

STOP VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN

NEWSLETTER



*Foreword by Marta Santos Pais
Special Representative of the Secretary-General
on Violence against Children*

Dear friends and colleagues,

Welcome to the first edition of Stop Violence Against Children Newsletter!

This Bulletin is a newsletter issued by my Office to share information and update our partners on key events, activities and progress in our efforts to eliminate all forms of violence against children.

I embarked on the second year of my mandate and start 2011 with a team of committed and dynamic professionals.

It is with great pleasure that I introduce to you my colleagues, many of whom are already known to you for their work as child advocates:

- *Joost Kooijmans, Special Assistant*
- *Min-Whee Kang, Senior Adviser*
- *Cecilia Anicama, Programme Specialist*
- *Miguel Caldeira, Communication Specialist*
- *Sanna Kiki, Child Protection Officer*
- *Janeth Lara-Garcia, Senior Executive Assistant*
- *Falaq Dullo, Senior Administrative Assistant*

We hope you will find the Stop VAC Bulletin useful and look forward to your advice. We are also working on a new website on violence against children.

We look forward to collaborating closely with you and thank you for your continuing support.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Marta Santos Pais".

*Marta Santos Pais
Special Representative of the Secretary-General
on Violence Against Children*

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Marrakesh Declaration - A new milestone for children's rights

Fourth High-Level Arab Conference
on Children's Rights

21-23 December 2010, Marrakesh

A Declaration calling for further action to protect children and promote their rights was adopted unanimously by the League of Arab States, in Marrakesh, Morocco, during the Fourth High-Level Arab Conference on Children's Rights in which the SRSG on Violence against Children participated together with UNICEF, ministers from member countries of the League of Arab States and representatives from non-governmental organizations.

The Declaration calls on national strategies to combat violence against children, the enactment of legislation to prohibit abuse and neglect including corporal punishment, strategies to ensure the prevention and reintegration of child victims, as well as support to families to prevent and address domestic violence. It also calls on birth registration and the enhancement of the capacity of professionals.

The SRSG recalled that "Violence takes place in all contexts, including where children are expected to enjoy a secure environment and special protection - in care institutions, in the school and also within the home. The protection of children from all forms of violence needs to evolve from being a concern of a few into a priority for all."

Shahida Azfar, UNICEF acting Regional Director for the Middle East and North Africa, welcomed the achievements made in the region towards the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs): "across the countries in the region, important achievements have been made with respect to several MDG's including significant reduction in both infant and child mortality and high rates of enrolment and gender parity in primary education".

Despite these positive steps towards the MDG's, the available data related to violence against women and children in Africa reveals that 89 per cent of children in the region are subject to physical or psychological punishment, and 3.5 million women aged between 20 and 24 were married before they turned 18; while female genital mutilation affects 96 per cent of women in Egypt, 93 per cent in Djibuti and 89 per cent in Sudan.

The Marrakesh Declaration

Calls for further action to safeguard children and their rights in the Arab world, including measures to protect them from violence and to end child labour and early marriage.

Calls on an Implementation Plan with the identification of concrete indicators to assess progress, and the development of research and data to address child protection concerns.

The League of Arab States will support the set up of a database and assist countries in review of national legislation.



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Beijing Declaration on Cooperation for Child Rights - a high level Asian Commitment

High-Level Meeting on Cooperation for Child Rights in the Asia Pacific Region

4-6 November 2010, Beijing

The High Level Meeting held in Beijing approved a Declaration on Cooperation for Child Rights in the region, which reflects the high level commitment expressed by the countries to advance child rights and to work more closely together in this area.

The meeting focused on three major thematic issues: a systems approach to child protection and child welfare; children and disaster risk reduction; and addressing the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) with equity.

The event was jointly organized by the National Working Committee for Children and Women under the State Council, the Ministry of Commerce and the All China Women's Federation, with the support of UNICEF. It provided a platform for the 29 invited governments to share national experiences, good practices, and lessons learned from their work on child rights, and to identify effective mechanisms to strengthen intra- and inter-regional cooperation on child rights.

Representatives from the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN), the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC), Asian Development Bank (ADB) and United Nations Economic and Social Commission in the Asia Pacific (UN ESCAP) participated in the meeting.

The SRSG on Violence against Children was a key note speaker during the plenary session on child protection and child welfare. Guided by a sense of urgency and by the opportunity of scaling up positive national initiatives promoted in this and other regions, the SRSG expressed her strong commitment to promote the development in each country of a national strategy to prevent and respond to all forms of violence; the introduction of legislation to prohibit all violence against children; and the consolidation of data and research to inform progress in this area.

Ms Santos Pais appealed to the high-level delegations to strengthen their efforts and promote cross-fertilization of experiences within the region, to achieve tangible progress in these areas towards ending violence against children. These are critical areas for the prevention of violence and for the development of cohesive national child protection systems.

More:

- http://www.unicef.org/capro/media_14170.html
- http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/files/Beijing_Declaration.pdf



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South Asia Initiative to end Violence Against Children Nepal hosts the first Governing Board Meeting

First Governing Board Meeting and Technical Meeting on the Legal Reform of the South Asia Initiative to End Violence Against Children (SAIEVAC)

9-12 November 2010, Kathmandu

The first meeting of the governing body of the South Asia Initiative to End Violence against Children (SAIEVAC) was held in Kathmandu with the participation of the SRSG on Violence against Children.

Ms. Santos Pais congratulated the members of the Board for the historic step and for South Asia's commitment to prevent and address all forms of violence against children.

The Governing body adopted several recommendations including: SAIEVAC five year strategic plan and the ensuing annual work plan to guide the development of national level activities.

The Governing Body meeting was followed by a Technical Workshop on Law Reform. The SRSG highlighted the critical significance of the meeting aiming at strengthening national legislation in South Asia for the prevention and elimination of all forms of violence against children.

During her visit, the SRSG met with the Prime Minister of Nepal, the Nepali Minister on Women, Children and Social Welfare, the Secretary General of SAARC and Representatives from UN agencies and international organizations.

The SRSG also met with the Child Rights Parliamentary Committee, a cross-party committee working on the

What is the SAIEVAC?

SAIEVAC is a regional initiative to end violence against children through comprehensive child protection systems. It comprises representatives from the governments of Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka and aims to ensure a steady implementation of the recommendations of the UN Study on Violence against Children.

Constitution of Nepal with a view to promoting the inclusion of child rights and their safeguard from all forms of violence in the new Constitution of Nepal.

During her mission, the SRSG went on a field visit and met a paralegal committee and a child club, community based institutions for the protection of children's rights. She also met with the group of local and international NGOs and had a special session of interaction with child representatives of SAIEVAC, whose participation and role in the regional process is well established and institutionalized.



More:

<http://www.saievac.info/>

http://www.saievac.info/editor_uploads/File/Children%20Participation%20Report%20SAIEVAC%20November%202010.pdf



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Follow-up to the Brazil World Congress III Against Sexual Exploitation of Children and Adolescents

25-26 Oct 2010, Bangkok

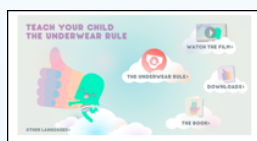
Almost two years after the Brazil World Congress III against Sexual Exploitation of Children and Adolescents was held in Rio de Janeiro, the organizing committee composed of UNICEF, the Government of Brazil, and ECPAT International organized a progress review meeting, in Bangkok. The review highlighted initiatives to promote prevention and to address violations that jeopardize the right of the child to protection from sexual exploitation, as well as to accelerate progress.

Guest speakers included the SRSG, Carmen Silveira Oliveira, Secretary of State for the Promotion of the Rights of the Child, Government of Brazil; Jaap Doek, Child Rights Expert and former Chair of the Committee on the Rights of the Child; Susan Bissell, UNICEF Associate Director and Chief of Child Protection; Maureen Crombie, Chairperson; Carmen Madrinan, Executive Director of ECPAT International; and the Global Youth Partnership Project, and the Mekong Children Forum representatives.



More:

http://www.ecpat.net/ci/WCIII_Foll_index.asp



Council of Europe and SRSG Campaign to Stop Sexual Violence Against Children



29-30 November 2010, Rome

The SRSG Marta Santos Pais was a keynote speaker at the launch of the Council of Europe (CoE) Campaign to Stop Sexual Violence against Children. The high level meeting was organized by the Italian Government and the Council of Europe.

Available data suggest that one in five children in Europe are victims of some form of sexual violence. Hence the title "ONE in FIVE" of the Council of Europe's Campaign to Stop Sexual Violence Against Children. It is estimated that in 70% to 85% of cases, the abuser is somebody the child knows and trusts. Child sexual violence can take many forms: sexual abuse within the family circle, child pornography and prostitution, corruption, solicitation via Internet and sexual assault by peers.

The ONE in FIVE campaign has two main goals: to achieve further signature, ratification and implementation of the Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse; and to empower children, as well as their families and societies at large with the necessary knowledge and tools to prevent and report sexual violence against children, thereby raising awareness of its extent and promoting redress recovery and long lasting reintegration.

Marta Santos Pais held meetings with participating governments, international organizations, European institutions and civil society representatives on cooperation with SRSG on Violence Against Children. In her speech, the SRSG addressed the key dimensions of protection of children from sexual violence and called for the ratification of the CoE Convention of Lanzarote, as well as the Optional Protocol to the CRC on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography. In her closing speech, Maud de Boer-Buquicchio, Deputy Secretary-General of the Council of Europe expressed her best wishes for the campaign and the efforts of the Council of Europe to contribute to the important mandate of the SRSG on Violence against Children.

More:

http://www.coe.int/t/dc/files/events/2010_campagne_enfants/default_en.asp



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Cooperation with the Latin American and Caribbean Chapter of the Global Movement for Children (MMI-CLAC in Spanish acronym)

22 – 24 November, 2010, Montevideo

The MMI-CLAC is the regional platform of the Global Movement for Children (GMC) created in the framework of the campaign on “Say Yes for Children”, promoted on the occasion of the UN Special Session on Children held in 2002, in New York.

As a strategic alliance of the largest organizations and networks in Latin America and the Caribbean on the safeguard of child rights, the Office of the SRSR is committed to strengthen institutional cooperation with MMI-CLAC, and also to enhance the support of other UN agencies such as UNICEF, WHO, ILO, OHCHR.

Following on planning meetings held in December 2009 and June 2010, the SRSR participated in the annual meeting of MMI-CLAC to pursue a joint strategic agenda for effective implementation of the recommendations of the UN Study on Violence against Children. The agenda includes a mapping exercise of the initiatives undertaken by States over the past three years as a follow up to the UN Study and the organization of three high-level sub regional meetings in the course of 2011 and 2012.



These meetings will focus on the three priority areas of the SRSR’s mandate, namely the development of a national agenda on violence against children, the enactment and enforcement of legislation to ban all forms of violence, and the consolidation of data and research on violence against children. A special emphasis will also be given to child participation and violence in the context of juvenile justice.

Fundamental Rights Conference 2010 - Ensuring Justice and Protection for all Children

Brussels, 7 - 8 December

The SRSR attended the Fundamental Rights Conference 2010 'Ensuring Justice and Protection for all Children' which was organized by the FRA in cooperation with the Belgian Presidency of the European Union (EU), in Brussels.

The conference discussed the challenges and strategies to protect particularly vulnerable children and deliver child-friendly justice in the European Union.

It brought together 300 experts from national governments, EU bodies, intergovernmental organisations, local authorities, civil society and specialised bodies on human rights.

The focus was on developing practical proposals to address challenges faced by vulnerable children in the EU, sharing ‘good practice’ on child-friendly approaches within administrative and judicial practice and supporting the implementation of policies and strategies related to the rights of the child in the EU.

The session on “Child victims of domestic violence” was chaired by SRSR Marta Santos Pais.



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West African Youth Forum “Say No to Violence Against Children”

30 August – 3 September 2010, Accra

Commemorating the first anniversary of her mandate, SRSG Santos Pais met in Ghana with more than 80 children from the West African region, to ensure children’s voices are heard in the follow up process to the UN Study on Violence against Children; to assess the impact of violence on their lives; and to consider ways of promoting children’s participation to prevent and respond to all forms of violence.

The West African Regional Youth Forum brought together young participants from Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Cote d’Ivoire, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo, who have been at the forefront of the fight against violence in their schools, communities, and homes.

They exchanged views and shared experiences on how to fight violence against children and how to work together to combat the different forms of violence against youth, particularly girls.

Reminding everybody that children witness violence and endure physical, emotional and sexual abuse every day, the SRSG expressed concern at children’s fear of reporting, of not being believed or of suffering reprisals or stigmatisation when they find the courage to speak up.

Children expressed concern for not knowing where to go or whom to call to benefit from counselling and support and to see the incidents of violence effectively addressed and impunity combated.

The SRSG emphasized that with the majority of its population below 18, Africa can help gain a better understanding of the solutions that can work best, so that schools, communities and homes become safer for children.

Organized by Plan in collaboration with Save the Children Sweden and with support from UNICEF, ActionAid, World Vision, ECPAT and War Child Holland, the West African Youth Forum against violence promotes one of the main recommendations of the 2006 UN Secretary-General’s Study on Violence against Children, namely the participation of children to prevent and respond to all forms of violence.

The Forum is part of the Violence Against Children project launched in 2008 by Plan and Save the Children Sweden in a coordinated effort to support action by young people to raise awareness about the issues of violence in their lives.



More:

<http://www.plan-childrenmedia.org/spip.php?article1125&vac=1&lang=en>



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NGO Advisory Council for the UN Secretary-General Study on Violence Against Children

12 October 2010, UNICEF, New York

SRSB Marta Santos Pais meets periodically with the NGO Advisory Council established to ensure follow up to the UN Study on Violence Against Children.

The NGO Advisory Council is a core partner of the SRSB mandate, including representatives from key international child rights organizations, and representation from North America, Latin America, The Caribbean, South Asia, , East Asia & Pacific, West and Central Africa and East and Southern Africa, Middle East and North Africa.

In the October meeting, key issues were discussed to enhance the implementation of the recommendations of the UN Study and pursue the strategic priorities of the SRSB mandate.

Progress towards the universal ratification of the Optional Protocols to the CRC and cooperation on expert meetings to consolidate children's protection from violence, including on law reform, were some of the key issues addressed.

The members of the advisory council include representatives from World Vision International, Human Rights Watch, International Save the Children Alliance, Defense for Children International, Global Initiative to End all Corporal Punishment of Children, End Child Prostitution, Child Pornography and the Trafficking of Children for Sexual Purposes, OMCT/World Organization Against Torture, Plan International, and Child Rights Information.

The mandate of the NGO Advisory Council is to encourage and maintain NGO involvement at national, regional and international levels in follow-up advocacy with the SRSB on violence against children, governments, UN agencies, the Independent Expert and the Inter-Agency Working Group and others for full implementation of the recommendations of the UN Study on violence against children.

More:

<http://www.crin.org/violence/adccouncil/index.asp>



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Other Initiatives

Children's Rights Coalitions in Europe 6th Regional Meeting of NGOs

20-22 Oct 2010, Florence

The Italian NGO Group for the CRC hosted in Florence the regional meeting of child rights coalitions in Europe.

Started in Berlin in 1998, and followed-up in Stockholm (1999), Vilnius (2002), Brussels (2005) and Bucharest (2008), this three-day event was an excellent opportunity to share successes and challenges in children's rights advocacy, monitoring and networking, including on children's protection from all forms of violence.

The regional meeting shared information, ideas and experiences on the monitoring of CRC, and was designed to improve the knowledge and effectiveness of the coalition of NGOs working on children's rights.

SRSO Marta Santos Pais addressed the plenary, highlighting the critical role of civil society organizations in the protection of children from violence and in the implementation of the recommendations of the UN Study on Violence against Children.



Meeting with the ASEAN Inter-Governmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR)

18 November 2010, hosted by UNIFEM, New York

Inaugurated in October 2009, The ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR) is a human rights institution with the overall responsibility of promoting and protecting human rights in ASEAN Member States. In April 2010, the ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children (ACWC) was established.

The AICHR organized a mission to the USA in November 2010, with an important meeting held at UNIFEM in which the SRSO on Violence against Children took part.

The meeting focused on two priority themes selected by AICHR for their work plan, namely Women, Peace and Security, and the Gender Dimensions of Migration and Trafficking.

SRSO Marta Santos Pais actively discussed with the group to discuss opportunities for collaboration particularly in the light of their commitment to promote sharing of experiences and good practices, review national legislation, policies and practices, and consolidate data and studies to foster the rights of children and women.

Participants expressed strong commitment to the protection of the rights of the child and to promoting collaboration with the SRSO mandate, including in the areas of law reform and child participation, and in the promotion of the ratification of the Optional Protocols to the CRC. One of the key tasks for the Commission in the coming months will be the drafting of the ASEAN Human Rights Declaration.

Child Helpline International (CHI) 5th International Consultation

24-28 October 2010, Madrid

SRSO Marta Santos Pais addressed the Fifth International Consultation of CHI in Madrid, commending their critical work and in the protection of children from all forms of violence.

Stressing the need for "safe, confidential and accessible channels for children to seek help and advice," SRSO Santos Pais reiterated her firm belief in the role of child helplines as core components of comprehensive, robust and integrated national child protection systems; as well as: "as valuable resources for children, as generators of data and information, and also as referral systems for children in need of advice and assistance."

Noting the invaluable contribution of CHI and its members worldwide to the fight against violence against children, Marta Santos Pais expressed her wish to continue to cooperate and learn from their work.



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SRSB in direct speech



German Action Plan meeting

9 December 2010, Berlin

The SRSB was a key speaker at the Conference on the German National Action Plan, in Berlin. The meeting was well attended by Government Officials, Parliamentarians, academia and civil society, including young people.

“The National Action Plan - “For a Germany fit for children” is one of the first national action plans formulated in response to the 2002 UN Special Session on Children and its Plan of Action to create “A world fit for children”. In that sense, Germany has shown itself to be a trailblazer in protecting children’s rights - many other countries can learn from the German experience and I trust that, also within Germany, the National Plan will provide a sound foundation to inform future actions on the rights of the child.

The National Action Plan promoted a clear focus around strategic areas which remain relevant to this day; and, at the same time, it emphasized the importance of a steady process of monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the Plan, expressing openness to introduce policy adjustments and consider emerging areas where further action may be needed. Moreover the Plan contributed to enhance national awareness of children’s rights and to inform the public debate on child well-being.

These significant dimensions illustrate well the importance of the National Plan over the past five years. But they also stand as a sound reference for the further consolidation of children’s rights in the years to come, providing a sound platform for the development of a new and forward-looking strategy that can help address persisting challenges and emerging concerns, ensure a steady national monitoring of progress and shape a vision for a Germany fit for Children in the second decade of this new century.

One crucial area addressed by the five year Plan is non-violent upbringing. This dimension is central to my mandate on the protection of children from all forms of violence. Protecting children’s rights is a never ending task and the Berlin Conference is a unique occasion to celebrate the conclusion of Germany’s initial five year plan and, with renewed enthusiasm and sense of urgency, to shape a strategic agenda for the next few years. “



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Expert consultation

Child sensitive counseling, reporting and complaint mechanisms on violence against

30 September - 1 October 2010, OHCHR, Palais Wilson, Geneva

More than 20 experts from different regions gathered in Geneva for an expert consultation hosted by the SRSG on effective and child-sensitive counselling, complaint and reporting mechanisms to which children can safely report incidents of violence, including sexual violence and exploitation.

The meeting was co-organized with the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights and held in preparation of the report jointly developed by the SRSG on Violence against Children with the Special Rapporteur on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography.

The three key objectives of the forum were: gathering data on mechanisms and institutions providing information, advice and assistance to children; promoting a better understanding of how widely available and accessible, child friendly and protective these mechanisms are; and clarifying existing gaps and effective ways supporting States in their efforts to develop child sensitive counseling, complaint and reporting mechanisms.



The outcomes of the expert consultation were later complemented by other critical contributions which have been sought from a wide range of actors, including Governments, United Nations agencies, human rights bodies and mechanisms, national human rights institutions and civil society organizations.

SRSG Marta Santos Pais highlighted the urgency of developing child sensitive counselling, reporting and complaint mechanisms, as an important remedy for the breaches of children's rights and an indispensable dimension of children's protection from violence. As stressed by the SRSG, the critical relevance of these mechanisms was acknowledged by the Brazil World Congress against the Sexual Exploitation of Children and Adolescents, which set a goal for each country to set up such mechanisms by 2013.

The SRSG emphasized the urgency of ensuring availability, accessibility, legitimacy and effectiveness of these mechanisms, which should be seen as core components of a robust national child protection system.

Significant national experiences and good practices were presented during the expert consultation, including the Paralegal Committees in Nepal, the Thuthuzela Care Centers in South Africa, as well as the Office of Domestic Violence of the Supreme Court of Justice in Argentina.

Other mechanisms reviewed included telephone help-lines as well as the CLICKCEOP button installed in internet search engines and chat websites in the UK to allow children to seek advice and report incidents of violence including on-line abuses.

The particular challenges faced by vulnerable groups of children, including those living in extreme poverty, children with disabilities and children on the move, such as migrant and refugee children were also discussed.

More:

<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/ViolenceAgainstChildren/Pages/ConceptNote.aspx>



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Panel Discussion on Better Data and Research to Address Violence Against Children

15 October 2010, United Nations, New York

The Office of the SRSG on Violence against Children, in cooperation with UNICEF, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Permanent Mission of Sweden to the United Nations, organized a panel discussion on the importance of better data and research to prevent and address violence against children.

The SRSG calls for the consolidation of a national system of data collection, analysis and dissemination, and a research agenda to inform advocacy, laws policies and budgets for protecting children from violence.

Other speakers on the panel were Ambassador Signe Burgstaller, Deputy Permanent Representative of Sweden to the UN; Maria Teresa Mesquita Pessoa, Minister Plenipotentiary in the Permanent Mission of Brazil to the UN; Ann Sophie Lois, Director of Plan Liaison and Advocacy Office in Geneva, and Plan International Representative to the UN, and Susan Bissell, Chief of Child Protection Section and Associate Director of Programme Division in UNICEF.

The main findings from a forthcoming UNICEF report, *Child Disciplinary Practices at Home: Evidence from a Range of Low and Middle-Income countries* were presented by Tessa Wardlaw, Chief of Statistics and Monitoring Section and Associate Director of Division of Policy and Practice in UNICEF.

The report describes the use of child disciplinary practices by parents and caregivers in 35 low- and middle-income countries, which comprise around 10 percent of the child population in the developing world.

Based on data collected by household surveys in 2005 and 2006, the findings show that violent disciplinary practices are widespread and largely accepted.

For example, data analysis revealed that in average, three in four children between 2-14 years old experience some form of violent discipline at home.

The findings also revealed that psychological violence is more common than physical violence, as almost three in four children experience psychological aggression, and about half experience physical punishment. These forms of violence are linked and occur together, with almost half of all children likely to experience both physical punishment and psychological aggression.

Regardless of their personal characteristics and family background, children are at risk of violent discipline.

In half of the countries surveyed, there is no difference in the prevalence of violent discipline between boys and girls. In the remaining countries boys are more likely to be subject to violent disciplinary practices.

In most countries, the prevalence of violent discipline peaks among young children between 5 – 9 years of age.

Violence in all its forms affects the life of millions of children around the world. But, as we have learned from the many successful initiatives promoted across regions, it is not inevitable; violence can be prevented and effectively addressed.



More:

To listen to the SRSG's radio interview online and for more information, please visit:

- <http://www.unmultimedia.org/tv/webcast/2010/10/panel-discussion-on-better-data-and-research-to-address-violence-against-children.html>
- <http://www.unmultimedia.org/radio/english/detail/104043.html>



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Panel Discussions

Interactive Panel Discussion on Implementing Child Rights in Early Childhood

13 October 2010, UNICEF, New York

The investment in early childhood was at centre stage in an interactive panel hosted by UNICEF with the support of the Permanent Missions to the United Nations of Barbados, Belgium, Uruguay, and the Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations, and in collaboration with Plan International, Save the Children, World Vision and America Latina en Accion Solidaria (ALAS).

The panel discussion addressed key child rights dimensions in early childhood, the focus theme for the 2010 General Assembly on the Rights of the Child.

The SRSG debate highlighted the high returns of investing in early childhood and emphasized that protection from violence is also critical for the very youngest age group, as illustrated in the alarming numbers of infant trauma cases and the high cost of treatment associated with incidents of violence, including the shaken baby syndrome.

Other child experts, including Yanghee Lee, Chairperson of the Committee on the Rights of the Child, Lisa Jordan, CEO of Bernard Van Leer Foundation, Alicia Marin, Deputy Director of ALAS Foundation and Nicholas Alipui, Director of Programme Division in UNICEF.



Panel discussion on Ending Inhuman Sentencing of Children

14 October 2010, United Nations, New York

SRSG Marta Santos Pais addressed the panel of experts to end inhuman sentencing of children, which covers very serious forms of violence against children, including sentences of death, life imprisonment, and corporal punishment, such as whipping and flogging.

The event was organized by the Permanent Mission of Norway in collaboration with the Child Rights Information Network (CRIN), and chaired by Norway's UN Ambassador, Morten Wetland. It marked the launch of a campaign to bring to an end children's inhuman sentencing. Also participating in the panel was Paulo Sergio Pinheiro, Rapporteur on Children's Rights for the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights and Independent Expert who led the UN Study on Violence Against Children.



Other speakers were Jo Becker from Human Rights Watch, Peter Newell from the Global Initiative to End All Corporal Punishment of Children, and Veronica Yates from CRIN.

Inhuman sentencing of children, including death, life imprisonment, stoning, amputation and corporal punishment has been consistently denounced by UN Treaty Bodies and Special Procedures and by regional human rights mechanisms as a violation of human rights. It was also condemned by the UN Study on Violence against Children. The SRSG urged all countries to strengthen their national legal framework to protect child rights and end inhuman sentencing and all forms of violence against children.

More:

http://www.unicef.org/doublepublish/index_56530.html
<http://www.diplomatic.bc/newyorkun/default.asp?id=172&mnu=172>
<http://www.bernardvanleer.org/English/Home/News/News-2010/Lisa-Jordan-addresses-UNICEF-panel-on-child-rights.html>

More:

http://www.norway-un.org/NorwayandUN/Selected_Topics/humanrights/Campaign-to-end-inhuman-sentencing-of-children/
<http://www.crin.org/violence/campaigns/sentencing>



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Religions for Peace and UNICEF - Roundtable

2 November 2010, UNICEF, New York

Religious leaders from the Executive Committee of Religions for Peace, an international, multi-religious coalition championing the cause of children, convened at UNICEF headquarters with the SRSB on Violence against Children to reaffirm their strong commitment to continue to mobilize religious communities around the world for the elimination of all forms of violence against children.

Dr. William F. Vendley, Secretary-General of Religions for Peace, recalled that the well-being of the child is at the heart of what it means to be a religious leader. SRSB Marta Santos Pais stressed the critical role played by religious leaders and communities in promoting respect for the dignity of the child in all regions, in times of peace and in times of political instability and war.

The SRSB highlighted the decisive contribution of religious leaders who command extraordinary moral authority, foster dialogue and help to bridge differences, and influence thinking and behaviour change in favour of the protection of children's rights.

Marta Santos Pais expressed her hope that religious leaders everywhere will continue to actively promote the principle that no religious teaching or tradition may justify any form of violence against children.

More:
<http://religionsforpeace.org/news/statements/statement-on-commitment-to-1.html>

NGO Briefing - Can I ask you a question, Madame SRSB?

More than 120 participants attended the briefing



16 December 2010, New York

In the DPI-NGO briefing Marta Santos Pais provided an overview of the situation on violence against children and shared the priorities of her work with more than 120 civil society representatives at the United Nations building, in New York.

The SRSB highlighted the significant regional developments around the world on violence against children and the importance of prevention and good quality services in combatting violence. She recalled that economic costs of violence are high and investments in prevention would be much more cost-effective than responding to incidents of violence once they have occurred.

In a lively Q&A session, the important role of schools, and parenting programmes were discussed. The SRSB called for strong partnerships of all stakeholders, including civil society organizations which are crucial player in promoting and monitoring the progress toward eliminating all forms of violence against children, in all settings.

The Cycle of Abuse



We thank you for your strong support to protect children from all forms of violence and to promote a world where violence has no place!
We count on your continuing support in 2011.



Warmest regards,

Cecília, Miguel, Marta, Min-Whee, Sanna, Joost, Janeth, Falaq

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ILLUSTRATION PAGE 15: Gregor Nemec, from Teachers College Reports Columbia