Climate Change: Impacts on Children and on their Rights

International Seminar organized by

THE INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD (IDE)

In collaboration with

THE UNIVERSITY INSTITUTE KURT BÖSCH (IUKB)
TERRE DES HOMMES - CHILD RELIEF, LAUSANNE

Programme

Course Director: Prof. Christophe Clivaz, Interdisciplinary Master in Tourism Studies, IUKB

Dates: From October 25th to October 28th, 2011

Venue: Institut international des Droits de l’Enfant
Chemin de l’Institut 18, 1967 Bramois, Switzerland
Tel. ++41 27 205 73 03 — Fax: ++41 27 205 73 02
E-mail: ide@childsrights.org
Web: www.childsrights.org

Languages: French and English
(with simultaneous translation throughout the plenary sessions)

With the sponsorship of

The International Association of Youth and Family Judges and Magistrates (IAYFJM)

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Fondation d’entreprise Groupe ECORE

AVEC LE SOUTIEN DE LA
Loterie Romande
ARGUMENT

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (the Convention), promulgated in November 1989 and ratified by 193 States (the international binding instrument with the most universal scope) establishes a new statute of child, considered a subject of rights. The global approach of the Convention encompasses every aspect of human rights, including environmental issues.

Moreover, as a binding Treaty going beyond a Declaration, the Convention imposes obligations to State Parties. One of them is enshrined in article 4: “States Parties shall undertake all appropriate legislative, administrative, and other measures for the implementation of the rights recognized in the present Convention. With regard to economic, social and cultural rights, States Parties shall undertake such measures to the maximum extent of their available resource...”. With regard to article 4, particular attention must be paid to the responsibility of State Parties to provide sufficient economic resources for children, and to give the priority to the child in economic and social planning, as in budget policies.

We live in a world where the financial, economic, climatic and energetic crisis affects us globally. And yet the effects of this crisis are felt more acutely in developing countries, thus directly affecting children: it is indeed a threat for their life and survival, but also for the realisation of their rights. Obvious examples are the food crisis, on the one hand, hitting hard a whole part of Africa, South-Asia and Latin America; and hampered access to energy, on the other hand, for part of the world population. The underlying financial crisis declared in 2008, probably the most ravaging of its kind, bears indeed consequences we have not yet entirely grasped. A vast number of countries accordingly experience a very upsetting situation, with money devaluation, plummeting tax income, applications for IFM aid schemes, with countries literally queuing up... In parallel, the prices of exported raw material are decreasing and the prices of imported raw material are soaring. First necessity items thus become unaffordable.

This situation directly impacts on children, on their life standards and on the enjoyment of their most basic rights such as food, housing, water access and hygiene conditions, access to healthcare. It also indirectly influences the conditions of child care, and faulty parenting: parents being forced to work harder, longer, and to venture on emigration as often as not. It also takes its toll on institutional structures, since States are short of the resources necessary to maintain protection services and promote education and training activities. In such contexts, there is no such thing as enjoyment of their rights for children. Words are wasted on a starving man... Situations of violence multiply, children are set to work from a very tender age, physical and mental health is deteriorating.

Children in the poorest developing countries moreover have very difficult, or almost non-existent, access to energy: their right to development, granted by art.6 of the Convention is therefore under threat. They are in no position to exert their basic rights, having no light, no heating, no transportation means... With regard to education, they have no access to new technologies, which cannot be driven without a minimum of energy. These new modes of learning (distance-learning), which could be so precious for them, remain therefore unavailability.

The North-South divide, the gap between developed and developing countries, between children from here and from far away, has been widening. There is no perspective for it to be filled in a near future.

We bear a common responsibility, and cannot limit ourselves to denouncing those phenomena. IDE, in association with IUKB, engages the main (public and private) partners to take stock on this situation, to launch a reflection and to outline ground-breaking ideas to address
these nagging issues, unsolvable without dialogue.

The vision of the 2011 Seminar is accordingly to conduct interdisciplinary reflection on the effects of these new phenomena (access to water, food, energy, and climate change) in order to outline solutions and practices promoting harmonious development for the child, respect for her/his rights, in the universally acknowledged context of sustainable development.

**OBJECTIFS**

By confronting theory/practice, legal frame/field reality, the Seminar aims at:

- **giving a clear view on the problems**: presentation of the reality experienced by children, obligations and responsibilities of States, new technologies, water, food, energy, knowledge of the main phenomena and reference texts sustaining research and intervention

- **bringing up** especially blatant situations and identifying causes, with a concern for scientific objectivity;

- **singling out best practices**, by exchanges of experiences between international organizations, NGOs, UN agencies, State officials, private industry, trade...;

- **identifying possible synergies** between the various stakeholders and identifying possible actions in the short, middle and long run;

**TARGET AUDIENCE**

Members of NGOs active in the field, UN bodies, State officials, representatives from concerned

**PROGRAMME**

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<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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<tr>
<td>05:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Registration and distribution of documents at the IDE</td>
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<tr>
<td>06:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Opening Ceremony: Welcome Speeches</td>
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<td><strong>Mr Marcel Maurer</strong>, Mayor of the City of Sion</td>
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<td><strong>Mr Jean Zermatten</strong>, Director of the International Institute for the Rights of the Child (IDE)</td>
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<td><strong>Mr Philip D. Jaffé</strong>, Director of the University Institute Kurt Bösch (IUKB)</td>
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<td>06:15 p.m.</td>
<td>Film (English and French)</td>
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<td>Discussion</td>
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<td>07:15 p.m.</td>
<td>Welcome Cocktail</td>
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<td>08:15 p.m.</td>
<td>End of the evening</td>
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Session Chairperson: Mr Jean Zermatten, IDE Director

Part I: What are we talking about?

09:00 a.m. Welcome Address
Mr Christophe Darbellay, IDE Foundation President
Mr Jacques Melly, President of the cantonal Government Valais
Mr Peter Brey, General-Secretary, Terre des hommes (TDH), Lausanne
Mr Christophe Clivaz, Course Director, MIT, IUKB

09:45 a.m. United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
Ms Donna Goodman, Executive Director, Earth Child Institute, New York, USA

10:30 a.m. Break

11:00 a.m. Climate Change and its Impact on Children
Prof. Susana Sanz Caballero, Professor in International Public Law, CEU Cardenal Herrera University. Member of the International Human Rights Institute, Spain

11:30 a.m. Rights of the child and development: the challenges of article 6 CRC
Prof. Hatem Kotran, Vice-President of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child

12:00 noon Discussion in plenary

12:45 p.m. Lunch

02:15 p.m. Workshops

05:15 p.m. End of the day

07:30 p.m. Valaisian Evening

Session Chairperson: Mr Stéphane Nahrath, Head of Tourism Studies Unit, IUKB

Part II: Particular Issues

09:00 a.m. Evolution of the International Environment Law and Position of Child from a Philosophical Perspective
Dr Peter G. Kirchschlaeger, Co-Director, Centre of Human Rights Education (ZMRB) of the University of Teacher Education Lucerne

09:30 a.m. “Climatic Refugees” and International Law
Prof. Astrid Epiney, Institute of European Law, Fribourg University, Switzerland

10:00 a.m. Education and Climate change
Dr Archana Mehendale, Child Rights Researcher, Bangalore, India

10:30 a.m. Break

11:00 a.m. Challenges in Implementing the Right to Water and Sanitation
Mr Antoine Delepière, Water Sanitation and Hygiene Resource Person, Terre des hommes, Lausanne

11:30 a.m. Sustainable development and democratic participation of the child
Ms Lucy Stone, Climate Change Advisor, UNICEF UK
THURSDAY

12:00 noon  Exchange with speakers
12:30 p.m.  Lunch
01:45 p.m.  Workshops
04:30 p.m.  End of the day

Session Chairperson: Prof. Philip D. Jaffé, IUKB Director

Part III: Concrete solutions and ideas

09:00 a.m.  The 16 Commitments of the Canton of Valais for Sustainable Development  
            Mr Olivier Guex, Head of the Forest and Landscape Department, Canton of Valais
            Mr François Seppey, Head of the Economy and Tourism Department, Canton of Valais

09:30 a.m.  Agenda 21: Role of Children and Youth in Promoting Sustainable Development  
            Ms Claudine Dayer Fournet, Assistant-secretary for Sustainable Development, Department of Education, culture and Sport, Canton of Geneva

10:00 a.m.  Obligations of Public Service and Corporate Governance  
            Mr Henrik Holmquist, Special Advisor, Secretary General’s Office, Save the Children, Stockholm, Sweden

10:30 a.m.  Break

11:00 a.m.  Youth Participation in Environmental Activities  
            Ms Ivana Savic, Jurist, Rio+twenties, Belgrade, Serbia

11:30 a.m.  Example of action to tackle malnutrition: the Bangladesh Project  
            Dr Jean-Pierre Papart, Terre des hommes, Lausanne

12:00 noon  Exchange with speakers
12:30 p.m.  Lunch
01:45 p.m.  Continuation of the Workshops and drafting of Recommendations
03:45 p.m.  Break
04:00 p.m.  Workshops recommendations  
            Workshops reporters
04:45 p.m.  Synthesis  
            Mr Christophe Clivaz, Course Director

05:15 p.m.  Closing Ceremony, announcement of the 2012 Seminar  
            Mr Jean Zermatten, IDE Director
WORKSHOPS

Workshop 1: Convention on the Rights of the Child and Climate Change: How to Grant Harmonious Child Development

- Ms Donna Goodman, Executive Director, Earth Child Institute, New York, USA
- Ms Renate Winter, Judge, former President and Member of the UN Appeal Chamber and of the Special Court for Sierra Leone

Workshop 2: Child Participation in Tackling the Issue: How to Make Children Actors in Prevention Policies and in Mitigation of Climate Change

- Ms Ivana Savic, Jurist, Rio+twenties, Belgrade, Serbia
- Ms Lucy Stone, Climate Change Advisor, UNICEF UK
- Prof. Hatem Kotran, Vice-President of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child

Workshop 3: Child Education, Prevention, Natural Disasters, Programs and Awareness-Raising. The role of School.

- Dr Archana Mehendale, Child Rights Researcher, Bangalore, India
- Ms Julie Beausoleil, Independent Consultant, Geneva

Workshop 4: Food, Water and Energy: Challenges for the UN, States, Communities and NGOs

- Dr Jean-Pierre Papart, Terre des hommes, Lausanne
- Mr Antoine Delepière, Water Sanitation and Hygiene Resource person, Terre des hommes, Lausanne