



**Speaker Biographies for the  
2018 Day of General Discussion (DGD) Working Groups**

**UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC)**

***“Protecting and Empowering Children as Human Rights Defenders (CHRDs)”***

**28 September 2018 – Room XVII, Palais des Nations, Geneva**

<b>Dialogue: Civil society space for children human rights defenders (CHRDs)</b>	
<p>Michael Gaffey</p> 	<p>Amy</p> 
<p>Michael Gaffey is the Permanent Representative of Ireland to the United Nations Office at Geneva.</p> <p>Prior to his appointment to Geneva, Mr. Gaffey had been working at headquarters since 2008, first as Deputy Director General of the Development Cooperation Division and then as Director-General of Irish Aid. From 2002 to 2008, he worked at the Political Division of the Department of Foreign Affairs in Dublin. He served at the Irish Embassy in Tokyo from 2000 to 2002; at the Irish Embassy in London from 1997 to 2000; at the Irish Embassy in Cairo from 1993 to 1997; and at the Irish Embassy in Baghdad, and then Amman, from 1990 to 1992.</p>	<p>My name is Amy Spearman and I am a 17 year old high school student from Canada. I speak English, French, Spanish and am currently learning Italian. I enjoy learning about law, politics, international relations/development and world history. I am an avid traveler who enjoys being immersed in new cultures and languages, something I recently discovered after having marvellous experiences living and studying in Chile and Italy. After volunteering with Canada's National Youth Advisory Committee and discussing with other Canadian youth about prominent issues facing our country, I became a Canadian Youth Correspondent with the Instituto Interamericano del Niño, la Niña y Adolescentes (IIN-OEA). Working with the IIN, I have become part of a network of youth correspondents from around the world. The IIN has provided me with a platform and the necessary tools to effectively voice my opinions and concerns regarding the situation of child rights in the world. At the DGD, I will have the honour of interviewing and speaking with Ireland's Ambassador to the UN, about a resolution drafted in June 2016 regarding, "civil society space" and the role civil society plays in "empowering children".</p>

**Dialogue: Empowerment through digital media**

Regina Jensdottir



Melissa



Regína Jensdóttir holds a law degree from the University of Iceland and a post graduate degree (D.E.A.) from the University of Strasbourg in international public law. Since 1998 she has been working for the Council of Europe and since 2010 she is the Council of Europe Co-ordinator for Children’s Rights and heads the organizations’ Children’s Rights Division.

In these capacities she follows the Council of Europe Ad hoc Committee for the Rights of the Child, the implementation of the Council of Europe Strategy for the Rights of the Child (2016-2021), and of the Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse (the Lanzarote Convention) and its monitoring committee which follows how states put the Lanzarote Convention into practice.

She has also led the development of the work on children’s rights in the digital environment which has included the adoption of a new Recommendation to states to respect, protect and fulfill the rights of the child in the digital environment, an Internet Litteracy Handbook and a guide for parents on how to be a good digital parent.

Melissa is a young Brazilian leader with a strong commitment to fighting injustice, discrimination and violence against children. She is an active member of the Young Public Policy Monitoring movement (MJPOP) which is an initiative that aims to open up spaces for young people to engage in social accountability mechanisms and participate in public policy debates.

Melissa is particularly interested in promoting and defending the rights of young girls like her. She engages in actions to addressing the issues of violence and discrimination that affect young people, who are most likely to be poor, black and from vulnerable families. She is raising awareness and advocating for ending violence against young black men who are specifically targeted and murdered.

Melissa advocates for creating a space for young people from slum communities to dialogue with stakeholders on issues that are relevant to them. The MJPOP promotes the integration of young people into a debate on local level policy with the aim to strengthen their social experiences and empowerment. This group enhances opportunities and spaces for young people to develop their leadership skills and full potential.

Melissa is interested in building awareness on issues related to violence against children, gender inequality and discrimination. She is passionate about empowerment and how this is connected to the personal identities and self-confidence of children and young people.

**Dialogue: Child-led initiatives & protection online**

Tomomasa



Konstantinos



Tomomasa is a former representative of Study Group on Social Media. This group was formed in 2013 by the initiative of university students studying education aimed at taking actions to address the online issues as they realized the seriousness of the issues. The Group has been visiting elementary and junior high schools to teach children and organizing “Smapho (Japanese abbreviation of Smartphone) Summit”, which is a platform for children to discuss online issues among themselves. Recently the Group is focusing on the risk to children being victims of sexual abuse and violence online or through internet and working in collaboration with relevant agencies (municipal governments, police, and UNICEF) business sectors.

Konstantinos is a 16 year old boy from Greece, currently living in England where he studies. Konstantinos is a member of the Eurochild Children’s Council and has worked with the Smile of the Child in Greece for a few years. As a part of these groups he has been advocating for children’s rights and taken part in several projects and campaigns. One of those is the current #EuropeKidsWant campaign carried out by Eurochild and UNICEF to collect the opinions of children from around Europe to feed into advocacy work for the European Parliament elections in 2019. Konstantinos is very passionate about children’s rights and welfare and driven by his aspirations to make a difference, he founded the online platform Teens4Greece to give young people in Greece the chance to have their voices heard. With this initiative Konstantinos hopes to find solutions and give young people in Greece the space to create a better future for their country that is going through a difficult period. Teens4Greece has already gotten a lot of attention from children in Greece as well as influencers of all ages from different walks of life and Konstantinos was featured as an empowering story in a documentary by award-winning filmmaker Panayioti (Pan) Yannitsos. Konstantinos is currently working on setting up a mentoring programme through Teens4Greece, and an ambassador programme for young people in Greece.

**Dialogue: Empowerment & protection of CHRDs victims of sexual exploitation**

Najat Maala M'jid



Himanshu



Ms. Najat M'jid Maalla was born on November 10, 1959 in Casablanca. After studying at the Faculty of Medicine of Rabat de Bordeaux and Toulouse, she worked as a doctor in Bordeaux and Casablanca. She is currently a pediatrician and medical director of the Polyclinic mother-child of the CNSS in Casablanca. She is the founder, president and active member of the association "Bayti", a non-governmental organization working in the field of family reintegration, school and socio-professional reintegration of children in precarious situations. She is also active in NGOs concerned with the health and protection of children. Ms. Najat M'jid has also conducted expert work at international conferences and organizations in charge of children's issues. She is laureate of several prizes and distinctions, including the Nathalie MASSE Prize (international center of the childhood and the family, Paris 1997), European Prize of social pediatrics (1997) the Price of the human rights of the French Republic (2000). She is also the author of numerous articles on the themes of child exploitation as well as the actions of the civil society in charge of children's issues. In 2008, Ms. Najat M'jid was selected by the Human Rights Council to serve as special procedures mandate-holder, as Special Rapporteur on the sale of children, child prostitution and pornography involving children. Ms. Najat M'jid is the mother of two children.

Himanshu (15) from India is an only son. He lives in Khajuraho, loves listening to music and he also draws well. His father is a security guard and his mother is a housewife. Himanshu studies in grade 10 and is very eager to learn. About a year ago, Himanshu joined the Child Club of ADHAR in Khajuraho to explore the reason why so many boys are going there and what they do.

After few meetings, he felt that the Child Club is a platform that he can use to share his concerns, worries and, most importantly, a place where they can learn collectively from each other and where they may solve issues that bothers them.

With the club, Himanshu made requests with the local government, some of them successfully. To increase safety for children in Khajuraho, Himanshu and the children of the Children's Club filed a petition with local government for a safe and dedicated space/playground for children, as such is lacking at the moment. The Children's Club feels that because of this lack, children roam around and become vulnerable to different sorts of risks. They also asked local government to install street lights, a proposal that has been realized.

This was Himanshu's motivation to continue with the club. He also says that the Child Club is a platform for collective development, "we all grow together", learn, share and prepare to move forward. Himanshu also sees protection issues online, amongst his peers. As a club, they have received training on online safety and they have developed a document with ten points to build awareness on online safety amongst children.

**Dialogue: Indigenous CHRDs**

Manuel Lopez



Theiland

Manuel Lopez Delgado belongs to the Raramuri Tribe, also known as the Tarahumara People (The Running Feet) in the state of Chihuahua, Mexico. He is the first indigenous person from his State to obtain a PhD. At eighteen he participated in the Consejo Nacional de Fomento Educativo (National Council for Education Development CONAFE), a program in which he taught elementary education in remote indigenous schools as Community Leader in order for him to win a 3-year scholarship grant that could pay for his higher education. He pursued B.A (Hons.) in Education and was certified as teacher. In 2006 due to his community service with the indigenous peoples of Chihuahua, he won a fellowship by the USAID to pursue a Masters Degree in Education at New Mexico State University. Later, in 2008 he won one of the four doctoral fellowships offered in Mexico by the Ford Foundation, and completed his Doctorate in Education at the University of Birmingham in England.

Theiland Kicknosway is a young Potawatami/Cree, Wolf Clan, and member of Walpole Island -Bkejwanong Territory-Southern Ontario, Canada. Living in the Ottawa area, he shares the gifts of his Ancestors as a singer, drummer, grass and hoop dancer, ceremonial helper, and workshop facilitator. Notably, in 2015, he performed an honour song during the swearing-in ceremony of Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and drummed for survivors of the Indian Residential School system at the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. This past spring, in collaboration with Families of Sisters in Spirit, Theiland completed his 4th annual 135 KM run to raise awareness about the children of missing and murdered Indigenous women. Earlier this year, he was honoured with an Indspire Achievement Award for Culture, Heritage & Spirituality, and is the youngest recipient in the 25 year history of the awards.

**Dialogue: CHRDs with disabilities**

Catalina Devandas Aguillar



Magdalena



James



Ms. Catalina Devandas Aguillar is a lawyer by training and human rights advocate, who has worked extensively on disability issues at the national, regional and international level. Before taking up her duties as first Special Rapporteur on the rights of persons with disabilities on 1 December 2014, she was working as a Program Officer for Strategic Partnerships with the Disability Rights Advocacy Fund, and was formerly with the United Nations Secretariat unit responsible for the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and the World Bank as a consultant for the Disability and Inclusive Development team for Latin America and the Caribbean region.

Magdalena is 12 years old and from Moldova. She is one of the first generation of children with disabilities in Moldova to be included in mainstream education.

Magdalena is an active member of a group that promotes children (with and without disabilities) right to live in the community and go to school with their peers. She also works with Lumos, an international NGO which supports children to live in families and communities instead of residential institutions.

James is 15 years old and from Scotland, UK. He has been acting as a human rights defender in Scotland to prevent bullying online. He is keen to talk about his experiences and the recommendations he has to ensure that children with disabilities have equal enjoyment of their rights in the digital environment.

**Dialogue: National protection measures for CHRDs**

Vincent Ploton



Keita



Vincent has been with ISHR since 2016, having worked for over ten years in the international human rights field. Vincent specializes on UN treaty bodies and has first-hand experience with the Human Rights Committee, Subcommittee on the Prevention of Torture and Committee against Torture. He also worked with the Secretariat of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child as an intern. He has undertaken field work in Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, Afghanistan, as well as Colombia among others. Vincent holds a Masters degree in political science (SOAS, University of London) and in business administration (Lyon). Vincent is the father of three young boys aged seven, five and two. Follow him on Twitter [@vploton](https://twitter.com/vploton).

Keita was just 9 years old when he was first moved to speak out. Outraged by the rape and murder of a 13 year old girl in his community, he took part in a peaceful protest demanding that the perpetrators - her foster parents - be brought to trial. Making an impression on his peers, Keita was invited to join the Liberian Children's Parliament, where his passion for advocacy was nurtured

Keita is a member of The KidsRights Youngsters; a unique youth-led advocacy and awareness-raising platform of the International Children's Peace Prize winners, that aims to realize children's rights as outlined in the Convention on the Rights of the Child. As leading young changemakers, they act locally, speak out to world leaders, influence policy, and engage children and young people worldwide. What these inspiring youngsters have achieved on their own is amazing. But that is just the beginning. With our support, their ambition to change the world can be limitless.

After winning the 2015 International Children's Peace Prize, The KidsRights Youngsters took Keita's battle with violence against children to the next level. Keita addressed the World Summit of Nobel Peace Laureates on the refugee crisis, and on the importance of justice and safety for children.

**Dialogue: Participation of children in public affairs/freedom of assembly and association**

<p>Olivier de Frouville</p> 	<p>Luis</p> 	<p>Eyoel</p> 
<p>Olivier de Frouville is Professor of International Law at the University Paris 2 Panthéon-Assas and Director of the Center for Research on Human Rights and Humanitarian Law / Paris Human Rights Center (C.R.D.H.)</p> <p>Since 2015, Olivier de Frouville has been a member of the United Nations Human Rights Committee, which oversees states' implementation of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. From 2008 to 2014, he was a member and then Chairperson-Rapporteur of the Working Group of Nations on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances.</p> <p>Before becoming an expert for the United Nations, Olivier de Frouville was for more than 10 years in charge of the International Federation of Human Rights (F.I.D.H.), an international NGO for the defense of human rights.</p>	<p>Luis was born in 2001, and lives in the Villa El Salvador district of Lima, Peru. He has been a child human rights defender with Amnesty International Peru since 2016 when he began working on the 'It's My Body' project – a regional programme which uses playful and participatory forms of human rights education to help empower young people to know and claim their sexual and reproductive rights.</p> <p>Luis is the youngest of four children and began working at seven years old in his family's restaurant, washing dishes. At 10 years old he became involved with MANTHOC (Movement of Adolescents and Working Children of Christian Workers), where he empowered himself through his rights.</p> <p>He participated in various public spaces such as the Participatory Budget and the Consultative Council of Children and Adolescents, and was a representative for his group aged 11, and from his region aged 12. Aged 13, he travelled to Italy to meet other child HRDs, which strengthened his commitment and motivation to promote and defend the rights of children. Alongside his activism with Amnesty Peru, Luis is currently an Advisor to the National Coordination of MANTHOC. He is currently working repairing clothes, and preparing to enter university.</p>	<p>Eyoel is in grade 8 and lives in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. When he grows up, he would like to become an architectural engineer and build buildings and bridges to contribute to the growth of Ethiopia. He is member of his school's innovation club and would like to contribute to the establishment of innovative systems and equipment to enable young people and community members to better report violence against children to the police and concerned bodies.</p> <p>Through the children's club, children and young people raise awareness of the many children from the southern region of Ethiopia who do not attend school regularly and are exploited by being forced into jobs such as traditional weaving and pottery work that involve long hours and carrying heavy loads. He is highly concerned about other children in his community who are engaged in forced labour as a result of child trafficking.</p> <p>He is motivated to fight against child abusers as he believes that the penalties for those convicted of committing violence against children are too low. In the future, Eyoel would like to become an activist and work to eliminate child trafficking and ensure the persecution of illegal brokers and traffickers who profit from exploiting children.</p>



**Dialogue: CHRDs in armed conflict & humanitarian situations**

Cecilia Jimenez-Damary



Sandra Camila



Haya



Cecilia Jimenez-Damary is a human rights lawyer specialised in forced displacement and migration. Ms. Jimenez-Damary has over two decades of experience in NGO human rights advocacy for the Asia-Pacific region and also has teaching experience as an adjunct professor of international human rights and humanitarian law. Ms. Jimenez-Damary previously acted as Senior Legal Adviser and Trainer with the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC) of the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) in Geneva; as the National Director of the IDP Project of the Commission on Human Rights of the Philippines; and more recently as the government representative to the Philippine Transitional Justice and Reconciliation Commission. Ms. Jimenez-Damary was appointed Special Rapporteur on the human rights of internally displaced persons by the Human Rights Council in September 2016 and assumed the mandate on 1 November 2016.

Mi nombre es Sandra Camila, tengo 16 años, vivo con mi mamá, una hermanita y un hermanito más chiquitos que yo, soy del departamento del Cauca en Colombia y me considero una niña muy afortunada porque siempre he contado con el apoyo de mi madre y mi familia materna, quienes han sido el mayor apoyo que he tenido para crecer como una niña empoderada; desde hace más de tres años he venido participando en proyectos que se realizan en mi comunidad. Hago parte del proyecto Usa tu poder para construir paz de la Fundación PLAN, con el que se busca la visibilización y participación activa de niñas, niños y adolescentes, especialmente de los que han sido víctimas del conflicto armado.

My name is Haya, I'm 16 years old from Syria, I live as a refugee in Zaatari camp, Jordan. I am a member in one of the youth committees that exists in the camp, the youth committee members are young girls where we work on campaigns to benefit the community inside the camp. I am also a member of the VoiceMore group, it's also a group of young girls who work on solving one of the issues that are affecting children in the camp, we are now working on the issue (hard forms of child labor) we did research on this problem, we also asked children who works on the reasons that led them to work and to get more information about the issue and to count their numbers. We are currently planning for activities to advocate for the rights of these children with different stakeholders so children can live in a healthy and safe environment, not being exposed to any sickness or mental pressure and have the proper education they deserve.

**Dialogue: Role of legislature, children's parliament**

Patricio Cuevas-Parra



Haneen



Patricio Cuevas-Parra holds a PhD in Social Policy at the University of Edinburgh, United Kingdom and a Master of Advanced Studies in Children's Rights at the University of Fribourg-University Institute Kurt Bösch, Switzerland. Patricio is currently the Senior Global Policy Adviser for Child Participation and Rights with World Vision International where he leads strategies and programmes to ensure that children and young people's participation is at the centre of the advocacy and policy debate. He has a keen interest in looking at cutting-edge child rights advocacy tools and models to enhance children and young people engagement in decision-making. His research interest falls into four main categories: children's rights and participation in public policy with a focus on children's parliament, children as advocates of their children's rights, child-led research methodologies, and children and young people's perspectives on violence and abuse. Patricio is currently conducting a research project on 'child activists for ending child marriage: exploring children's experiences in Bangladesh' with the University of Edinburgh.

Haneen is a member of the Palestinian Children's Council (elected on April, 2018 during the Second Convention of the Council under the supervision of Defence for Children international). She represented youth at multiple activities within the General State Attorney Conference, which discussed issues such as children in odds with law, early marriages. She is also a leading member of the SOS Child Protection Team through which she: has been actively involved in discussing how to monitor and report violations against children; participated in Board meetings of Save the Children International to share her views in laws linked to the protection of Palestinian Children rights; helped children without identity or official registration (initiative recognised and nominated for a price. It will also be presented at the next convention of the International Movement for Child Defence); conducted a campaign for their initiative in local schools and got signatures of other children on a letter addressed to the Ministry of Internal Affairs local office in order to push for the actions relevant to their initiative; visited local officials asking them to push the resolution of several issues. Haneen has also led the Palestinian Child Day activity which was held in cooperation with partner organizations including the Ministry of Social Affairs. The team led by Haneen produced a brochure on Children Rights and their protection which they also distributed and posted at local events.

**Dialogue: CHRDs in alternative care**

Salimane  
Issifou



Ryan



Agnes



I am the chief executive officer of SOS Children’s Villages Benin; as such, I ensure that good quality services are provided for children, youth, families and communities, within the frame of the Organisation’s Vision, Mission & Values. Through fundraising, I maximize the financial self-sufficiency of the National Association. I develop and implement the overall advocacy strategy of the Organisation.

October 2017: Participation to ECOWAS’s Forum of First Ladies in Niamey (Niger) where I successfully advocated, in front of ECOWAS’ First Ladies, ministers and officials, the inclusion of the fight against child infanticide in the ECOWAS child protection framework.

November 2016 until today: General Secretary of the Central Authority for International Adoption, government of Benin (<http://autoritecentralebj.org>). I represent the civil society and I ensure that children who lost parental care are firstly offered adequate alternative care options other than adoption; international adoption being the last resort.

**2018:** Encouraged the Scottish government to incorporate the UNCRC into domestic law. Attended a review of how care experienced young people’s rights are being upheld, speaking to issues affecting them. Attended committee and cross-party groups in the Scottish Parliament. Recently passed the first care experienced motion in the Scottish Youth Parliament around awareness of mental health directly affecting care experienced young people.

**2017:** Elected to the Scottish Youth Parliament in January to represent Who Cares? Scotland’s Membership. By doing this I was actively using Article 12. Participated in the Scottish Youth Parliament’s national campaign on Young People’s Rights. Contributed to the development of Who Cares? Scotland’s strategic plan, including a written contribution on equality.

2018: Elected member of the Executive Council of Children.  
2018: Advocacy project as part the African Child Day

2017: Advocacy in front of the Prefect (governor) of the Atacora department for the fight against sexual harassment in school, child abuses, and lack of responsibilities from parents.

2016: Advocacy in orphanages (LA PAIX and BON SAMARITAIN’) so that they can abide the norms and standards applicable to alternative child care Centres.  
Education

2016: End of primary school certificate.

**Dialogue: Role of Ombudspersons for children and NHRIs**

Genevieve Avenard



Foyzal



Geneviève Avenard was appointed Child Advocate, Assistant to the Defender of Rights, in September 2014, after a professional life of thirty years closer to the realities of people, especially children involved in the protection of children and children with disabilities. She is also now Chair of the Committee on the Rights of the Child of the Association of Ombudsmen and Mediators of the Francophonie (AOMF) and President of the European Network of Children's Defenders ENOC (European Network of Ombudspersons for Children).



She has always been keen to promote social action based on people's ability to act, "empowerment", and their own perception of their situation. As a Children's Advocate, since 2017 she has developed a specific child consultation process, prioritizing the most vulnerable children, as part of her mission as an independent mechanism for monitoring the implementation of the CRC and the Committee's observations on the rights of the child.

Foyzal lives in a rural and deprived region of Bangladesh. He is a very articulate and smart young person who is committed to social justice and change. Foyzal has a strong motivation to be an agent of change at the local and national level. Foyzal is a member of the Children's Forum in the rural area of Mymensingh in Bangladesh, which is an organised group of children and young people that aims to give a voice to young people and train them to be active citizens.

He is also a Young Ambassador to the World Vision's *It Takes a World* campaign and his primary role is to represent the voices of children and young people in policy debate and awareness raising initiatives. This includes delivering speeches, running child-led sessions at the community and national level and giving media interviews. Foyzal engages with his peers from the Child Forum in actions to stop child marriage in his community, which has resulted in more than 20 child marriages cancelled due to the mobilisation of the Child Forum.

Foyzal is very active in sensitising the community about child marriage as he feels he is bringing up the voices of the voiceless. In addition, he has participated in rallies and social media campaigns to denounce violence, abuse and death affecting Bangladeshi children. Foyzal is an activist for children's rights and he believes that well-being and justice can only be achieved when all children enjoy the same rights across all aspects of life such as education, health, protection and participation.

**Dialogue: Freedom of speech and violence in schools**

Alejandro Cussianovich	Camila		Gabriel	
<p>Primary Education Teacher, Catholic Priest with studies in England and Lyon, France. Teacher in the Master of PPSS and Promotion of Childhood and in the Faculty of Educational Psychology in the "National University of San Marcos". Since 1964 he has been working with the Christian Workers Youth. He started the Manthoc in 1976, and since 1996 he has accompanied the National Movement of Organized NNATs of Peru (Mnnatsop). He is Doctor Honoris Causa by the National University "Federico Villarreal" (2008). He holds the Degree of "Amauta" (2013) granted by the Ministry of Education, and the "Medal of the Teacher 2013" by the Municipality of Metropolitan Lima. He is Doctor Honoris Causa by the UNMSM (2016). He has been awarded the "Encinas 2016 Medal" by Derrama Magisterial (2016); Dhc by the University of Manizales, Colombia (2018). Author of various books and essays in his specialisation.</p>	<p>I am Camila Alvarez Cortes and I am 17 years old. I live in La Serena, Chile, and I am the co-ordinator of the Marist Youth Council for my country. I think it is important to say that if we young people have the opportunity to express ourselves freely, be heard and respected, we will be able to contribute to the development of all human rights on this occasion and on future occasions.</p>	<p>I am Gabriel Genivaldo do Santos and I am 16 years old. I live in Curitiba, Brasil. I am a student and an apprentice of the Board of Infrastructure of the Marist Group. I am also a student of the Eunice Benato Educational Centre. My participation in the 2018 Day of General Discussion is important. I am not only a Brazilian representative. I am a representative of the adolescents from the peripheries of Brazil whose rights are violated from birth. I represent an active voice of these communities and I am interested in finding new ways to look at the world, for our world.</p>		

**Dialogue: CHRDs and role of business and donors**

David Schofield



Murhabazi Namegabe



Rose Ann



David is Group Head of Corporate Responsibility at Aviva (who provide life, general & health insurance and asset management to 33 million customers worldwide). With a background in the third sector, e-commerce and financial services he leads Aviva’s global CR team working on strategy, governance and implementation to support Aviva’s responsible and sustainable business agenda.

From 2010-2015 he led Aviva’s global ‘Street to School’ programme, working in over 20 countries with NGO’s and cross sector partners, recognising that every child living or working on the street has the right to fulfil their potential. David was involved in the consultations for the Child Rights and Business Principles, the working group for the ‘State of the Worlds Street Children’ report and led Aviva’s pioneering partnership with the UN OHCHR.

He runs up and down hills for fun in the peak district where he lives with his family in the UK.

Murhabazi Namegabe is the director of Bureau pour le Volontariat au Service de l’Enfance et de la Santé (Office of Volunteers in the Service of Children and Health – BVES). The winner of the 2011 World Children’s Prize, Murhabazi has worked tirelessly to stop the recruitment and demand the release of child soldiers. Working in challenging and volatile context, Murhabazi and his staff have often faced direct threats and navigated risky situations. Founded in 1992 in Bukavu, South Kivu, BVES seeks to promote the rights of children (street children, imprisoned children, unaccompanied child refugees, internally displaced persons, and former soldiers). BVES operates centers that help boys and girls affected by conflict rejoin their communities and provides psychological and medical services as well as literacy training. BVES also trains members of a coalition of organizations to negotiate with armed groups to release children and promote children’s rights.

Rose Ann, 16, lives in Payatas, which is infamous for its massive open dumpsite, one of the largest in the Philippines. Rose Ann and her family, like many in the area, scavenged through the garbage, earning around \$2/day which is not enough to cover basic needs. In 2011, Rose Ann joined the football program of the Fairplay For All Foundation, and since then has continued to receive holistic support and mentoring towards her education, sports, and personal development. She is an active member of the Youth Group, a social support group facilitated by the Foundation to provide a safe space for the youth in Payatas. She is also learning to coach football, attending the coaching courses at Fairplay and assisting in training sessions, to help create safe spaces for children to enjoy their right to play, as there are no others in the community. In May 2018, Rose Ann was selected to represent the Philippine team at the Street Child World Cup in Russia, and helped the team reach the semi finals of the competition. In the future, Rose Ann hopes to study law and help bring justice to those who have little access to the justice system.

**Dialogue: Empowerment through transitional justice**

Rémy Ngoy Lumbu



Nima



Rémy is the Special Rapporteur on Human Rights Defenders, a role which was established by the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights with the adoption of Resolution 69 at the 35th Ordinary Session held in Banjul, The Gambia from 21st May to 4th June 2004.

The mandate calls for the Special Rapporteur to do many tasks including to:

- seek, receive, examine and act upon information on the situation of human rights defenders in Africa;
- submit reports at every ordinary session of the African Commission;
- raise awareness and promote the implementation of the UN Declaration on Human Rights Defenders in Africa.

Nima is 15 years old and is in high school. She is in charge of communication in a children's coalition that is a branch of the NJPN and president of a section of another children's association.

She has participated in ICTJ programs focusing on children's participation in transitional justice, hence the subject of dialogue.

**Dialogue: Environmental CHRDs**

Michael Windführ



Zarah



Michael Windführ, born in 1961, studied political science, German language and literature, geography and philosophy in Heidelberg. For almost 20 years he helped to establish and lead the international human rights organization FIAN (Food First Information and Action Network). There he was first responsible for case research in Latin America, then for ten years FIAN representative at the United Nations and subsequently Secretary General. During this time, he played a key role in standard-setting processes for the right to adequate food, such as the development of voluntary guidelines on the implementation of the right to food, which were unanimously adopted by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) in November 2004.

From 2006, Michael Windführ headed the human rights department at the Diakonisches Werk der EKD. The Diakonisches Werk also includes the international work of Brot für die Welt. During this time he has worked in the field of economic, social and cultural rights, in particular the right to water and sanitation, the right to social security and the connection between poverty and human rights. In the field of civil and political human rights, he was particularly committed to the protection of human rights defenders and the safeguarding of political leeway for civil society. In addition, he was a lecturer at the Institute for Political Science at the University of Heidelberg for many years.

Zarah M De Guzman, 23 years old, from the Philippines, an active VIDES volunteer since 2009. Studied in an IIMA school from kinder (1999) until she graduated high school (2011). She has a bachelor's degree in Entrepreneurship (2015). Her feasibility study with an organic product received a thesis award. Currently working in a bank as a customer service assistant since 2015, with multiple recognitions. Committed to promoting Child Rights and Environmental Sustainability since 2009 at 15 years old. She was active in attending workshops about environment and was able to join another national organization that promotes environmental sustainability. This qualifies her as a child human rights and environmental defender. Having been empowered as a child, she is now engaged to empowering other children and youth to be active defenders of human rights and the environment.



**Dialogue: Empowerment of girls CHRDs**

Saneri



Saneri is a child and youth rights activist from Indonesia who has been working for more than nine years to empower marginalized children and youth, particularly girls at the grassroots level. Working with Plan International Indonesia in the past five years, she has been playing a key role in mobilizing youth-led movements/organisations and advocating governments in ensuring meaningful participation across a wide range of community development programs. Together with Plan's youth activists, she co-founded Youth Coalition for Girls as a platform to advocate the fulfillment of children and girls' rights. Hailed from Jakarta's urban slums herself, the cause is a subject close to her heart and she is determined to show how investing in girls' empowerment can truly transform communities. In her early life, Saneri benefited from social interventions by a local grassroots organization, Sanggar Anak Akar, that supported her to grow and be the woman she aspires to be. Today, she walks hand-in-hand with hundreds of marginalized girls, boys and youth across Indonesia on expanding the Youth Coalition for Girls as a collective action to call for a just world that is equal for everyone.

Mellicentia



Mellicentia Boateng is 17 years old and Sierra Leonean. She has been in the field of advocacy for almost four years now. In 2014 she joined the Action for Youth and Children's Network and learned about advocacy. She gave a speech in 2015 about the effects of stigmatization on survivors after the Ebola outbreak. In September 2015 she was the chairperson on the first National Children's Summit in Sierra Leone on "A Child centred development agenda 2015 -2030 [Nothing about us without us]"

The last two years she has participated in a dialogue meeting with Members of Parliament and the media on the inclusion of children in budget planning and she gave a statement on the allocation of government funds towards improving the health and education sector for children. Recently the action for youth and children's network has been embarking on a campaign with theme "No belle before and after BECE" She have been engaging communities and schools on mentorship talks and telling about the effect of teenage pregnancy and also the distribution of school materials. She also became part of the Girls Advocacy Alliance (Plan International, Defence for Children, Terre des Hommes) network for girls in schools in 2017 to advocate for the protection of girls against sexual and gender base violence. Mellicentia: "So far as an advocate I have been faced with so many challenges like threats and even felt left out, being bullied, and intimidated but with the skills I have acquired I have being able to overcome these challenges and do my job as a human rights Defender."