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**Draft Concept Note**

**HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL HIGHL LEVEL PANEL ON HUMAN RIGHTS MAINSTREAMING:**

**The protection and promotion of the human rights of migrants**

**Side Event: Mainstreaming the Rights of Children on the Move in Migration and Development Debates**

**Date:** 24 March

**Time/location:** 14.00-16.00, Room XXI, Palais des Nations

**State sponsors:**

Permanent Mission of Italy, Permanent Mission of Mexico

**Co-sponsors:** Inter-Agency Group on Children on the Move, which includes: Terre Des Hommes, Save the Children, IOM, UNICEF, ILO, UNHCR, World Vision International, Plan International, the African Movement of Working Children and Youths (AMWCY/MAEJT), Environmental Development Action in the Third World (ENDA), the Oak Foundation and individual experts.

**Background:**

Approximately 232 million people currently live outside their countries of origin, while 740 million people are internal migrants. Children and youth make up a significant part of this large-scale and complex population movements and the expectation is that in the years to come, the number of children who are ‘on the move’[[1]](#footnote-1) will steadily increase.

In 2012, the Committee on the Rights of the Child held a General Discussion Day on the rights of all children in the context of international migration. The follow-up report adopted by the Committee on the Rights of the Child called States Parties to the Convention to *‘adopt comprehensive human rights-based laws and policies to ensure that all children involved in or affected by international migration enjoy the full protection of the Convention in a timely manner, regardless of age, economic status, documentation status of themselves or their parents, in both voluntary and* *involuntary migration situations, whether accompanied or unaccompanied , or any other.*’

Despite a clear legal framework obliging states to respect and ensure the rights of all children, children on the move face numerous systematic violations of their rights in countries of origin, transit and destination. These challenges are compounded by the fact that children’s rights are still largely overlooked both in migration laws, policies and practices as well in development strategies and programmes.

The UN GA High Level Dialogue on International Migration and Development held in October 2013 represents a significant step towards bridging the gap between human rights, migration and development with due attention given to the specific protection needs and rights of children on the move. Indeed Member States unanimously adopted a Declaration where they expressed their ‘*commitment to protect the human rights of migrant children, given their vulnerability, particularly unaccompanied migrant children, and to provide for their health, education and psychosocial development, ensuring that the best interests of the child are a primary consideration in policies of integration, return and family reunification.*

The side event aims to contribute towards mainstreaming the rights of children on the move in relevant policy frameworks and ensure that they become a central part of an inclusive agenda which brings together the respect of human rights, migration and development policies. Discussions will build upon the outcomes of the Human Rights Council High Level Panel on human rights mainstreaming, with specific consideration to the achievements and challenges in mainstreaming the human rights of migrant children through the work of the UN System and how they can be successfully integrated into the post 2015 development agenda.

**Objectives of the side-event:**

1. Mobilize governments and UN agencies to mainstream the rights of children on the move in international and domestic policy frameworks, in line with the UNCRC Committee’s recommendations and the Declaration of the High Level Dialogue on Migration and Development
2. Discuss how the rights of children on the move can be mainstreamed into the work of the UN system, including the human rights mechanisms
3. Reflect on how the rights of children on the move can be integrated into the post 2015 international development framework and the Global Forum on Migration and Development
4. Ensure that the voices of children on the move and stakeholders engaged in advocating for their protection can inform the international debate and share examples of promising practices with respect to the protection and fulfilment of the rights of children on the move

**Audience:**

* Governmental representatives, staff of UN agencies and bodies, human rights and child rights NGOs, representatives of civil society organizations (CSOs) attending the Human Rights Council.

**Proposed programme:**

**Welcome** from the Moderator (5mins) - Moderation: Mr Ignacio Packer, Terre des Hommes International Federation

**Opening statements** (15 minutes):

**- Representative from Mission of Italy:** protecting children on the move a priority in the European Context

**- Representative from Mission of Mexico:** after the High level Dialogue on International Migration and Development: cooperation mechanisms for the protection of chidren on the move.

Keynote statement: **Deputy High Commissioner for human rights** (10 minutes)

**Panellists** (40 minutes)

**Markus Reisle**, *Head of the Global Programme on Migration and Development, Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, Government of Switzerland:* Mainstreaming the rights of Children on the Move in the Post 2015 Framework

**Ana Fonseca**, *Senior Migration Specialist, IOM*: Mainstreaming the rights of children on the move: Key Challenges in the global migration agenda

**Monika Sandvik-Nylund**, *Senior Adviser, UNHCR*: Mixed migration flows and the rights of children on the move: current and emerging challenges.

**Daniela Reale**, *Adviser*, *Save the Children, Chair of the Interagency Group on children on the move*: Experience from global programmes for the protection of children on the move

**Discussion** **with the audience –** (30 minutes)

**Conclusions** – (10 minutes)

🡪 Moderator and panelists

**TOTAL TIME – 110-115 minutes**

1. The Inter-Agency Group on Children on the Move defines children on the move as: ‘*children moving for a variety of reasons, voluntarily or involuntarily, within or between countries, with or without their parents or other primary caregivers, and whose movement while it may open up opportunities might also place them at risk (or at an increased risk) of economic or sexual exploitation, abuse, neglect and violence”.* While not exhaustive, this definition brings together children who have been trafficked; children seeking asylum; children who migrate (e.g. to pursue better life opportunities, look for work or education or to escape exploitative [↑](#footnote-ref-1)