**UDHR75: Revitalising the universal commitment to all children’s rights,**

**with and for children**

**Date: 12th December - 12:30 - 2pm (90 min)** (Hybrid event)

**Location: Room XXI, Palais des Nations, Geneva and** [**online**](https://unog-un-org.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJ0tdOmhqTgoH9R-ZPIhTQkvxRhCNF6_Yo48)

[Online](https://unog-un-org.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJ0tdOmhqTgoH9R-ZPIhTQkvxRhCNF6_Yo48) **Registration**

**Organisers:** Plan International, Save the Children, SOS Children’s Villages International, Terre des Hommes International Federation, World Vision International and Child Rights Connect Working Group on child participation

**Co-sponsors: European Union, Permanent Mission of Uruguay, Permanent Mission of Bulgaria and Permanent Mission of Malawi**

**Background**

When adopted in 1989, the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) enshrined, for the first time in international law, the recognition of children as right holders, entitled to the full scope of civil, political, economic, social, and cultural rights. **As we mark this year the 75th Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR75), recognising the indivisibility and interdependence of all children’s rights, the central role of children as right holders and the importance of a mainstreaming approach for children’s rights across all policy areas and processes, should be a central piece of the conversation.**

Despite its near universal ratification, the holistic implementation of the UNCRC is still a challenge and a general pushback against child rights and children’s agency is taking place globally, including in intergovernmental fora, threatening to undermine the integrity of international standards and roll back progress on child rights. Children’s rights today are often misunderstood, looked in a fragmented way, and increasingly disputed. Children are still not systematically and meaningfully included in decision-making processes despite representing more than 30% of the world’s population. Without an effective and systematic application of a child rights approach, some rights end up being partially realized or even violated.

Following a strong [push from Child Rights Connect](https://childrightsconnect.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/positionpaperourcommonagenda_crcnct_final.pdf) and 100 child rights CSOs as well as inputs from many CSOs and children around the world, the UN Secretary General issued a [Guidance Note on Child Rights Mainstreaming](https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/2023-09/Guidance-Note-Secretary-General-Child-Rights-Mainstreaming-July-2023.pdf) (July 2023) which mandates the mobilization of the UN system to collectively strengthen and elevate a shared UN child rights agenda across all the three UN pillars, human rights, development as well as peace and security. Beyond calling for specific actions from UN entities, this document sets a vision for change on how children and their rights are viewed, and the approach needed to ensure their holistic implementation. Mainstreaming child rights must be an integral part of the human rights-based approach and should take place at all levels, from local to global, and across sectors. To turn this vision into concrete actions and systemic change, including at national level, we need leadership at all levels, not only from UN entities but also from Member States, civil society, and to work in partnership with children.

**UDHR 75 is a key opportunity to** revitalise the universal commitment to all children’s rights, as indivisible and interdependent, andgalvanise joint actions to elevate children’s rights on the national and international agendas, putting children’s right to participate at the centre of this ambition. Equal attention should be given to all categories of rights and to all rights, including civil and political rights that are particularly neglected and denied but equally central to enable children’s **meaningful, safe and ethical participation in decisions that affect them.** The mobilization and agency of children on the climate crisis, gender equality, anti-racism, violence, and many other societal issues clearly illustrates the power of children’s activism on a range of human rights issues and the need to recognise, support and protect them as child human rights defenders.

With only seven years left until 2030, the target deadline to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), significant setbacks from the COVID-19 pandemic, conflict, the climate and environmental crises and economic turmoil around the world have only increased the sense of urgency for **a joint call to action for rights-based approaches and solutions that are age-and gender- responsive, with an intersectional lens and shaped with children in all their diversity**.

On the margins of the UDHR75 high-level event, this side event will provide a space for an intergenerational dialogue between States, UN, civil society, including children themselves:

* to discuss and share good practices on mainstreaming child rights approaches and children’s participation in national and global policy agendas;
* to reflect on what steps are needed to amplify these efforts across these different levels;
* to mobilise states and other stakeholders to elevate and mainstream children’s rights in their policy and advocacy efforts, including in key opportunities, and ensure that meaningful, safe and ethical child participation are at the centre of these.

This side-event will look into upcoming key opportunities to elevate child rights mainstreaming at local, national, regional and international levels, including:

* Efforts by the UN to implement the UN Secretary Guidance Note on Child Rights Mainstreaming, including in providing technical assistance to States;
* The Summit of the Future and the negotiations for the Pact for the Future;
* The 35th anniversary of the UNCRC;
* Efforts at the Human Rights Council (upcoming OHCHR report on child rights mainstreaming and panel in March 2024).

**Programme**:

**Format**: Intergenerational dialogue between children and adults

**Doris, Child Human Rights Defender, Zambia** moderator - opens the event

**Opening remarks**

* **H.E. Lotte Knudsen, Ambassador and Head of Delegation of the European Union**
* **H.E. Yuri Sterk, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Bulgaria to the United Nations in Geneva**
* **Minister Alejandra Costa, Deputy Director General for Political Affairs of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Uruguay**

**Q&A Panel discussion**

* **Anghelina, Child Human Rights Defender, Moldova**
* **Fran, Child Human Rights Defender, Croatia**
* **Mr. Pacharo Kayira, Deputy Permanent Representative of Malawi to the United Nations in Geneva**
* **Minister Alejandra Costa, Deputy Director General for Political Affairs of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Uruguay**
* **Dr. Philip Jaffé, Member of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child**
* **Hon. Anne Musiwa, Rapporteur of the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child**

**Concluding remarks**

* **Ms Valerie Ceccherini, Secretary General of Terre des Hommes International Federation**

**Q&A with the audience**