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Welcome to the Defence for Children International (DCI) Newsletter

Foreword from the President of the movement, Rifat Odeh Kassiss

Dear friends, I begin with some sad news: Anna Volz, the Juvenile Justice Programme Officer with the IS, will be leaving DCI at the end of August. Anna has been a tremendous asset to the DCI community: we would like to thank her profusely for her dedication and her many contributions to our work, as well to wish her success in all her future projects. She will be missed!

But I continue with plenty of positive news. For one thing, DCI sections in Africa have recently shown notable development and growth, with increased involvement in new projects and strong support from the IS. Among the new initiatives, still in progress, is the establishment of a regional programme on juvenile justice in Africa.

Very soon- from the 16th to the 18th of August- DCI associated member in Mexico- REINTEGRA- will host the 2010 DCI Latin American Regional Juvenile Justice programme meeting.

For another, DCI had a productive fundraising visit to Holland in March, with the purpose of meeting with our current partners, seeking new collaborations, and requesting funds.

Thirdly, there are two important events to anticipate: 1) The joint conference between DCI-Palestine and the International Secretariat, which will be held in November in Bethlehem, Palestine; and 2) The IGA Conference which will be held in 2011 in Uganda (planning

still in progress). Since the DCI-PS/IS Conference ("Protective Environment-Active Participation) approaches in the very near future, I'd like to urge all DCI sections to visit DCI/PS website:

www.dci-pal.org , to register for attendance as soon as possible!

Of course, while our work and successes continue, our challenges continue as well. Despite positive fundraising discussions in Holland, the current financial realities are difficult. Indeed, NGOs are especially hard-hit by the global economic crisis, and many of our donors are able to contribute less, not at all, or with uncertain continuity. We must keep strategizing responsibly and creatively, saving money while maintaining the quality of our work. Finally, I add a reminder to all DCI sections: please remember to keep in contact with the IS and to pay your membership fees on time, given the IS's current financial constraints, in order to keep the entire organization running smoothly.

Many thanks to all of you for your endeavours and dedication to children's rights!

Sincerely,

Rifat Kassiss



- Update from DCI-The Netherlands
- Update from DCI-The Netherlands
- Updates from DCI Vice-presidency of the African region
- The NGO Group for the CRC held its GA
- Annual Meeting of the Interagency Panel on Juvenile Justice
- IV Conference of the International Juvenile Justice Observatory (OIJJ)
- Training on the Right to Education for All organized by Bice

Activities at the IS

Exposition of DCI activities during the event Making Peace, Geneva 2010

Aisha Rahamatali

On Sunday, June 6, the International Peace Bureau, which celebrated its centenary Nobel Peace Prize, invited the International Secretariat for DCI at the inauguration of the photo exhibition “Making Peace” and at the Global Peace meetings. For this occasion, DCI had a Stand where we presented the various publications of the movement and activities of DCI in the world. This was also an opportunity to make DCI known at Geneva level and to interact with the general public.



DCI International Secretariat, New co-convenor of the Working Group on Children and Violence of the NGO Group for the CRC.

Since June 2010, DCI is co-convening the Working Group on Children and Violence (WG-CAV), together with War Child Holland (a close partner of DCI). The WG-CAV forms an integral part of the NGO Group on the CRC’s work in ensuring that child’s rights is actively advanced within the UN system, as well as other international

forums. It is a platform for its members for debate and joint action to prevent and protect children from violence. strengthen cooperation among institutions and local and international organizations active in the field of child rights.

Meeting with the Special Representative of the Secretary General on violence against children

The NGO Working Group on children and violence organized in Geneva a two hours meeting with Mrs. Marta Santos Pais.

The meeting took place on the 2nd of July of 2010, from 8:00-10:00 in Geneva; the meeting was the first one co-chaired by DCI and War Child Holland.



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www.defenceforchildren.org

Meeting with the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on violence against children... (continued from page 2)

The aim of this meeting was to confirm the support from the INGOs community to the activities of the Special Representative and to seek ways of closer mutual cooperation. It has also been the opportunity to promise Marta that the WG is willing to support the Campaign for the universal ratification of the Optional Protocols to the CRC as well as contribute to the Expert consultation suggested by the Ngo Advisory Council on complaints mechanisms that Marta will organize with the Special Rapporteur on sale of children.

It is important to underline that Marta has among her priorities juvenile justice, as she has been deeply concerned by the situation of juvenile justice particularly in Latin America. She formally asked for the support of DCI and OMCT to get to know more on the topic. In response, in early July the IS sent a document prepared by the coordination of the Latin American regional juvenile justice programme and OMCT in which some considerations and recommendations were provided. We are confident that Ms. Santos Pais will include this information in her next report which will be presented to UN GA in September.

DCI-Colombia visits the IS

DCI-Colombia's President Mr. Fernando Sabogal visited the IS in the occasion of the examination of the Colombian government at the Committee on the Rights of the Child concerning the Optional Protocol of the CRC on children involved in armed conflict. The Coalition submitted an Alternative report, which included a strong component of child participation. <http://www.coalico.org/>

DCI-Colombia was also leading the Colombian coalition to stop the use of Child Soldiers that organised in Geneva a side-event previous to the official session of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, with the aim of providing relevant information on the present situation of children affected by forced recruitment in Colombia and it was the occasion to present the activity of the Coalition and of getting information on

child rights violations in Colombia. The meeting took place on the 3rd of June 2010, from 12:30-14:00 at the Geneva Academy of International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights.

The visit of DCI-Colombia and the meeting with the staff at the IS gave the possibility to

- Better understand the situation of children involved in the armed conflict that is going on in Colombia;
- Analyse the link between juvenile justice and former child soldiers;
- Understand the importance of the awareness raising of a conflict denied by the government
- Offer the support of the IS for the international advocacy and lobby activities of the Coalition.





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Young child rights activists at the Human Rights Council: the importance of Youth participation and cooperation with other NGOs

From 7 to 11 June, a group of young people from YMCAs in Sierra Leone, Ireland, Togo, England and Guatemala participated to the UN Human Rights Council (HRC) in Geneva. During the week, they presented their research on how well their governments are implementing the Resolution on the Administration of Justice, including juvenile justice, adopted by the Human Rights Council in March 2009 (Resolution 10/2). They followed trainings on how to use the Human Rights protection mechanisms, delivered statements during the 14th session of the Human Rights Council, met with States delegations, NGOs and with assistants of UN Special Rapporteurs but most of all they intervened in a side event on Juvenile Justice Reform in the light of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. For more info:

<http://www.defenceforchildren.org>

This experience was a very rich for DCI, in terms of youth participation. The four youth campaigners, who had directly experienced the justice system as children, shared their stories and made recommendations for improving children's rights in juvenile justice systems. A key part of the strategy was to facilitate young people to get their voices heard at the UN and to influence decision makers on the theme at the Human Rights Council.



The participation of young people was very interesting. They were not only perceived as victims, but also and especially as active advocates working towards finding a solution of these issues. It was also a very "refreshing" and "more concrete" experience for the persons with whom they met (Permanent Missions, NGOs, UN staff...), who are rather used to reading reports and documents.

This experience was also very rewarding for DCI as it allowed us to work in a constructive partnership with Y Care International and YMCA. We worked together both in terms of planning and implementation of the project. It helped to facilitate a good and effective participation of the Young Advocates. Also, both organisations shared a real passion for youth participation and giving young people a space to advocate and it was really clear that when properly supported, young people can have considerable impact at the Human Rights Council.



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From the sections...

News from DCI- Ivory Coast

DCI-Ivory Coast has been working in partnership with Aflatoun, a Dutch organisation, since a long time. They have been attending the training in Mali and they signed an agreement with them for feasibility/exploring mission to set up a programme in Ivory Coast. A first part has been concluded and a new phase will start in the fall. From 19 to 21 July the section attended a regional meeting organised in Ghana by Aflatoun.

Moreover the section is trying to organise an international conference on Juvenile Justice that should take place in September, but as fundraising is still ongoing, it might be moved to next year.

A first contact was taken with a Swiss based organisation for the distribution of Mosquito nets, with the aim of protecting child's welfare, especially towards malaria and other mosquitoes' derived diseases.

Update from DCI-The Netherlands

We are happy to announce the appointment of a director at Defence for Children International - ECPAT Netherlands, Mr. Aloys van Rest.

In the past Aloys has worked for Dutch organisations such as Oxfam Novib, Unicef and the Red Cross. In 2004 he was chair of the Dutch coalition of development organizations for the tsunami in Asia, the largest ever humanitarian action by the Netherlands.

He is determined. "There is still so much to do to improve the rights of children in the Netherlands. It is incredible that in a country as rich as the Netherlands, there are still children without a proper home. There are far too many children in deten-

tion. There is still exploitation and trafficking of children. This and more needs to be changed. I'm determined that within the next five years we have set the necessary steps to change this course".

Aloys looks forward to working closely together with all their partners in DCI and ECPAT International to fulfil their shared mission.





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Updates from DCI Vice-presidency of the African region

Abdul Manaff Kemokai (DCI Sierra Leone and DCI Vice-president for Africa) had the chance to participate in the meeting of the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child in Addis Ababa, it was also the opportunity to discuss key areas of collaboration with the African Child Policy Forum (ACPF).

DCI-The Netherlands submitted a project to the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, involving five DCI sections in Africa: Sierra Leone, Benin, Ghana, Togo and Liberia (all those considered as priority countries from the government in the Netherlands). The focus will be equal rights and opportunities for girls and young women, including the support to the socio-legal defence centres in the 5 sections identified.

Other...

The NGO Group for the CRC held its General Assembly

On the 29th of June in Geneva, the NGO Group for the CRC held its General Assembly and DCI as member attended the meeting. It was a one day meeting and the morning was devoted to discussing procedural matters and election of the new board and the afternoon dedicated to discuss mainly the elections of the new members of the Committee on the Rights of the Child and the elaboration of the General Com-

ment n. 13, referred to article 19 of the CRC.

The new President of the NGO Group has been unanimously elected and is Ms. Roberta Cecchetti from Save the Children. Four new memberships have been approved: Eurochild, REDLAMYC, International Falcon Movement and Proyecto Solidario.

Annual Meeting of the Interagency Panel on Juvenile Justice

The Interagency Panel on Juvenile Justice (IPJJ) held its Annual Meeting on 24 and 25 June 2010 in Sion, Switzerland. DCI was represented by Executive Director Ileana Bello and by Juvenile Justice Programme Officer Anna Volz.

The IPJJ has currently 13 members (7 UN agencies and organisations and 6 NGOs). The Panel's Secretariat is hosted by DCI and the coordinator shares the office space with the IS. During the meeting the hosting agreement between the Panel and DCI was finalized. DCI will remain the host organization for at least one more year. The last day of the meeting was also the last day of work Davinia Ovetto Bondi, who, after three years as Secretariat Coordinator decided to leave her position (her successor will start in September).





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During the meeting, Panel members agreed on the programme for the following year and discussed possible collaboration in the promotion of comprehensive juvenile justice reform in compliance with the CRC and international standards. They also agreed on how best the Panel can follow-up to technical assistance requests sent by States around the world. Regarding this, a recent request was presented to the Panel by the Government of Pakistan. DCI's associated member in

the country (SPARC) joined UNICEF and Penal Reform International in preparing a coordinated response.

More information on the IPJJ website:
www.juvenilejusticepanel.org.

PARTNERS EVENTS

IV Conference of the International Juvenile Justice Observatory (OIJJ)

On the 9th to the 10th of November 2010, the International Juvenile Justice Observatory will organise an international conference in Rome on the themes of mental disorders and drugs misuse in the field of juvenile justice "Building integrative juvenile justice systems: approaches and methodologies regarding mental disorders and drug misuse"

DCI will be member of the Honorary Committee of the Conference.

For more details please visit the website of the IJJO: <http://www.oijj.org>

Training on the Right to Education for All organized by the International Catholic Child Bureau (Bice)

This training, organized by Bice and the University College Henri Dunant, will run from 1 to 5 November 2010 in Geneva. It is open to stakeholders in education (officials, teachers, NGO members, journalists ...). The program of the training was developed in partnership with the UN Special Rapporteur on the right to education.

For more information on the participation: <http://www.biceinternational.org>



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WWSF launches a new website

WWSF announces the launch of an interactive website YouthEngage.com to commemorate the 10th Anniversary of the WWSF campaign and the World Day for Prevention of Abuse and Violence against Children and youth - 19 November.

With tools and suggestions on how to get involved, develop competences and become prevention actors, YouthEngage.com serves the emergence of a culture of prevention. You are kindly invited to have a look at the website and to share it with you partners.

www.youthengage.com

YouthEngage.com is based on a challenge: how can young people better prevent abuse and violence against children and youth?

NEW ONLINE!

Now available online:

- Annual Report of DCI-IS for 2009 in English (translations coming soon)
- Info and awareness raising Kit on violence against children prepared by DCI Costa Rica in collaboration with the IS. The presentation of the kit is downloadable for your use and the use of your partners and available in three languages (English, French and Spanish)
 (<http://www.defenceforchildren.org/resources/publications/49-training-manual.html?q=resources/publications/49-training->)

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Please note that the articles contained in this newsletter are the individual contributions of DCI's national sections and the International Secretariat, and as such do not constitute the official position of the IEC members or the movement as a whole.