



BARNEOMBUDET



Concept note:

Side event on Child Rights Monitoring

UNHQ – Conference Room 11

9 October - 1.15 pm – 2.30pm

Summary:

The Permanent Mission of Norway to the UN, UNICEF and the Norwegian Ombudsman for Children is hosting a side event to the Third Committee of the 72nd session of the UN General Assembly. The event will take place on the 9th of October, and address the important role of independent child rights monitoring mechanisms in closing the implementation gap, and the heightened importance of having institutions that are strong, independent and accessible to children under the SDG agenda.

Expected outcomes:

- Raise awareness of the importance of independent child rights monitoring mechanisms in closing the implementation gap and fulfilling the SDG agenda;
- Inspire countries to establish or strengthen such institutions;
- Lay strong grounds for future cooperation between countries, UN institutions and civil society to establish and strengthen child rights monitoring mechanisms.

Panelists

- **UNICEF – Susana Sottoli, Deputy Director, Programme Division** UNICEF will elaborate on their important role in promoting independent human rights institutions for children in many countries. UNICEF's Strategic Plan 2018-2021 now includes support to national human rights institutions as key actor to support change strategies on the ground.
- **SRSG Violence against Children Marta Santos Pais** – On the enormous challenge of protecting all children against violence, and the importance of strong independent monitoring mechanisms in this work
- **Anne Lindboe** – Ombudsperson for Children in Norway – On experience from bilateral cooperation to establish and strengthen independent child rights monitoring mechanisms
- **Zagipa Baliyeva, Child Rights Commissioner in Kazakhstan (TBC)** – On being a recently established child rights commissioner – experiences from initial year and plans ahead
- **Malawi Human Rights Commission (TBC)** – on the process of strengthening the focus of an existing HRC on children's rights
- **Morocco Human Rights Commission – Khalid Hanefioui**

Background:

Article 4 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) requires State parties to “*undertake all appropriate legislative, administrative and other measures for the implementation of the rights recognized in the present Convention*”. According to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, this includes establishing an independent

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body, for example an ombudsperson for children, with the mandate to monitor and promote the implementation of the CRC. While the CRC is ratified by nearly all countries in the world, a lot still needs to be done to bridge the gap between the recognition of child rights, and their effective implementation in countries' legislation, policies and budgeting.

Upholding children's rights is an important part of securing a sustainable development. Building structures for good governance is also essential in ensuring children's rights. This has been highlighted in the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) agenda adopted by the UN General Assembly in September 2015. More specifically, SDG 16 is dedicated to the promotion of peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development through granting access to justice for all and building accountable institutions at all levels. A specific target (16.2.) under SDG 16 is to end abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children. Strong, and includes an indicator on National Human Rights Institutions as a strong indication of the important role played by accountable and efficient child right's monitoring mechanisms in fulfilling the SDGs in all countries.

Today, more than 200 independent monitoring mechanisms for children's rights exist in over 70 countries. However, among the existing institutions, some lack legal mandate, sufficient independence and/or funding to efficiently monitor and promote children's rights. Additionally, accessibility to children sometimes remains an issue, making it difficult not only to address the real problems children face in their everyday lives, but also to bring children's experiences and views to the tables of decision makers.

About the organizers:

The Ombudsman for Children in Norway is the world's oldest independent child rights monitoring mechanism, established in 1981. The office's 35 years of experience is valuable to countries that want to establish similar institutions or strengthen existing ones. Our experience includes knowledge about the mandate and organization of the institution, methods for monitoring children's rights and involving children and examples from different areas such as bullying, child protection and juvenile justice.

UNICEF has had a long standing interest in the development of NHRIs and Ombudsperson for children, reflected for example in the development of various publications. More recently, a global study was conducted by the Office of Research (2012) which is the first comprehensive review of independent human rights institutions for children, taking stock of more than 20 years of their experience. This interest is also translated into growing engagement at the national level for the development and strengthening of such institution.



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