



Government of Iceland
Ministry of Education and Children



Changing the Narrative: Promoting positive change with children around 40 years of civil society advocacy in Geneva

EXPERT CONFERENCE (HYBRID FORMAT), 26 MAY 2023

In person: Ecumenical Center (1 route des Morillons, 1218 Le Grand-Saconnex)

Online: Zoom link to come

Interpretation: English - French - Spanish

Registration: <https://childrightsconnect.org/registration-form-40th-anniversary-conference/>

This conference is convened in partnership with, and with the support of, Terre des Hommes, the Global Initiative on Justice with Children, the Ministry of Education and Children of Iceland, the Canton of Geneva, the City of Geneva, Geneva University, World Vision International, the Swedish International Development and Cooperation Agency, International Child Rights Institute and Baker McKenzie.

Time	Items and speakers
8h30 – 9h	Registration / online video and audio check
9h – 9h30	Opening <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ María Herczog, President of Child Rights Connect ▪ H.E Ambassador Jürg Lauber, Permanent Representative of Switzerland to the United Nations and other Organizations in Geneva
9h30 – 10h	Children as Changemakers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Moderator: Dana Buzducea, World Vision International ▪ Representatives from the Child Rights Connect Children’s Advisory Team, which has been awarded the Changemakers Prize by World Vision International
10h – 11h	Morning Plenary Panel: The anti-child rights rhetoric and challenges for the child rights movement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Moderator: Catarina, member of the children advisory team (CAT), child advisor from Brazil and Doris, member of the CAT, child advisor from Zambia ▪ Philip D. Jaffé, Professor at the CIDE and member of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child: <i>Challenges for child environmental activists</i> ▪ Najat Maalla M’jid, Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children: <i>Threats and violent reprisals faced by child human rights defenders</i> ▪ Barbara Hintermann, Director General, Terre des Hommes Lausanne Foundation: <i>Civil society perspective</i>
11h – 11:30	Coffee break
11h30 – 12h30	PARALLEL WORKING GROUP DISCUSSIONS Working Group 1: Anti child-rights narratives and attacks based on traditional and family values <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Moderator: Mieke Schuurman, Eurochild ▪ Luis Pedernera, member of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Evgenia Toneva, Know-how centre for alternative care for children at New Bulgarian University ▪ Denitsa, Alexandra, Donka, Alisya and Maria, child human rights defenders from Bulgaria ▪ Monica Ferro, UNFPA Geneva Office Director <p>Open discussion</p> <p>Working Group 2: Political rights of children, in particular freedoms of expression, association and assembly</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Moderator: Hazel Bitaña, Child Rights Coalition Asia (CRC Asia) ▪ Ann Skelton, Chair of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child ▪ Plataforma Colombiana de organizaciones sociales y populares por el protagonismo de niños, niñas y jóvenes ▪ Miguel Angel, member of the CAT, child advisor from Mexico and Anna, member of the CAT, child advisor from Venezuela ▪ Sigrid Lipott, CIVICUS <p>Open discussion</p>
12h30 – 14h	Lunch
14h – 14h45	<p>Keynote Address by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Mr Volker Türk: <i>Child rights mainstreaming as a means of responding to the pushback against child rights and child human rights defenders</i></p> <p>Followed by an interactive dialogue</p>
14h45 – 16h	<p>Afternoon Plenary Panel hosted by Iceland: Leveraging UN mechanisms and agencies to respond to challenges for the child rights movement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Opening remarks by hosts: Ásmundur Einar Daðason, Minister of Education and Throstur, member of the CAT, child advisor from Iceland ▪ Moderator: Gloria, member of the CAT, child advisor from Cameroon ▪ Catherine Russell, UNICEF Executive Director: <i>UNICEF responses to the regression of national laws and standards on child rights</i> ▪ Ann Skelton, Chair of the CRC Committee: <i>What can and will the CRC Committee do to support responses to the pushback against the child rights movement?</i> ▪ Mary Lawlor, UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders: <i>Positive societal change by child human rights defenders</i> ▪ Michel Forst, Special Rapporteur on environmental defenders
16h – 16h30	Coffee break
16h30-17h30	<p>PARALLEL WORKING GROUP DISCUSSIONS</p> <p>Working Group 3: Access to justice for child rights defenders: paving the way to protect and empower children</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Moderator: Marta Gil Gonzalez, Terre des Hommes Lausanne Foundation & the Global Initiative on Justice With Children ▪ Benoit Van Keirsbilck, member of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child ▪ Arjun, member of the CAT, child advisor from Nepal and Hala, member of the CAT, child advisor from Palestine ▪ Youth representative of Our Children’s Trust ▪ Gülşen Güler, Young Justice Leaders (Pathfinders SGD 16) <p>Open discussion</p> <p>Working Group 4: Use of, and recourse to, established protective mechanisms for human rights defenders by <i>child</i> human rights defenders</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Moderator: Leo Ratledge, CRIN

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Mikiko Otani, member of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child▪ Smiljana Frick, Child Rights Information Center Moldova▪ Anghelina, member of the CAT, child advisor from Moldova▪ Gheorghe Galbura, young human rights defender from Moldova▪ Viviana Krsticevic, CEJIL Open discussion
17h30-18h	Closing