shaping the Third Optional Protocol to the CRC to provide children with a communications procedure.

As a global child rights development organization, Plan International has been closely involved with the NGO Group for a number of years. With Plan's increasing organizational focus on effective monitoring of child rights, our partnership with the NGO Group is gaining momentum. One aspect of this is our collaboration on initiatives to strengthen the involvement of children as key actors and in the reporting process. In the years to come, Plan will remain fully committed to the continuous strengthening of this cooperation and joint efforts.

We look forward to continued working together towards our shared goal of securing the right of all children to grow up, develop and prosper in an environment which empowers children by providing care, warmth, respect and understanding.



**Raša Sekulović**  
*Plan Asia Regional Child Rights  
Programme Specialist*





## Introduction from the President



Dear colleagues  
and friends of the  
NGO Group

2010 was an eventful year for the NGO Group for the Convention on the Rights of the Child. It was marked by the intensification of its

core area of work – supporting national NGOs in the reporting process – as the Committee on the Rights of the Child worked in two chambers to reduce its backlog in reports, influencing the negotiations on the new Optional Protocol for a communications procedure and training activities in most regions to name but a few of our activities. This report assesses the extent to which we contributed to realising child rights in 2010.

Having taken stock of the achievements of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) in 2009, the focus in 2010 was on strengthening the monitoring and implementation of the CRC and its Optional Protocols, especially at national level. In response to the Committee's work in two chambers, the NGO Group doubled its support to international and national child rights NGOs to ensure that their perspective is taken into account when the Committee is examining states' actions and political will to realising child rights. While many of these national and international NGOs have developed an outstanding capacity to use the CRC as a monitoring and accountability instrument, this is not universal. The NGO Group therefore continued to provide training in national, regional and international events and workshops in Egypt, Nepal, Kenya, Italy and Geneva to build the capacity of partners on CRC reporting, working as a coalition and the follow up to concluding observations. As part of our work to strengthen capacity, we also produced tools for NGOs, including a new guide on the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography (OPSC) and the Optional

Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict (OPAC), as well as fact sheets on the Human Rights Council's Universal Periodic Review.

An effective monitoring system is guaranteed if members of its Committee is composed of outstanding, knowledgeable and independent experts on child rights. In 2010, nine members of the Committee on the Rights of the Child were up for (re)election. As for every election, the NGO Group wrote to States parties and NGOs to encourage them to nominate, or advocate for the nomination of, the most suitable candidates. Together with the Child Rights Information Network (CRIN) we also introduced the new element of interviewing the candidates prior to the elections. The interviews aimed to give candidates the opportunity to express why they wanted to become members, and their vision for the Committee, in order to attract the votes of States parties. We received many words of appreciation for this initiative and we hope that the new membership will make the Committee an even more effective body.

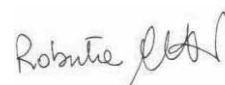
The NGO Group, through its Secretariat and members, has also been a pioneer in advocating for the Committee to be able to receive communications on violations of child rights. Through the existence of effective remedies at international level when domestic ones are ineffective or non-existent, this would give full meaning to the rights enshrined in the Convention and its Optional Protocols. Through its successful advocacy campaign in 2010, the NGO Group influenced the Human Rights Council to give a drafting mandate to the Working Group for an Optional Protocol to the CRC. We also contributed to the draft text, prepared a detailed commentary, lobbied diplomatic missions in Geneva for the inclusion of specific provisions, followed the first round of negotiations and coordinated NGO input.

An effective organization is dependent on good and committed staff. All these achievements would not have been possible without the work of our dedicated team, members of the

Executive Committee and of the NGO Group as well as the support from our partners and donors. On behalf of the NGO Group, I would like to thank all those who supported our work in 2010.

Yet despite these many achievements, the everyday situation of many children around the world is bleak. After twenty-one years of exist-

ence of the Convention, there is still no country in the world where child rights are fully implemented. While sceptics would use this as a reason to declare failure, the NGO Group considers it proof for continued and stronger action. We look forward to working with all of you in the future to make child rights a reality!



**Roberta Cecchetti**

President of the NGO Group for the Convention  
on the Rights of the Child





# 1. Enhancing NGO engagement with the Committee on the Rights of the Child

## STRENGTHENING REPORTING BY NATIONAL NGOS

Core to the NGO Group's work is building the capacity of civil society to strengthen and safeguard child rights through effective reporting to the Committee on the Rights of the Child (the Committee). The distinctiveness of the CRC's reporting process, with its mechanisms allowing NGOs and other non-state actors' direct access to the Committee continues to make this treaty body the most accessible, including to national NGOs and child rights coalitions, and children themselves.

To play this powerful role however, NGOs and coalitions need to be able to understand and navigate their way around the complex processes and protocols that govern the work of the Committee. This is where the NGO Group, with its eighteen years' experience, provides its expertise by guiding NGO engagement through the whole reporting process, both for the CRC and its two Optional Protocols.

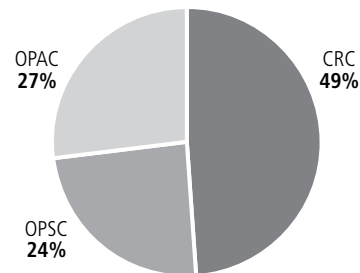
As many child rights NGOs and national coalitions have reported to the Committee previously, the NGO Group's support is tailored to the needs of these actors. For each country under examination, the NGO Group provides NGOs with technical assistance to maximise their impact and ensure that the most relevant information reaches the Committee. The support ranges from providing training on the reporting process, advice and comments on draft alternative reports, to facilitating the participation of NGOs<sup>1</sup> in the Committee's Pre-sessional Working Group<sup>2</sup> (Pre-session) and Session. It also provides financial assistance and logistical support to national child rights NGOs or coalitions from the developing world and Central and Eastern Europe.

To ensure that the national NGOs, coalitions, children, Ombudspersons and Committee con-

<sup>1</sup> This assistance is also extended to children and Ombudspersons who are participating in the reporting process.

<sup>2</sup> This is a three-hour private meeting when the Committee meets with non-state actors, including NGOs, to get their perspective on the implementation of the CRC and/or its Optional Protocols at national level.

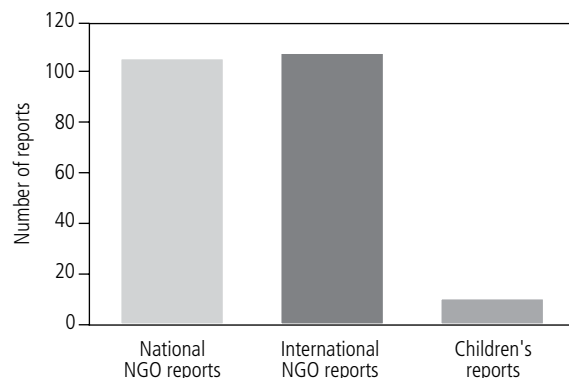
## Breakdown of reports examined by the Committee under each treaty in 2009



tinue to make the most of their three-hour Pre-sessions, the NGO Group briefed all the non-state actors attending the 2010 Pre-sessions; advising them on meeting procedures, the best ways to present sensitive issues, and how to effectively convey concerns about child rights and recommendations for the state. Through these interactions, the Committee gained a fuller picture of the child rights situation and key issues for a country, and was better equipped to raise concerns with States parties, and make concrete and effective recommendations in its Concluding Observations.

The Committee examined sixty-six reports during its Sessions or Pre-sessions in 2010. The NGO Group gave technical and logistical assistance to 115 NGO participants and children to attend

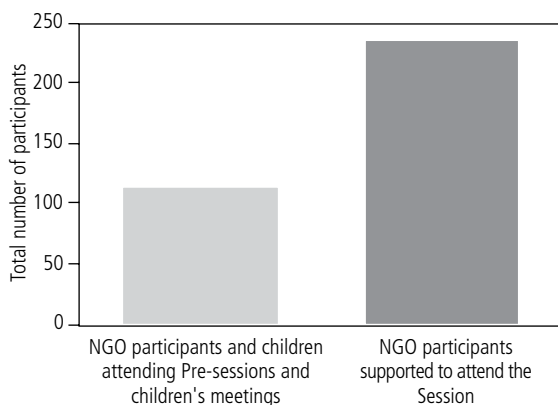
## Number of Reports examined by the Committee in 2010



## Doubling the support to NGOs in 2010

To address its backlog in reports, the Committee met in two chambers for all three Sessions and three Pre-sessions held in 2010. To ensure that the same level of support was provided to NGOs and the work of the Committee, the NGO Group maintained the same level of assistance. This involved assisting more NGOs to prepare twice as many reports, organise and pay for twice as many representatives from national child rights coalitions and/or NGOs to attend the Pre-sessions and Sessions as well as following and reporting on twice as many meetings of the Committee. The NGO Group's Secretariat therefore worked through a year of especially high activity, doubling its workload to cover the two chambers without increasing its staff.

### Participation in Pre-sessions, Sessions and Children's meetings<sup>1</sup>



Pre-sessions, and 237 NGO representatives<sup>1</sup> from thirty-nine countries to attend Committee Sessions. Of these, the NGO Group provided financial support enabling fifty-eight NGO participants to submit alternative reports during the year. While NGO participants attend Sessions as observers only, the NGO Group assists their engagement with the Committee to highlight key issues to raise in its discussions with States parties.

As well as NGO participants, children from Japan, Macedonia, Montenegro, Nicaragua and Serbia attended Pre-Sessions, Sessions, or separate children's meetings with the Committee.

<sup>1</sup> Includes a group of 130 representatives attending the Japanese Session.

These interactions helped the Committee understand the rights situation in these children's countries as experienced by the children living there.

## Reporting on the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)

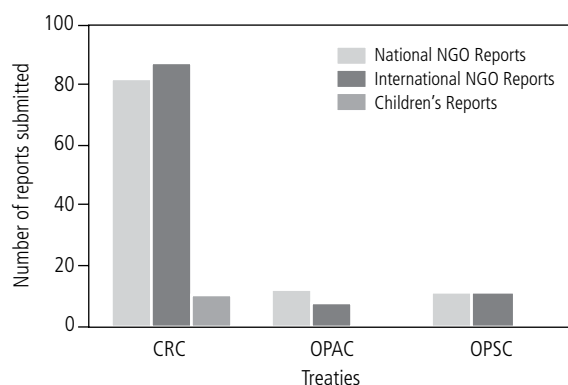
Thirty-six State party reports on the CRC were examined by the Committee in 2010. The NGO Group provided technical assistance and logistical support to more than 340<sup>1</sup> NGO participants in 2010, coming from Argentina, Belgium, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Ecuador, El Salvador, Estonia, Grenada, Guatemala, Israel, Japan, Macedonia, Mongolia, Nigeria, Norway, Paraguay, Sierra Leone and Tajikistan. It also paid the costs of travel and accommodation for fifty-three NGO representatives coming to Geneva to meet the Committee.

In 2010, two States reported for the first time to the Committee, namely Afghanistan and Montenegro. The NGO Group provided support to the NGOs from these states to effectively participate in the reporting process for the first time either in the Pre-session or the Session. In the case of Afghanistan, the NGO Group had been in contact with the organisations preparing the report in recent years, as they developed a coalition and drafted their initial report. Receiving information from civil society in a country where there is an ongoing conflict or in a relatively new country is an invaluable source of information for the Committee.

## Reporting on the Optional Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography (OPSC)

The Committee examined fourteen State Party reports under the OPSC during 2010 in the Sessions and Pre-sessions. The NGO Group pro-

### Number of NGO reports examined by the Committee under each treaty in 2010



vided technical and logistical support to NGO representatives from Argentina, Bosnia Herzegovina, Colombia, Ecuador, El Salvador, Macedonia, Mexico, Mongolia, Nicaragua and Serbia in their reporting to the Committee or attending Session, from the following countries: Argentina, Belarus, Belgium, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Colombia, Ecuador, El Salvador, Macedonia, Mexico, Mongolia, Montenegro, Nicaragua and Serbia. Of these, the NGO Group also provided financial support to cover flights and accommodation in Geneva for twenty-nine NGO representatives, enabling them to attend Sessions or Pre-sessions.

### **Reporting on the Optional Protocol on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict (OPAC)**

In 2010, many countries recently involved in armed conflict or suffering ongoing armed conflicts reported to the Committee on the OPAC. Amongst these countries, children had been or were still actively involved in the conflict either as child soldiers or in other roles, for instance in Colombia, Sierra Leone, Sri Lanka and Sudan. Given the sensitivity surrounding the use of child soldiers, the NGOs provided essential information to the Committee to ensure that it had a comprehensive view of the situation in these countries and attempts at prosecuting people who recruited child soldiers and the measures in place to reintegrate former child soldiers.

The NGO Group also provided specialist advice to help NGOs prepare alternative reports covering the OPAC, even if the countries were not involved in an armed conflict. The NGO Group therefore provided OPAC reporting guidance to NGOs from Argentina, Belarus, Belgium, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Colombia, Ecuador, El Salvador, Japan, Macedonia, Mexico, Mongolia, Montenegro, Nicaragua and Serbia in 2010. In addition, it provided financial support for thirty-eight NGO representatives to attend Pre-session or Session.

### **WORKING CLOSELY WITH THE COMMITTEE ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD**

The NGO Group has a close working relationship with the Committee on the Rights of the Child, with continual dialogue to ensure the smooth running and enhancements to the reporting process, as well as collaboration on new ways to strengthen child rights. In addition to doubling the support needed to cover the two chambers, the NGO Group also took part in the following

activities and meetings with the Committee in 2010:

**Supporting the Committee in developing its working methods:** In June, the NGO Group met the Committee to discuss some of the new developments in its work. These included the General Comments, the follow-up to the Concluding Observations and the new Optional Protocol for a communications procedure.

**Participating in the Committee's expert meeting on the new Optional Protocol:** In preparation for the drafting of this new treaty, the Committee held an expert meeting to develop its position paper on the Optional Protocol for a communications procedure. The NGO Group participated in this meeting, and made presentations on legal issues relating to the development of this new treaty.

**Contributing to the guidelines for the CRC:** In accordance with harmonised guidelines on reporting to the international human rights treaty bodies, the Committee adopted its own treaty specific reporting guidelines on 1 October 2010. The Committee asked the NGO Group to provide input, given its longstanding role in supporting the alternative reporting process.

**Providing input to the General Comments:** The NGO Group closely followed the development of the General Comments on Articles 19 (Protection from all forms of violence) and 3 (Best interest of the child) of the CRC. As some of the NGO Group's member organisations were very involved in the drafting of the General Comment on Article 19, the NGO Group ensured that its other members were informed of the process.

### **ENHANCING NGO INFLUENCE IN THE ELECTIONS OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

#### **CRC elections: advocating for the nomination and election of the most qualified experts**

At the thirteenth Meeting of States parties to the CRC (New York, 21 December 2010), elections were held to fill the nine seats on the Committee becoming vacant on the expiry of members' terms. In preparation for these elections, the NGO Group encouraged States parties and NGOs to ensure the most qualified experts amongst their nationals were nominated for appointment to the Committee. In order to ensure appropriate geographical representation, the NGO Group analysed the regional gaps amongst the nine members of the

Committee who were not running for re-election.

In addition to the criteria set out in Article 43(2) of the CRC, that Committee members *'shall be of high moral standing and of recognised competence in the field covered by this Convention'*, the NGO Group developed a set of criteria based on its role of monitoring the Committee's work since its inception. These include:

### **CRC Committee candidate selection criteria promoted by the NGO Group**

- Demonstrated expertise in the field of human rights and particular commitment to respect for children's human rights;
- A variety of complementary professional backgrounds;
- Independence and impartiality;
- The ability to devote sufficient time to the work of the Committee;
- Experience working with a broad range of stakeholders (United Nations agencies, national human rights institutions, NGOs and children);
- An awareness and sensitivity to cultural differences;
- Fluent in one of the three working languages of the Committee (English, French or Spanish);
- Experience relevant to the Committee's likely new role of considering communications and complaints from children and those acting on behalf of them, in light of the current drafting of the new Optional Protocol for a communications procedure for the CRC.

### **Mobilising key stakeholders in the nomination and election processes**

The NGO Group wrote to States parties and national NGOs and coalitions from all regions, alerting them to the forthcoming elections and encouraging them to nominate the most suitable candidates. In order to inform NGOs about the role they could play at national level, the NGO Group circulated its fact sheet on elections. NGOs

in Africa, Europe (including Central and Eastern Europe) and the Caribbean lobbied their governments to nominate national experts on child rights, and some of these candidates were officially nominated.

Following nominations, the NGO Group wrote to national and international NGOs working in the countries of the candidates, to receive feedback on how they matched the appointment criteria. NGOs from twenty-two countries provided feedback on candidates. Once this information was collected and analysed, the NGO Group contacted the States to provide them with supplementary information on the candidates. The NGO Group's role was to share the views of the national NGOs; not to promote one candidate over another.

On 21 December 2010, 180 of the 193 States parties to the CRC elected nine members of the Committee on the Rights of the Child from the twenty final candidates put forward. Some of the candidates who were successfully elected had been nominated as a result of NGO advocacy.

### **Interviewing the candidates running for election**

As the only officially available information on the candidates was their *curricula vitae*, the NGO Group and the Child Rights Information Network (CRIN) joined forces to provide supplementary information and interview nominees. This provided candidates with the opportunity to present their experience in children's rights, what they could contribute to the work of the Committee, what they considered to be the key issues in child rights, and their vision for the Committee. They were interviewed on a voluntary basis by CRIN and all the posted interviews were checked and approved by the relevant candidates.

The NGO Group informed States parties about this supplementary information to assist them in finding out more about the candidates and in deciding which candidates to vote for during the elections.



## 2. Ensuring effective legal redress: Assisting NGOs to campaign for a new Optional Protocol to the CRC

2010 was a pivotal year for the campaign for a new Optional Protocol (OP) establishing a communications procedure. It marked the start of the drafting process of this new instrument, which will enable children and representatives to bring complaints alleging child rights violations when they cannot get justice in their own countries. The NGO Group's work in this field is done jointly by its Secretariat and some of its members, through its thematic Working Group.

### A drafting mandate

In March, a new resolution (A/HRC/RES/13/3) was adopted by consensus by the Human Rights Council (HRC), changing the mandate of the Open-Ended Working Group (OEWG) from simply 'considering' the need for a new OP to actually drafting the procedure. The OEWG was given the mandate to meet for up to ten days to draft the new treaty text and present the final draft for adoption in June 2011.

### Strengthening our capacity to react while ensuring wide communication

In May, as the process was entering its critical phase, the NGO Group Working Group established a Core Group composed of ten members to set campaign priorities and strategies for influencing drafting statements and releases.

This enabled NGOs to respond rapidly to the needs of the international campaign, especially regarding research, advocacy briefings and meetings with UN missions in Geneva.

The broad global campaign group was also kept informed through CRIN including actions proposed for NGOs to take.

### Influencing the provisions of the draft Optional Protocol

On 21 and 22 June 2010, an expert consultation on the new Optional Protocol was organised by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the International Commission of Jurists on the initiative of Ms. Yanghee Lee and Mr. Jean Zermatten, respectively Chair and Vice-Chairperson of the Committee on the Rights of the Child in Geneva. Peter Newell and Anita Goh, of the NGO Group, were invited as experts to discuss the different provisions that the new OP should contain and had an opportunity to discuss those with the Chairperson of the OEWG, Mr Štefánek.

In August 2010, Mr Štefánek circulated a proposal for a draft to all UN missions and relevant stakeholders that formed the basis of the negotiations starting in December. Throughout the summer, the NGO Group Working Group carried out a major research project on each of the key provisions of the draft and developed a submission responding to the Chairperson's draft.

This joint NGO submission was translated into Arabic, Chinese, French, Russian and Spanish. It was officially submitted to the OEWG in October 2010 and circulated to all UN missions in Geneva, to national and international NGOs and to more than 6,000 signatories of CRIN's online campaign in November.

Also in November, letters were sent to states' missions to discuss the chairperson's draft and the NGO position. The NGO Group Working Group met with many state representatives both in Geneva and in capitals to influence the position of states participating in the negotiations and raise their concerns. It also participated in the first round of negotiations from 6 to 10 December 2010, and delivered a joint oral statement for each item under debate responding to the issues and concerns raised by states during the negotiations. The Working Group also provided new wording suggestions to the chairperson and individual States. Daily updates of the session were provided through CRIN.

## Strengthening the international campaign

In 2010, the NGO Group Working Group established partnerships with new stakeholders in order to strengthen the international campaign, including the Coalition to stop the use of Child Soldiers and the International Coordinating Committee of national human rights institutions.

It continued to mobilise support by presenting the campaign during training sessions and forums. These included training events in Sweden, Nepal and Thailand, the sixth Regional Meeting of children's rights coalitions in Europe, held in Italy, the NGO forums in Geneva, the NGO Group's General Assembly, and an online seminar on the campaign organised with members based in Japan. This was available on live streaming for all interested parties.

The Advocacy Toolkit, produced by the NGO Group and its members, was updated twice in June and November 2010 and an Advocacy Briefing explaining and summarising their position on each of the main provisions of the Chair's draft was prepared and circulated in November 2010 through member organisations and CRIN to the broader child rights community.

SVd onsdag 3 mars 2010 NYHETER II



# Klagorätt kan säkra barns rättigheter

**Barakonventionen, som mynnar i fyra årtio år, är en paraplytext för miljontals utsatta barn i världen. Nu förs en kampanj för att enskilda barn som kränks ska kunna klaga. Anita Goh, som representerar en riksgående frivilligorganisation i Genève, besökte Stockholm för att förmå Sverige att spela en ledande roll i arbetet.**

I stort sett samtliga stater i världen har skrivit under barnkonventionen, förutom USA och Somalia. Trots det kränks rättigheterna som hindras under betydligt fler slag än vad för miljontals barn runt om i världen.

Det finns flera andra internationella konventioner som tillkommit senare, bland annat om tortyr och funktionshandräddas rättigheter. Till skillnad från dem finns det ingen klagomekanism i barnkonventionen när de rättsliga systemen i ett land inte kommer ge upprättelse åt ett barn som kränks.

Nu förs en bred internationell kampanj för att införa en sådan

och därför besökte Anita Goh, som representerar ett stort antal frivilligorganisationer, Stockholm för att tillsammans med barnombudsmannen träffa utskottet på regeringskansliet.

Barnkonventionen är en funktionellt instrument, men det finns luckor med implementeringen. För att rättigheter ska fungera måste det finnas sanktioner. I många fall kan inte barn som kränks vända sig någonstans. Tanken är att det här ska ge en tydligare praxis om vad barnen har rätt till, säger Anita Goh.

Sverige är ett föregångarland inom barns rättigheter och kan spela en viktig roll i genomförandet. Många länder lyssnar på Sverige.

I mars ska rådet för mänskliga rättigheter, där Sverige dock inte är med, ta ställning till om arbetet med att skapa en klagomekanism ska dras i gång på allvar och börja konkretiseras. Det är då de tuffa förhandlingarna mellan staterna börjar och många tekniska frågor ska lösas.

Staterna har ratificerat konventionen, det är upp till bevisna. Ska barnen ha rätt att klaga? Bli svaret negativt blir jag uppriktigt orolig, säger Anita Goh.

Processen är fortfarande i ett tidigt skede och regeringen vill inte uttala sig ännu. Allt vara Juvheri, politiskt sakkunnig på UD, säger att uttalet troligen drar ut på tiden.

I vissa artiklar i konventionen står det att staten "skall" göra vissa saker, i andra att staten ska "eftersträva" saker. Det är alltid en delaktig uppgift att ratificera konventionerna. Vi tar det här på stort allvar och måste se hur förhandlingarna och diskussionen går framåt vi kan ta ställning, säger hon.

Jag förstår att de vill att Sverige utan att ha sett något ska säga att vi kommer att under-teckna, men så funkar det inte riktigt, det är många departement och många ministrar inblandade.

HANNES DELING  
08 13 51 06, hannes.deling@svd.se

Anita Goh interviewed in Svenska Dagbladet, (a Swedish national daily newspaper), 3 March 2010. Headline reads "Optional Protocol to secure Children's Rights".



### 3. Enabling effective NGO engagement with the broader UN human rights system

#### Strengthening and harmonizing treaty body processes for increased effectiveness

2010 saw two new developments to strengthen treaty body harmonization. Firstly, the annual Inter-Committee Meetings, which examine the practice of the different treaty bodies, drawing on best practice from each one, began focussing on specific issues for discussion, rather than covering a broad range of issues. The 2010 Inter-Committee Meeting (28–30 June) therefore focussed on issues related to the list of issues, including the new practice by some Committees of preparing them prior to reporting to provide more targeted State party reports. Secondly, to provide a space for in depth discussions, a thematic working group will now meet at the beginning of each year to discuss a particular area of harmonization (in 2011, this meeting will discuss follow-up to reporting to treaty bodies and individual communications).

As part of a group of twenty human rights NGOs that closely follows the harmonisation process, the NGO Group contributed to the preparation of a joint paper and statement for the Inter-Committee Meeting, and provided concrete recommendations.

To mark the first anniversary of the adoption of the Dublin Statement on the Strengthening of the United Nations Human Rights Treaty Body System, the group of twenty NGOs prepared a collective response to the Dublin Statement. It covered the parameters, methods and objectives of reform, and provided proposals for strengthening the treaty bodies.

#### Working to build the utility of the Human Rights Council as a mechanism for improving child rights

##### Annual day on the Rights of the Child

The United Nations Human Rights Council held its Annual Day on the Rights of the Child on 11 March, with a series of meetings in Geneva

addressing *'The fight against sexual violence against children'*. The states organising the annual day invited the NGO Group to be part of the organizing core group. The NGO Group helped prepare the two panels, which discussed the *'Manifestations of sexual violence against boys and girls'* and *'Protecting boys and girls from sexual violence: prevention and response'*. In addition to its role in helping to decide the themes to be covered under the two panels and the panellists, the NGO Group ensured that NGOs' expertise was represented.

In order to bring the perspective of national NGOs to the HRC, the NGO Group supported the participation of Mr Timothy Ekesa from the Kenya Alliance for Advancement of Children. Providing an overview of sexual violence against children in schools and education facilities in East Africa, Mr Ekesa stated that:

*"Schools and education facilities should be safe places for children with no risks of harm from the people who are responsible for their education – their teachers. However, sexual violence against children, which include the use of sexual actions and references, pressuring a child to engage in sexual activities, indecent exposure, unwanted sexual relations with a child, are actions being committed in the school setting and mostly by the teachers and other adults working in these institutions."*

Mr Ekesa linked sexual violence in schools to the vulnerability of certain groups of children who lack food or other basic needs. He also spoke about the negative impact on child victims, the frequent impunity of perpetrators as well as some of the solutions to strengthen abuse prevention, the rehabilitation of children, and the prosecution of abusers.

## Contributing to the review of the Human Rights Council's work and functioning

As decided in 2006 by the UN General Assembly, the Human Rights Council underwent a review of its work and the functioning of its first five years of existence. In September 2009, the HRC therefore set up an Open-ended Working Group with the mandate to review the work and functioning of the Council during ten days in October 2010 and February 2011 and report back to the Council by June 2011.

The NGO Group participated in discussions at the institution-building stage of the Council back in 2006 as how it works directly impacts the possibilities of civil society participation. The NGO Group Secretariat therefore followed the discussions relating to the review of the Council's work and functioning as part of its general goal of mainstreaming child rights in the work of the

### Making the NGO Group's voice heard

In order to influence the issues and proposals to be discussed during the aforementioned Open-ended Working Group sessions, the Secretariat participated in a number of informal seminars organised by states. These included the Montreux meeting organised by the Swiss government (April 2010), and the meeting organised by EU member States (May 2010).

The NGO Group co-sponsored two joint submissions representing the views of 18 NGOs on the modalities the review should follow: the '*NGO Proposal on the Structure for the 2011 Review of the Human Rights Council's Work and Functioning*'<sup>1</sup> and '*Ten Principles to guide a successful outcome of the Review of the UN Human Rights as it relates to the Special Procedures*' that were presented to States in May 2010 during a side-event.

The NGO Group also participated in a workshop organised by UPR-Info where thirty international and national organisations met in Geneva to assess the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) mechanism and put forward specific proposals to the review process to strengthen the UPR. The joint outcome paper, endorsed by thirty-seven NGOs, was presented orally on 27 October and submitted as a written contribution to the Open-ended Working Group.<sup>1</sup>

HRC. In particular, the NGO Group was interested in identifying potential risks for the annual day on the rights of the child and future amendments of the HRC working methods that might be relevant to its work.

## Assisting child rights NGOs to effectively engage with the Universal Periodic Review mechanism

In 2010, the NGO Group developed a strategy defining the areas of its engagement with regard to the UPR mechanism. This recent innovation of the HRC presents child rights NGOs with an additional platform from which to lobby states, thereby reinforcing existing advocacy, and increasing the level of exposure and pressure for change.

The NGO Group decided to disseminate further the opportunities for action offered by the UPR as part of an awareness-raising campaign among child rights organisations. It also worked to strengthen its facilitation role with national NGOs interested in engaging in the UPR, assisting national NGOs from Iraq, El Salvador and Kenya.

A training module was designed to explain the functioning of this new mechanism and encourage child rights NGOs and national coalitions to include recommendations related to children's rights that were made and accepted under the UPR in their work. The NGO Group encouraged child rights NGOs to submit UPR reports addressing issues covered by the OPAC and OPSC, and to advocate for the implementation of their recommendations. This training module was included in each of the NGO Forums held during the year. A set of five factsheets<sup>2</sup> was also developed, in collaboration with UPR-Info, a Geneva-based NGO which has become the reference in UPR related matters. These factsheets – which will be translated into French and Spanish and launched in early 2011 – aim to enable interested child rights NGOs and national coalitions to submit reports to the UPR and advocate for their recommendations to be included in the UPR outcome in the most effective manner. Technical assistance was also offered to interested child rights NGOs, particularly regarding to advocacy and follow-up activities.

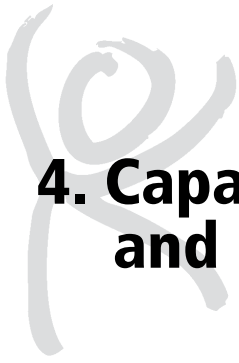
In December, the NGO Group also organised a training session on the UPR for ECPAT International (End Child Prostitution, Child Pornography and Trafficking of children for sexual purposes) in Thailand. ECPAT was a specific focus for the

<sup>1</sup> This assistance is also extended to children and Ombudspersons who are participating in the reporting process.

<sup>2</sup> More information on the UPR factsheets can be found in Section 7 'Tools and Publications'.



NGO Group's training, as very few issues related to the OPSC appear in either submissions by NGOs, interventions by states or the final recommendations which are issued. Given ECPAT's work in the areas relevant to the OPSC, the training aimed to encourage the network to integrate the UPR in its work and transmit this knowledge to its national sections and partners which work on these issues.



## 4. Capacity Building at National, Regional and International Level

The NGO Group works to build the capacity of national NGOs and coalitions to understand how to use international instruments to strengthen the implementation of child rights in their countries. As part of this work, it therefore participates in training events and workshops at national, regional and international levels. The main focus of training events in 2010 was providing participants with knowledge on effectively monitoring and implementing the CRC and its two Optional Protocols, mobilising them to support a communications procedure and encouraging them to engage with UPR.

In 2010, the NGO Group focussed on regional training workshops and events, as they enable efficient outreach to a large number of NGOs and coalitions, and allow participants to share best practice from around their region. The NGO Group helped to organise and participated in regional meetings and workshops in Egypt and Italy. As part of its increased work in the reporting process, Plan International approached the NGO Group to co-organise a series of regional workshops for its offices as well as national child rights coalitions or NGOs based in the countries it works. The first two workshops, which took place in late 2010, were held in Nepal and Kenya.

In addition, the NGO Group delivered training for *'capacity-building of NGOs of persons with disabilities in preparation of shadow reporting'* to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities at a workshop in Geneva. The International Disability Alliance had asked the NGO Group to share its experiences and best practice in forming and working as a national coalition of NGOs, as well as how the NGO Group facilitates communication between national NGOs and the Committee on the Rights of the Child. Similarly, the NGO Group was invited to share best practice with civil society organisations in Africa (Ethiopia, March 2010), as they were developing a body to facilitate their reporting on the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child. Finally, the NGO Group conducted training on engaging with the UPR and other areas of work of the HRC for

ECPAT, as issues related to the Optional Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography rarely come up during the UPR (see previous section on UPR).

### **Outreach to local child rights activists Capacity building workshop on the CRC in Egypt**

In February, the NGO Group provided training on CRC reporting to twenty-eight representatives from national NGOs in Egypt, assisting them as they prepared alternative reports for the first time. As a result of the training, the participants increased their understanding of the CRC reporting process, the working methods of the Committee and NGOs' role in preparing alternative reports. It also provided them with the opportunity to develop an action plan for the preparation of their joint alternative report.

The NGO Group prioritises national workshops such as these in countries where national child rights coalitions do not exist, or are newly forming. Not only does the report provide the Committee with information on the situation in the country, but it is often a concrete time-bound first activity to help NGOs start collaborating at a national level.

### **Regional level**

#### **Regional meeting – Nepal**

With few national child rights networks, limited or no reporting from some countries, and no regional coalitions, Asia is an NGO Group target region for capacity-building. As many States parties had recently submitted reports to the Committee, 2010 presented an ideal year to hold a regional meeting to make contacts with NGOs and Plan national offices in the region, build skills in CRC reporting, and help the relevant NGOs make preparations for their alternative reports. Twenty-six participants took part in the meeting, coming from Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia, Nepal, Pakistan, The Philippines, Sri Lanka, Timor Leste, Thailand and Vietnam.

None of the participants had previously taken part in the whole reporting process, and so a needs assessment helped to tailor support at the appropriate level for each participant, ensuring that all delegates left with a clear understanding of how the reporting process works. This was particularly important for countries that were in the process of reporting such as Cambodia, China, Nepal, Thailand and Vietnam, or which had not reported for many years (India and Indonesia, for instance). Meanwhile, it was also an opportunity to train NGOs from Pakistan and Sri Lanka on effective follow-up to Concluding Observations, as these countries had recently finished the reporting process. This was also important for countries like China, where no alternative reports are produced by national NGOs.

As well as sharing best practice on reporting and follow-up, the regional meeting discussed how to encourage appropriate child participation



**Working Group members share best practice on CRC reporting at the regional training workshop in Nepal**

in reporting to the Committee, how to get involved in the campaign for the Optional Protocol for a Communications, the role NGOs could play in the forthcoming elections of new members to the CRC Committee, and the use of other international human rights mechanisms in promoting child rights domestically. The NGO Group was also updated by NGOs from Indonesia and Pakistan about the possible ratification of the OPSC and OPAC in their countries, in line with the international campaign on their universal ratification.

### **Regional meeting – Kenya**

The NGO Group was invited by Plan International to deliver a workshop for its representatives and a selection of their NGO partners in East Africa. NGO coalitions and national organisations were represented from Egypt, Ethiopia, Kenya, Mozambique, Rwanda, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe. The second in a proposed series of such tailor-made regional capacity-build-

ing workshops, the focus for this regional meeting was establishing a common understanding among Plan International staff and their partners of the distinction between civil society support for the state CRC reporting process and the production of an alternative report by national organisations, or a national coalition. The timing of this workshop was particularly useful, since Egypt will report in June 2011 and Rwanda in September 2012, while a number of other state reports from the region are due in the next two years. Discussions were enriched by the range of experiences represented in the room: a number of countries present, namely Kenya, Mozambique, Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda, had reported recently, while others, such as Zambia and Zimbabwe, spoke about their work in encouraging their states to engage in the reporting process and also their own engagement with other UN Human Rights Mechanisms such as the Universal Periodic Review. Participants gave positive feedback on the workshop, especially how it provided an important opportunity to meet partners from across the region and to share experiences of how to meaningfully engage children in reporting. They also valued the opportunity to learn how obstacles have been overcome and goals obtained, while receiving technical information on how to navigate effectively the alternative report preparation process and the challenges encountered along the way.

### **Regional meeting – Florence**

In conjunction with UNICEF, Save the Children and the Innocenti Research Centre, the NGO Group co-organised and participated in the sixth European Regional Meeting of NGO Children's Rights Coalitions, in October. This biennial meeting was hosted in Florence by the Italian national coalition. At the meeting, the NGO Group provided information to NGOs and coalitions from thirty-five European countries as they worked to strengthen their activities in CRC reporting, developed plans to increase child participation in reporting, strengthen their coalitions and international advocacy on priority child rights issues (for example, the new Optional Protocol for a communications procedure) and follow-up to the concluding observations. With few national coalitions active in child rights monitoring, Central and Eastern Europe is one of the NGO Group's target sub-regions. Therefore the meeting was also used to create new contacts with relevant NGOs and discuss their forthcoming participation in the reporting process so as to enhance their engagement with the Committee on the Rights of the Child.

## **Civil Society Organisations forum – Ethiopia**

In order to support the African Committee of Experts in monitoring the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, international and national NGOs and coalitions from the region hold forums prior to the sessions of the African Committee of Experts. To explore different models of support, and to identify ways to strengthen its effectiveness, the NGO Group was invited to their March 2010 Forum to share experiences of working with the Committee on the Rights of the Child and supporting it in developing its working methods. As NGOs at the Forum were looking to create a body similar to the NGO Group, the latter was invited to explain its structure, governance, work, challenges and lessons learnt to contribute to the discussions around the development of such a support secretariat/organisation for the African Charter. Bringing together participants from NGOs and national coalitions from twenty countries around the region, the Forum enabled the NGO Group to make contact with new NGOs representatives, especially from coalitions formed since states had last reported.

With the Committee on the Rights of the Child and the African Committee of Experts increasingly discussing possible areas of collaboration, the NGO Group also followed the examination of one country to see how this regional body functions, and compared the African and the international processes.

## **International level**

### **NGO Forums**

The NGO Group organised a Forum at each of the three Pre-sessions held in 2010. NGO participants coming to Geneva for CRC reporting use these Forums to learn from each other's experiences,

strengthen their coalitions, and hear about other ways that international human rights instruments can be used to promote child rights.

Eighty-three participants took part in the Forums, from the following countries: Afghanistan, Argentina, Belarus, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Burundi, Denmark, Colombia, Grenada, Japan, Macedonia, Mexico, Montenegro, New-Zealand, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Serbia, Singapore, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan and Ukraine. Guest speakers Cécile Trochu Grasso (World Organisation Against Torture), Davinia Ovet (Inter Agency Panel on Juvenile Justice), Roland Chauville (UPR-info) and Peggy Brett (Centre for Civil and Political Rights) gave insights on their work relating to the CRC and reporting to other treaty bodies.

Coalitions presented their experiences and recommendations on how to strengthen child participation, including in information gathering, reporting, and in follow up to the Concluding Observations of the Committee. They also shared their plans, and looked at ways to improve implementation of those Concluding Observations, including through follow-up activity such as monitoring and government engagement. The importance of raising the profile of key child rights issues, including through the media and events, was discussed, as was the use of other international treaty bodies to promote child rights, including the UPR. Participants were updated on the progress of the campaign for a new Optional Protocol, how they could engage with the campaign, and in what situations the envisaged Optional Protocol could be used.

With elections to the Committee nearing, participants to the Forum at the fifty sixth Pre-session were also given information on the nomination and election process and how NGOs can work to promote the best candidates.



## 5. Campaigns and activities of thematic Working Groups

As well as its Working Group on the new Optional Protocol (see Section 2), the NGO Group currently runs five thematic Working Groups which allow its members to act jointly on issues of common interest.

### Children without Parental Care

Building on the achievement in 2009 of setting up universal standards, the 2010/2011 strategy of the Working Group was to promote and contribute to the implementation of Guidelines on Alternative Care of Children (Guidelines) at all levels. In early 2010, the Working Group in collaboration with counterparts in New York lobbied for the direct use of the Guidelines in policy-making after the earthquake in Haiti. Members of the Working Group also encouraged references to the Guidelines by various treaty bodies. As a result, the HRC started referencing the Guidelines as part of the UPR process for some countries. For example, it was recommended to Bulgaria that they ensure that children under the age of three are cared for in family-based settings. Moreover, the Committee has systematically requested that each country ensures it implements all aspects of the Guidelines, which will be an invaluable lobbying tool for grass roots actors.

The Latin American members of the Working Group have been developing tools to implement the Guidelines. As one of the lead actors in the region, Red Latino Americana de Acogimiento Familiar (RELAF) and UNICEF have been co-ordinating the development a child-friendly version and a version for government and NGO professionals of the Guidelines. Whilst individual countries such as Chile, Germany, Liberia and Namibia have started implementing the Guidelines or aspects of them, much work remains to be done for the Working Group and the wider international community.

### The Human Rights Council

The Working Group on the HRC, in collaboration with the Working Group on Violence Against Children, contributed to the draft Child Rights Resolu-

tion proposals on Sexual Violence against Children.

In January, the World Organisation against Torture and Save the Children ended their co-convenorship of the Working Group and new co-convenors, the Child Rights Information Network (CRIN) and SOS Children's Villages International, took up the reins.

In collaboration with the NGO Group's Secretariat, the Working Group took part in planning the annual day on sexual violence (10 March) to raise awareness and discuss prevention and responses to sexual violence. In addition to ensuring that experts such as Marta Santos Pais, Special Representative to the Secretary General on Violence Against Children, were on the panel, the NGO Group also supported the participation of non-governmental representatives from Africa, Latin America, and Europe to provide a broad regional perspective on the issues related to sexual violence.

In addition to the panels, some of the members of the Working Group<sup>1</sup> organised an NGO side event on sexual violence against children in Europe, bringing together practitioners to discuss specific examples of best practice, including what works, and what does not work. The event yielded constructive discussions, and practical examples for action, and was sponsored by the Norwegian Mission to the United Nations at Geneva.

During the second half of the year the Working Group made preparations for the 2011 annual day on street children. In addition, members have been discussing how best to coordinate NGO engagement with country missions in Geneva regarding the UPR.

### Sexual Exploitation of Children

The Working Group focussed on promoting the follow up of the 'Agenda for Action' commitments made at the 2008 World Congress III Against the Sexual Exploitation of Children and Adolescents.

At the March meeting of the HRC, members of

<sup>1</sup> The side event was organised by Plan International, Terre des Hommes International, International Save the Children Alliance, Bureau International Catholique de l'Enfance, Women World Summit Foundation, World Vision International and the NGO Group.

the Working Group presented an oral statement on the follow-up to the Rio Congress, highlighting the link to combating all forms of violence. Members also supported other statements, including on sexual violence and detention and on the Optional Protocol for a communications procedure. They also contributed to the event commemorating the 10th Anniversary of the adoption of the Optional Protocols to the CRC.

ECPAT, the convenor of the Working Group, led a review on progress versus agreements to combat sexual exploitation made by states at the Congress. Meanwhile, the NGO Group Secretariat published research analyzing the prevalence and nature of references to these commitments that were made in subsequent States Parties reports to the Committee. This assessment was presented at a follow-up meeting of the World Congress III, organized by ECPAT (October, Thailand), and attended by the Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary General on Violence against Children, the United Nations Chief of Child Protection, and the Government of Brazil. Members also participated in Geneva and regional consultations on the drafting of General Comment 13 on Article 19, and contributed to the joint NGO submission to the Open-ended Working Group on the Optional Protocol. Members also provided translation to ensure greater dissemination of the submission.

## Violence against Children

The Working Group continued to assist Marta Santos Pais, the Secretary General's Special Representative on Violence against Children (SRSG-VAC) be more effective in her efforts to end violence against children. It met with her three times, and contributed to her annual report for the UN General Assembly. It lobbied for her office to be sustainable and well-staffed, and as a result of successful discussions with Ms. Santos Pais and the chair of the Committee, it realised its goal of establishing regular meetings between her and the Committee. These meetings have resulted in a joint analysis of regional and country trends in violence against children, the identification of joint thematic priorities and closer cooperation.

The Working Group also supported the Campaign for Universal Ratification of the Optional Protocols to the CRC. Letters were sent to the Permanent Missions to the UN in Geneva of countries which have not yet signed or ratified the Optional Protocols. The Working Group also participated in the consultation organized by the SRSG-VAC and Ms. Najat Maalla M'jid, the Special Rapporteur on

the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography on the complaint mechanism.

In March, the Working Group strengthened its cooperation with the NGO Advisory Council for the follow up to the UN Study on Violence against Children, establishing formal meetings at least once a year to exchange information and plan joint activities.

## Indigenous Children

Building on the CRC General Comment 11 on Indigenous Children, a priority of the Working Group has been to promote indigenous children's rights by engaging with advocates and growing networks.

Between 30 August and 1 September, the Working Group was represented by its Convenor, the Secretariat of National Aboriginal and Islander Child Care (SNAICC) and Indigenous youth delegates at the UN Department of Public Information/NGO Conference on the Millennium Development Goals in Melbourne, Australia. This Conference presented an excellent forum to share the initiatives of the Working Group and also



meet many supporters of indigenous children's rights from around the world.

The Working Group also hosted an event for over fifty international guests, providing information on the General Comment 11 and showcasing opportunities and principles for partnerships with Indigenous children's organisations.

In addition, the Working Group contributed to the development of the draft General Comment on Article 19 of the CRC and provided advice on the NGO reporting processes under the Convention.

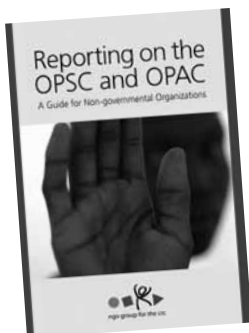
## Juvenile Justice

This historical Working Group was disbanded upon unanimous consensus during the 2010 General Assembly of the NGO Group because all of its members are involved in the Inter-Agency Panel on Juvenile Justice [<http://www.juvenilejustice-panel.org/en/>] which plays a similar – yet broader inter-institutional role as the Working Group.



## 6. Tools and Publications

In 2010, the NGO Group focussed on updating and translating tools for reporting to the Committee on the Rights of the Child, producing factsheets on engaging with the broader UN human rights system, conducting research on the follow-up to the World Congress III in the OPSC reporting process as well as advocacy documents for the campaign for an Optional Protocol on a communications procedure for the CRC. These included finalizing the guide to reporting on the Optional Protocols (<http://www.crin.org/ngogroup/infodetail.asp?ID=24130>), and producing factsheets on how child rights NGOs and coalitions can engage with the UPR (factsheet Nos. 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8, to be launched in early 2011). In addition, the NGO Group prepared country reports on all the countries examined by the Committee and three session reports.



### Strengthening reporting on the OPAC and OPSC

Having produced the guide 'Reporting on the OPSC and OPAC: A Guide for Non-governmental Organizations' in 2009, the NGO Group updated the guide to reflect

the adoption in October 2010 of the Committee's new CRC treaty specific reporting guidelines, harmonized according to the common core document. The NGO Group's guide was then translated into the other working languages of the Committee, namely French and Spanish. The three versions of the guide will be printed and broadly disseminated to child rights NGOs and coalitions in 2011, to facilitate their understanding of the provisions of both protocols and the evolving working methods of the Committee.

### Making Session proceedings widely available

With the Committee meeting in two chambers and therefore examining twice as many State

party reports in 2010, the NGO Group produced twice as many country reports over the course of the fifty-third, fifty-fourth and fifty-fifth Sessions. Fifty-three reports were prepared and sent to the national NGOs from the countries under review. These reports were also made available on the NGO Group website and to the broader child rights community through CRINMAILS.

### Bringing Child Rights reporting to the wider Human Rights audience

To reach out to the broader human rights community, the NGO Group changed the format of its reporting on the sessions of the Committee. Instead of producing its three session reports, the NGO Group began contributing to the International Service for Human Rights' *Human Rights Monitor Quarterly* (<http://www.ishr.ch/quarterly>). This new publication was launched in April 2010 to provide a global picture of developments in the international and regional human rights systems. Through its broad readership, the NGO Group provides the latest developments in child rights and the work of the Committee to a broader audience working in human rights.

### More on the Web

Having developed its website in 2008, the NGO Group reviewed its content and created new pages to reflect the new developments in its programmatic work. These developments reflect its increasing work at the HRC, in the UPR as well as the new Optional Protocol for a Communications Procedure.

In order to reach out to NGOs in other regions, the NGO Group set about developing French and Spanish versions of the website. The first phase of this project was started in late 2010. The website will be translated and officially launched in French and Spanish in the first half of 2011.



# 7. Organisational Development



## Executive Committee elections and appointment of new President

During the General Assembly (29 June, Geneva), four members of the Executive Committee, who had finished their term, went for re-election. Lennart Reinius, Alan Kikuchi-White, Veronica Yates and Peter Newell were re-elected for a two-year term. In addition, Roberta Cecchetti of Save the Children ran for election as a new member of the Executive Committee, and was unanimously elected.

Having served as President during challenging times and having recently moved to Kenya for work, Lennart Reinius stepped down from the Presidency. However, he remains a member of the Executive Committee. The Assembly thanked him for his valuable contribution to the growth and strengthening of the NGO Group.

At the same meeting, Roberta Cecchetti was nominated and seconded to be President of the NGO Group, and was elected unanimously to this role. In addition to her expertise in child rights, she has been involved in the work of the NGO Group for many years either as a convenor or acting member of various Working Groups as well as during a previous term as a member of the Executive Committee.

## New members join the NGO Group

During the General Assembly, the following four new members were approved unanimously: Eurochild, REDLAMYC, International Falcon Movement and Proyecto Solidario. The membership of regional networks of NGOs and coalitions such as Eurochild and REDLAMYC will help improve the collaboration between the international and regional level both in Europe and Latin America.

## Facilitating the participation of members through changes to legal statutes

The General Assembly looked at proposed amendments to Articles 14 and 19 of the statutes governing the NGO Group.

With members increasingly being based outside of Geneva, making it difficult to attend the General Assembly, the President proposed formalizing the use of proxy voting and online voting and to ensure that members could use their voting rights, while only active members should vote (e.g. based on the payment of membership fees for the previous calendar year). Finally, a proposed change to Article 19.1, which regulates the length of convenorships for Working Groups, was tabled. All the proposed changes to Articles 14 and 19 were approved unanimously.

## A newsletter is born

Launched in July, the new NGO Group newsletter 'GroupTalk' was developed as an easy, and quick way for the network to share members' news. The clear format and simple accessibility via email has already made GroupTalk a valuable resource for members to keep up to date with all areas of work. With a circulation to all members, and an external version distributed to donors and other stakeholders, GroupTalk has also proven valuable in communicating the impact of the NGO Group's work to funding partners, and updating government missions on key issues, positions, resources and meetings relating to child rights.







## 8. Accounts and Funding

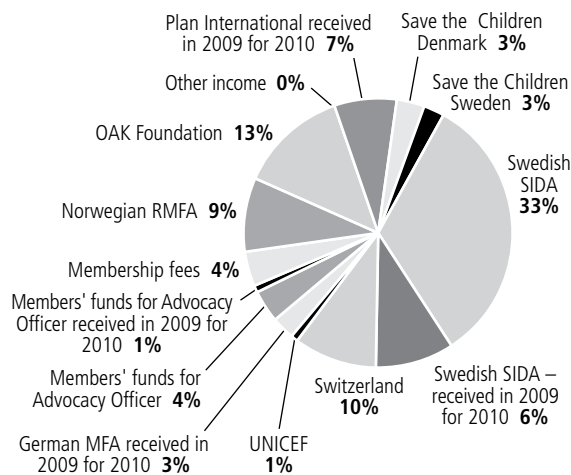
The NGO Group is immensely grateful to all its funding partners, who enabled us to expand our work of strengthening and safeguarding child rights in 2010. Four governments, one foundation, one UN agency and three international NGOs all provided valued financial support.

Adding to this, the following seven member organisations also provided specific funding supporting the work of the Advocacy Officer: Child

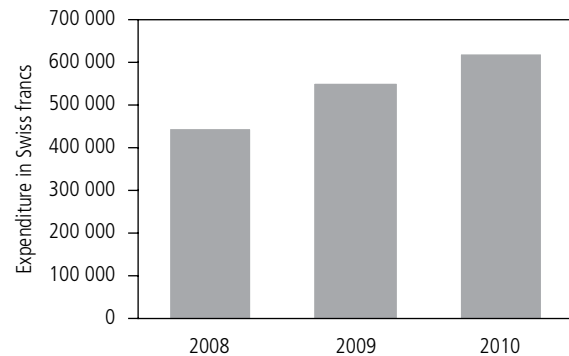
Rights Information Network (CRIN), Kindernohtilfe, Plan Norway, Plan Sweden, Terre des Hommes International Federation and World Vision International.

Despite the exceptionally challenging fundraising environment caused by the global financial crisis, donors generously increased funds to deliver the NGO Groups busiest programme yet.

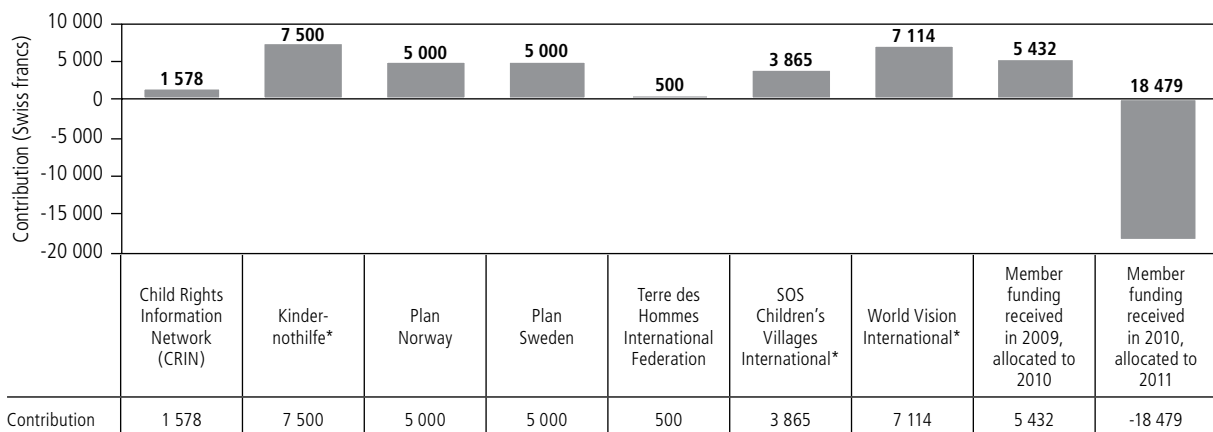
### 2010 Sources of funding



### NGO Group expenditure, 2008–2010



### Funding in 2010 for the Advocacy Officer Position from member organisations of the Working Group for the CRC Optional Protocol



Note: Member organizations marked with an asterisk have approved the allocation of their 2010 contributions to 2011.

## 2010 Expenditures of the NGO Group

	German MFA received in 2009 for 2010	Members' funds for Advocacy Officer	Members' funds for Advocacy Officer received in 2009 for 2010	Membership fees	Norwegian RMFA	OAK Foundation	Other income (bank interest, etc.)	Plan International received in 2009 for 2010	Save the Children Denmark	Save the Children Sweden	Swedish SIDA	Swedish SIDA - received in 2009 for 2010	Switzerland	UNICEF	TOTAL	
Activities															530,057	85%
NGO participation in CRC/OPs reporting and training	22 454					18 959					67 275		25 289		133 977	
Practical Tools, Research and Communications											10 110		3 589		13 699	
Campaign for OP on Communications Procedure						7 041					2 254		800		10 095	
Personnel & social charges		12 078	5 431			75 802		57 646	26 448	20 913	80 336	62 658	29 139		370 451	
Annual Report											1 354		481		1 835	
Core costs															94 809	15%
Rent & office operational costs & staff development											25 885		9 190		35 075	
Account services & administration fees											7 333	2 700	2 603		12 636	
Auditor											4 084		1 450		5 534	
ExCo, GA & Working Group meetings & activities					4 540						2 678		951		8 169	
Website maintenance											4 316		1 532		5 848	
Computer equipment & maintenance											14 016	8 555	4 976		27 547	
Total expenditure per donor in 2010	22 454	12 078	5 431		4 540	101 802		57 646	26 448	20 913	219 641	73 913	80 000		624 866	
Total donor income for 2010	22 454	12 078	5 431		4 540	101 802		57 646	26 448	20 913	219 641	73 913	80 000		624 866	
Income allocated to reserves				33 041			629								33 670	
Income earmarked for 2011		18 479			66 417						36 459			5 760	127 115	
TOTAL DONOR INCOME	22 454	30 557	5 431	33 041	70 957	101 802	629	57 646	26 448	20 913	256 100	73 913	80 000	5 760	785 651	



## 10. Organisational Structure and Governance

The most senior organ of the NGO Group is the **General Assembly**, which meets annually, and is comprised of the member organisations of the NGO Group. The **Executive Committee**, accountable to the General Assembly, provides strategic support, guidance, and oversight of the work of the NGO Group and **Secretariat**. The latter is responsible for carrying out the daily work of the network, especially in relation to reporting on the CRC and its Optional Protocols and mainstreaming child rights.

To advance child rights within the international human rights system, NGO Group members come together in thematic Working Groups to work on a particular child rights theme or issue.

In 2010, the Secretariat and Executive Committee consisted of:

### Secretariat Staff

Lisa Myers – Coordinator  
Shushan Khachyan – Child Rights Officer (to April 2010)  
Roisín Fegan – Child Rights Officer (from October 2010)  
Muriel Dreifuss Bisson – Administrative Officer  
Anita Goh – Advocacy Officer  
Tim Fieldsend – Fundraising and Advocacy Officer

### Short-term staff and freelance consultants

Laura Theytaz-Bergman ('Guide for NGOs reporting on the Optional Protocols to the Convention on the Rights of the Child')  
Nigel Cantwell (European NGO coalition regional meeting report consultant)  
Sabine Casenave (Accounting consultant)  
Alain Gross (Information Communication Technology consultant)  
Daphne Martin-Gnadason (Interim administrative officer)

### Interns & Volunteers

Nicole Bürlü  
Ismaël Frioud  
Alissa Ghils  
Abigail Shaw  
Robin Spencer  
Samuel Todd  
Lisa Ventura  
Madeleine Winqvist

### Executive Committee

Ms. Roberta Cecchetti – President  
(elected to Executive Committee and Presidency at General Assembly June 2010)  
*Save the Children International*

Mr. Peter Newell – Vice-President  
*APPROACH Ltd.*

Mr. Alan Kikuchi-White – Treasurer  
*SOS-Kinderdorf*

Ms. Anne-Sophie Lois – Secretary  
*Plan International*

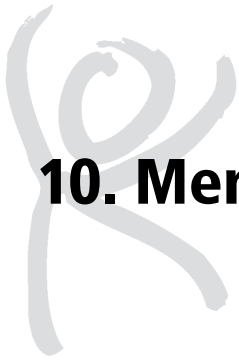
Mr. Lennart Reinius  
(President until General Assembly June 2010)  
*Save the Children Sweden*

Ms. Ivanka Shalapatova  
*International Foster Care Organisation*

Ms. Veronica Yates  
*Child Rights Information Network*

### Working Groups of the NGO Group

Working Group on Children without Parental Care  
Working Group on the Human Rights Council  
Working Group against the Sexual Exploitation of Children  
Working Group for a Communications Procedure  
Working Group on Violence against Children  
Working Group on Indigenous Children



## 10. Membership

1. 3D Three → Trade, Human Rights, Equitable Economy
2. Action for Children and Youth Aotearoa (ACYA)
3. African Child Policy Forum (ACPF)
4. Anti-Slavery International
5. APPROACH Ltd. – Global Initiative to End All Corporal Punishment of Children
6. Arigatou International
7. Associated Country Women of the World
8. Association for Rural Development and Action Research (ARDAR)
9. Association of Networks for Community Empowerment (ANCE)
10. Baha'i International Community
11. Child Helpline International
12. Child Rights Information Network (CRIN)
13. Child Rights Network Switzerland (Netzwerk Kinderrechte Schweiz)
14. Children's Rights Alliance Ireland
15. Children's Rights Alliance for England (CRAE)
16. Christian Children's Fund Inc
17. Coalition Against Trafficking in Women International (CATW)
18. Consortium for Street Children
19. Defence for Children International (DCI)
20. DevCon – An association for Rural Development
21. End Child Prostitution Child Pornography and Trafficking (ECPAT International)
22. Education International
23. Eurochild **NEW!**
24. Egyptian Foundation for Advancement of Childhood Conditions (EFACC)
25. European Association for Children in Hospital (EACH)
26. EveryChild
27. Fédération Internationale des Communautés Éducatives (FICE International)
28. First Nations Child and Family Caring society of Canada (FNCFS)
29. Friends World Committee for Consultation (FWCC)
30. Fundación Privada Intervida
31. Human Rights Watch
32. Inter African Committee on Traditional Practices Affecting the Health of Women
33. International Alliance of Women
34. International Association of Youth and Family Judges and Magistrates ((IAYFJM/AIMJF)
35. International Baby Food Action Network (IBFAN / GIFA)
36. International Catholic Child Bureau (BICE)
37. International Council of Jewish Women
38. International Council of Women
39. International Falcon Movement Socialist Education International **NEW!**
40. International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW)
41. International Foster Care Organisation (IFCO)
42. International Inner Wheel
43. International Institute for Child Rights and Development
44. International Movement "ATD Fourth World"
45. International Play Association: Promoting the Child's Right to Play

46. International School Psychology Association (ISPA)
47. International Social Service
48. La Voix de l'Enfant
49. Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns
50. National Aboriginal Islander Child Care (SNAICC)
51. National Coalition for the Implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child in Germany
52. Penal Reform International (PRI)
53. Plan International
54. Plataforma de Organizaciones de Infancia
55. Proyecto Solidario **NEW!**
56. Red Latinamericana de Acogimiento (RELAF)
57. Red Latinamericana y Caribena por la Defensa de los niños, niñas y adolescentes (REDLAMYC) **NEW!**
58. Resources Aimed at the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (RAPCA)
59. ROC (The "Right of the Child" NGO)
60. Roshni Homes Trust
61. Save the Children International
62. Soroptomist International
63. SOS Children's Villages International
64. Terre des Hommes International Federation
65. WAO – Afrique
66. War Child Holland
67. Werkstatt Ökonomie
68. Women's World Summit Foundation (WWSF)
69. World Alliance for Breastfeeding Action (WABA)
70. World Alliance of YMCAs
71. World Association Of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts (WAGGGS)
72. World Jewish Congress
73. World Movement of Mothers / Le Mouvement Mondial des Mères (WMM/MMM)
74. World Organisation Against Torture / SOS Torture
75. World Union of Catholic Women's Organisations
76. World Vision International
77. Young Men's Christian association of Costa Rica / Asociacion Cristiana de Jovenes



## 12. Thanks

The NGO Group relies on the financial support of its donors and partners to deliver its programmes. We are grateful to the following donors for their support in 2010:

### **Governments**

Germany  
Norway  
Sweden  
Switzerland

### **Foundations**

OAK Foundation

### **United Nations Bodies**

UNICEF

### **NGO Group Members and OP Working Group Members**

Child Rights Information Network (CRIN)  
Kindernothilfe  
Plan International  
Plan Norway  
Plan Sweden  
Save the Children Denmark  
Save the Children Sweden  
Terre des Hommes International Federation  
World Vision Canada  
World Vision International

### **Participating in the production and editing of this report**

Tim Fieldsend  
Lisa Myers

### **Concept and design**

minimum graphics

### **Printing**

Imprimerie Minute

The NGO Group envisions a world in which children's rights, as defined by the Convention on the Rights of the Child, are universally recognised and realised. With your support, we can help make this happen.

**Donations can be made to the NGO Group for the Convention on the Rights of the Child through:**

UBS Bank Account  
UBS SA Vermont – Nations  
17 Chemin Louis Dunant  
1211 Geneva 20, Switzerland

Account No. 279 – 230010.01M  
IBAN: CH55 0027 9279 2300 1001 M  
BIC: UBSWCHZH80A

**To find out more about how you can be a part of this vision, please contact:**

Tim Fieldsend  
Fundraising and Advocacy Officer  
NGO Group for the Convention on the Rights of the Child  
1, rue de Varembé  
1202 Geneva  
Switzerland

Tel +41 22 740 47 30  
Fax: +41 22 740 46 83  
E-mail: [fieldsend@childrightsnet.org](mailto:fieldsend@childrightsnet.org)  
Website: [www.childrightsnet.org](http://www.childrightsnet.org)

**NGO Group for the Convention on the Rights of the Child**

1, rue de Varembé

1202 Geneva

Switzerland

Tel: +41 22 740 47 30

Fax: +41 22 740 46 83

E-mail: [secretariat@childrightsnet.org](mailto:secretariat@childrightsnet.org)

Website: [www.childrightsnet.org](http://www.childrightsnet.org)