



Confédération internationale
Société de Saint Vincent de Paul

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Interactive Dialogue with the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children

Joint Oral Statement submitted by: Associazione Comunità Papa Giovanni XXIII (APG23)

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Mr. President,

APG23 and the co-signing NGOs thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for her report on violence against children.

Millions of children are still exposed to abuse and violations. Inequalities, further exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, have increased affecting the most deprived and marginalized children. Children on the move are paying the highest price due to wars, humanitarian crises as well as failing migration policies. Despite the improvements in law and practices, tens of thousands of migrant children are still at risk of detention. Too often, restrictive migration strategies prevail over child protection. Their right to physical and mental health and their right to life should never be under threat.

All policies involving children, including those on the move, should be guided by the core principle of the best interest of the child and enhance their participation as “agents of positive change”.

In addition, children have the right to participate in, contribute to and enjoy their social, economic and cultural development and be protagonists in shaping their future. In this regard, the realization of the right to development cannot wait any longer.

Finally, violence against children is “too often justified, socially accepted or authorized” and there is a need for strategies, investments, and funds that counteract it. Barriers such as, inter alia, poverty, discrimination, and exclusion have to be removed. Governments should take all efforts to prevent violence and develop appropriate child-sensitive policies, including migration strategies, in line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Thank you!