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**43rd Session of the Human Rights Council:**

**Annual High-Level Panel Discussion on Human Rights Mainstreaming**

Date: **Monday 24th February 2020 16:00-17:00**

Place: **Palais de Nations, Room XX (20)**

**Remarks by H.E. Tijjani Muhammad-Bande,**

**President of the UN General Assembly**

Her Excellency Ms. Elisabeth Tichy-Fisslberger, President of the Human Rights Council,

Ms. Michelle Bachelet, High Commissioner for Human Rights,

Distinguished panellists,

Excellencies,

I thank the Human Rights Council for extending an invitation for me to join you in this important discussion on mainstreaming human rights, with a focus today on the rights of the child.

Thirty years ago, Member States adopted the Convention on the Rights of the Child, recognising child rights for the first time. As the most widely ratified human rights treaty, the Convention and its optional protocols constitute a vital living body of law providing guidance on upholding the rights of children.

There is no ‘one size fits all’ approach to the CRC, and we can all learn from the various approaches taken by Member States with regard to implementation: from direct and indirect incorporation into national law; and legal and non-legal measures taken to realise the provisions of this treaty.

I commend Member States for this, and in addition, for adopting national plans for children to ensure that their rights are mainstreamed into all national policies and programmes. Furthermore, I commend Member States who have carried out child impact assessments and child impact evaluations to ensure that we are meeting the needs of the children we serve.

Moreover, I thank the Committee on the Rights of the Child. I thank civil society, national human rights institutions, academia, the media, and the UN system for their efforts in the promotion of child rights.

Our collective efforts can ensure the creation of a culture of respect for child rights where children are perceived as rights-holders and thus are given due consideration in all areas of work.

Excellencies,

I urge all Member States to take action to implement the recommendations of the Global Study of Children Deprived of Liberty, which was mandated by General Assembly Resolution 69/157. I thank the Independent Expert Mr. Manfred Nohawk for presenting his findings to the Third Committee during the Main Session of the 74th Session of the General Assembly.

This study is the first data-based attempt to comprehend the magnitude of the situation of children deprived of liberty, identifying root causes, conditions of detention and the impact on the health and development of children. It is worth noting also that children were consulted in this process, ensuring a child-centred approach which we should all emulate.

I urge you to consider how best to implement this in your national context, so that we succeed in upholding the rights of every child.

Excellencies,

We must seek to uphold the rights of all children. This is critical if we are to address deepening inequalities within and between countries, and make gains in this Decade of Action and Delivery to implement the Sustainable Development Goals. In particular SDG 1: End Poverty in All Its Forms Everywhere, requires us to address the needs of children trapped in poverty, and is a key priority of the 74th session of the General Assembly.

I applaud UNICEF for the Multiple Overlapping Deprivation Analysis (MODA) which assists in the planning of effective policies and underscores the need for multisector interventions. Children experience poverty differently to adults, and as such I urge all Member States to pay due attention to their specific needs.

A mutually re-enforcing priority of the General Assembly is education, as enshrined in Article 28 of the CRC. Education is essential if we are to reduce inequalities.

To reduce inequalities, we must seek to mainstream this right throughout social protection policies and the development of infrastructure. This will work towards providing a safe space and safe access for children to learn, ensuring ‘*available and accessible’* education as set out in the Convention.

Furthermore, these rights-based development measures must be adequately funded in order to uphold the rights of the child.

Indeed, by ensuring ‘*the development and respect for the natural environment’*, as per Article 29, we will make gains on climate action, an issue which deepens inequality and which affects this generation of young people more than any generation in the thirty years since the adoption of the Convention.

Excellencies,

As we celebrate thirty decades of the adoption of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, we reflect upon advances made in child health, child mortality, and nutrition.

However, childhood is changing, this generation of children and future generations will face new challenges including those presented by conflict, climate change, and rapid technological change. We must utilise child impact. We must guarantee the dignity of every child, everywhere in the face of new challenges and uphold the rights of the child throughout our work.

This year we are also commemorating the 75th anniversary of the United Nations, and we are asking, ‘*what is the future we want?’*

Excellencies,

Before you answer this question, I want you to consider the rights of children. I ask that you ask children what is the future that *they* want.

We must mainstream the rights of the child into not just our work, but our consciousness. I pledge to do just this, throughout the 74th session of the General Assembly.

I thank you.

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