



52nd Regular Session of the Human Rights Council, 27 February–4 April 2023

Interactive Dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on the sale and sexual exploitation of children, including child prostitution, child pornography and other child sexual abuse material

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

Check against delivery

Mr President,

APG23 thanks the Special Rapporteur on the Sale and Sexual Exploitation of Children for her comprehensive report.

Despite the efforts made in recognizing child victims' right to reparation, critical issues still emerge in safeguarding such right and in providing effective access to justice.

According to our experience, abused children have to face several obstacles such as stereotypes, discrimination as well as bureaucratic and procedural barriers; for instance, lack of proper and adequate information on redress mechanisms, together with lengthy judicial proceedings, jeopardise access to justice and the right to reparation. Affected children are not able to face long, painful and distressing court proceedings, especially when the victim has to manage post-traumatic stress diseases or trauma bonding, or is a child with disabilities, or belongs to a minority or is an unaccompanied minor.

All the above-mentioned factors limit the children's right to reparation, hinder their psychological and emotional well-being and recovery, discouraging them from making claims.

Sadly, judicial proceedings do not always end with a conviction; the dismissal of cases allows traffickers to continue their criminal activities; when it occurs, child victims are denied justice.

As Pope Francis reminds us: "The abuse of minors is a "psychological murder".... Therefore, the protection of children against sexual exploitation is a duty of every State.... Specific interventions must be organised to provide effective assistance to victims".

We strongly believe that receiving compensation is essential to achieve full reintegration and recovery.

We call upon all States to make any efforts aiming at ensuring reparation, restoring dignity and realising justice for child victims. Thank you!