DEFENSA DE NIÑAS Y NIÑOS INTERNACIONAL DNI
DEFENSE DES ENFANTS INTERNATIONAL DEI
DEFENCE FOR CHILDREN INTERNATIONAL DCI

ANNUAL ACTIVITIES REPORT 2008

Defence for Children International
International Secretariat

Annual Report 2008

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FOREWORD

"It is time to overcome the contradiction between the treatment of juveniles in detention and democracy" – Sergio Paulo Pinheiro, UN Independent Expert on Violence against Children

At the start of 2009, we are pleased to present you with a review of our activities in 2008.

Our ability to carry out, organise and coordinate the activities, initiatives and events described in this report depends entirely on the support of all of you reading these lines: friends, donors, national sections and other partners of DCI and of the cause of children's rights. While this report presents only highlights from the past year, we hope it demonstrates the flow of activities and events that best mark our international advocacy strategy and how we responded to our challenges and objectives – those which we chose in close consultation with all of you.

We open this report with the words of Professor Paulo Sérgio Pinheiro - keynote speaker at our international conference on ending violence against children in institutions - for a specific reason: Contributing to the follow-up to the UN Study on Violence against Children was a major initiative of DCI in 2008 and will continue to be of central importance in the coming years. The success of our well-attended conference and the launch of DCI's follow-up project on General Comment No.10 on Juvenile Justice were vital elements in 2008 carrying us into 2009 and beyond. As the new Executive Director and the re-elected President, we feel honoured to further develop these two branches of our core programme of advocacy for child rights in juvenile justice in the coming years.

Notwithstanding our efforts and those of hundreds, if not thousands, of others to change the world and make it a better place to live for children, this has been unfortunately far from universally achieved. At the time of writing, the situation for many children in the world has grown almost desperate. In the Occupied Palestinian Territories, the situation has only grown worse, and there is no end in sight. Children's rights are violated daily, from the right to life, to the right to live in peace with their families, the right to attend school, receive medical care, and not to be put in prisons and treated by the police and judiciary apparatus as if they were adults. If we move our eyes on the world map towards Africa, we see dramatic improvements in the socio-economic condition of children in the majority of countries, with the exception of the Democratic Republic of Congo, where all the indicators form a curve from bad to worse. The rights of Congolese children and youths remain unprotected: not only because of renewed active armed conflict but also because the breakdown of all minimum standards of society. Children have no access to food, health care, education, in a country whose natural and mineral resources are bountiful. Children and youth have no protection against sexual exploitation and abuse, against superstitious accusations of witchcraft and sorcery for which they are punished, tortured or even killed, and many children are forced to enlist in armies and armed bands as soldiers or sex slaves. Then we travel to Latin America, and we learn that expeditionary violence, including by police and paramilitary security forces, kills every weekend as many children and youth in the big cities as in the zones of acute military action such as the Gaza strip. In each case the suffering is immense and intolerable. The solutions and causes are different yet also the same.

Children are victims of unliveable situations as such, but even more so as their status as human beings and citizens with a full set of rights is not understood, let alone respected. That is why at the core of DCI's response is always a push for children to be understood as human beings and citizens, with a full set of rights that must be respected and upheld.

DCI lobbied for action and continued to mount international pressure for the Human Rights Council to pass a resolution and undertake an independent fact-finding mission into the situation in Gaza as it affected children. In response to the situation in Congo, DCI put an appeal to all its sections and the wider readership on its website to help DCI-Congo intervene on behalf of the children of Congo. DCI-Brazil maintained a steady denunciation campaign to commemorate the life of each and every child lost through the State's

utter failure to protect its own youth. While these are just a few examples from across DCI, they help to illustrate the breadth of issues and regions touched by our movement.

But we don't give up. We will never give up. The year 2009 is a jubilee year for DCI, for we shall celebrate our 30th anniversary, which coincides with the 20th anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. We are confident that the reading of this modest report will incite you to pay attention to our jubilee activities and, better still, wholeheartedly participate in them. We encourage you to visit our website regularly for news about our activities.

On behalf of DCI's International Secretariat, we wish you a good read. May it reinforce the trust and confidence you have shown in us so that we can count on your continuing support.

Warm greetings,

Laetitia van Haren
Executive Director

Rifat Odeh Kassis
President

I. INTRODUCTION

Since prioritising the issue of juvenile justice four years ago, the international movement of Defence for Children International (DCI) has worked to make the situation of children and juvenile justice in the world widely known by promoting actions that aim to include juvenile justice as a priority item on international, regional and national political agendas and to improve national juvenile justice systems, so that the rights of children and adolescents in conflict with the law are fully respected.

During its most recent International General Assembly meeting in October 2008, DCI released a "Brussels Declaration", reaffirming its commitment to making juvenile justice its key priority at the international level. After many years of successful advocacy for the adoption of an effective and comprehensive set of international standards on juvenile justice, DCI can now advocate for these standards to be implemented and transformed from words into action.

In 2008, with the support of its donors, national DCI sections, associated members and partners, DCI's International Secretariat (DCI-IS) has remained a strong advocate for more child-friendly juvenile justice at the international level. DCI-IS continued to raise awareness on the rights of children, particularly those in conflict with the law, by disseminating information through its website, newsletters and position statements, participating and advocating to United Nations bodies and international mechanisms, building networks and partnerships and by offering personalised assistance to its members to address the issues most critical in their country or region.

One of the most important projects undertaken by the International Secretariat in 2008 was the launch of a project to follow-up the recommendations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child's General Comment No. 10 on "Children's Rights in Juvenile Justice". The project, aimed at promoting and monitoring the use of this document, was developed and coordinated by the International Secretariat and received the full endorsement of the Committee on the Rights of the Child. Activities took place at the international level as well as at the national level, with the participation of 8 DCI national sections.

The DCI International Secretariat (DCI-IS) continued to collaborate with its national sections throughout 2008. With 15 national sections a particular form of collaboration developed during the research and drafting of the report "From Legislation to Action? Trends in Juvenile Justice across 15 Countries". The objective of the report was to identify gaps in the implementation of international standards on juvenile justice and provide recommendations for addressing them. DCI-IS will use the findings of this research project to sharpen its advocacy objectives and identify areas where further research and action are needed.

In 2008, DCI-IS renewed its commitment to engaging in follow-up activities to the UN Study on Violence against Children. A highlight of this commitment was the hosting of an international conference and training entitled "Ending Violence against Children in Justice Systems: From Words to Action" organised from 1-3 October 2008 in Brussels in close collaboration with DCI Belgium. The event was an opportunity to mobilise civil society in engaging with the recommendations of the UN Study for ending violence against children in justice systems.

Throughout 2008, DCI-IS continued to play its central role as a focal point for the movement at the international level, providing links, stimulating partnerships and identifying opportunities for international advocacy. DCI-IS's location in Geneva has allowed it to serve as a platform for voicing the concerns of its national sections and bringing their national advocacy work to the international forum.

DCI-IS would like to express its gratitude to all those who supported its work in 2008, including donors, national sections and associated members, DCI regional offices, and external partners. With your support we have been able to continue our advocacy and capacity building work, and as you will see in the report, make significant progress in improving the situation of children, particularly those in conflict with the law. We look forward to your continued collaboration in 2009.

II. WHO WE ARE

Defence for Children International (DCI) is an international human rights organisation that has been promoting and protecting children's rights for 30 years. DCI is represented in over 40 countries worldwide through its national sections and associated members, each working on child rights issues that are relevant to their national contexts, ranging from ending child labour, child trafficking and violence against children to promoting child participation. Juvenile Justice is the overarching issue of the DCI movement, with over 75% of national sections conducting activities in this area.

DCI's International Secretariat, located in Geneva, is the focal point of the movement. It represents the movement at the international level and develops projects which promote child rights globally and which support the activities and growth of DCI's national sections and associated members.

Our Mission

DCI is dedicated to ensuring on-going, practical, systematic and concerted international action directed towards promoting and protecting the rights of the child, as articulated in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), its optional protocols, and all the other human rights instruments.

Our Vision

Children should enjoy and exercise their rights in a just and responsible society.

III. WHERE WE WORK

DCI has national sections and/or associated members in the following countries: In the Americas: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Paraguay, Mexico and Uruguay – as well as a representative at the UN in New York; In Europe: Albania, Belgium, Czech Republic, France, Italy, Netherlands, Macedonia, Switzerland and Slovakia; in Africa: Angola, Benin, Cameroon, Congo, Gambia, Ghana, Mauritania, Mauritius, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Togo, Uganda; In Asia & Pacific: Australia, Pakistan, Sri Lanka; In the Middle East: Israel, Lebanon and Palestine.

IV. HOW WE WORK

DCI's work on the national, regional, and international level is directed by the principles enshrined in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UN CRC). Based on the Convention and other relevant international standards and regional instruments, DCI national sections develop actions in response to the issues affecting children's rights in their country. These actions can include: Monitoring the implementation of standards for children's rights, advocacy and lobby, targeted research, information dissemination and awareness raising, training of policy-makers and justice, police and social workers and educational professionals, and direct interventions with children, their families and the local community.

DCI believes strongly in the importance of networking and building strategic alliances in order to strengthen its work. DCI therefore coordinates with various actors in the child rights' area, including for example the Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC). DCI has consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and the Council of Europe, and working relations with UNESCO, UNICEF and the ILO. DCI is also a member of the NGO Group for the Convention on the Rights of the Child and its thematic working groups on juvenile justice, violence against children and the Human Rights Council. DCI is

an elected member of the NGO Advisory Panel for Follow up to the UN Study on Violence, and an active member of the Interagency Panel on Juvenile Justice.

V. ACTIVITY HIGHLIGHTS IN 2008

DCI national sections develop and implement programmes in response to the pressing issues affecting children in their countries. The following are some highlights from 2008:

National Level

- DCI-Belgium organised a public "Opinion Tribunal" with the aim of denouncing the Belgian State's arbitrary detention of migrant and asylum seeking children. A mock tribunal was held with a youth jury and child rights expert jury who reviewed the cases and delivered judgements.

- DCI-Palestine organised its 6th National Children's Conference on "Children's Initiatives…. Social Initiatives" from November 19-21 in Ramallah. Its main aim was to promote the right of children to participate, in accordance with the CRC, in Palestinian society and to outline new strategies, policies and laws to that end. In total, 125 boys and girls from all over the West Bank and Jerusalem participated in the conference.

- DCI-Palestine also launched its Freedom Now campaign in November 2008; the campaign aims at stopping the physical and mental torture of Palestinian child detainees; promoting their access to adequate education in prison, and ending administrative detention of children.

- DCI-Brazil launched an awareness-raising campaign to condemn the arbitrary killing of thousands of young people every year. The heart of the initiative was a year long e-mail campaign which sent a story, every day for 365 days, of yet another murdered Brazilian child, putting a human face to the anonymous media figures, and making obvious the unspeakable horror of hundreds of young lives wasted every year through extreme violence and state neglect. DCI-Brazil has also begun litigating on behalf of the children and families in a number of these cases. Moreover, a travelling exhibition across 15 cities was launched on the theme of violence against children.

- DCI-Uganda organised a Day of Action to End Sexual Abuse in October 2008. One of the main objectives was to push the government to adopt an effective and systematic birth registration policy in the country.

- DCI-Niger organised a training seminar for civil society on children's rights in Niamey with the support of DCI-Belgium in June 2008. The training delved into national and international legal frameworks in the areas of child protection and juvenile justice and was widely attended by DCI staff and other local NGOs.

- DCI-Netherlands launched a campaign "No one is illegal" to assist the more than 30 000 children liv-

ing “irregularly” or undocumented in the Netherlands. The campaign included the development of an accessible resource website for young people on laws affecting them and their rights. On the anniversary of Universal Children’s Day, playful pedagogical activities for direct participation by children were organised at various places simultaneously. One of them was a giant labyrinth erected in the centre of Rotterdam to symbolise young people’s confusion and difficulty in navigating the maze of rights and obligations. Children answered questions on child rights to find their way out.

- DCI-Albania offered socio-educative assistance and support to 40 minors in the juvenile prison. They also launched, with UNICEF, a series of newsletters for children and young people in the prison system.

Regional Level

DCI national sections coordinate at the regional level on common objectives and strategies for action. Some highlights from 2008 are as follows:

In the Americas

- DCI’s Latin American sections continued to implement a regional project on juvenile justice in nine countries. During the Ibero-American Summit of Presidents, held in El Salvador in October 2008, DCI pushed for reform of the repressive juvenile justice and security policies for youth. This work was coordinated with the Regional Vice-Presidency of the Americas.

- Key activities of the project included: publishing and disseminating lessons learned from of the first stage of the project, strengthening involvement in legislative reform, promoting the use of alternatives to the deprivation of liberty, providing training for professionals, advocating for restorative justice principles, organising a day of social awareness about the UN Study on Violence against Children and disseminating the Study’s recommendations

In Europe

- DCI-France, DCI-Netherlands and DCI-Belgium continued to play active roles as members of the Separated Children in Europe Programme.

- DCI was invited to make a presentation about juvenile justice to the Social, Health and Family Affairs Committee of the Council of Europe on December 12th. The presentation was delivered by a member of DCI’s Executive Council and aimed to provide information to the Council regarding social measures, education and the rehabilitation of young offenders.

International Level

DCI’s International Secretariat serves as a focal point for the movement, coordinating DCI interventions at the international level.

- The Juvenile Justice Programme Officer and the new Director attended a seminar in Sion at the Kurt

Bosch Institute on Child Rights entitled "Children as Victims and Witnesses. A Question of Law... and of Rights !".

- The Communications and Advocacy Officer and the Juvenile Justice Programme Officer attended a week long course on children's rights in juvenile justice to strengthen their skills as trainers of trainers in serving the movement. The Communications and Advocacy officer and the Director of DCI-Sierra Leone also attended a seminar on the procedures and mechanisms to complain about torture and degrading and inhuman treatment.

- Three DCI national sections (DCI-France, DCI-Brazil and DCI-Netherlands), with technical support and assistance from the International Secretariat, submitted reports to the Universal Periodic Review of the UN Human Rights Council. DCI-IS provided assistance for them in preparing and following-up key concerns affecting their country.

- DCI held an international conference titled "Ending Violence against Children in Juvenile Justice Systems: From Words to Action" in Brussels in October 2008 with the winning presence of Mr. Paulo Sérgio Pinheiro, UN independent expert on violence against children. The event was widely attended by NGOs, government authorities and UN organisations, and was successful in mobilising civil society representatives to undertake concrete follow-up to the recommendations of the UN Study on Violence against Children

VI. DCI – IS: AN OVERVIEW OF PROGRAMME ACTIVITIES IN 2008

A) Strategic Plan of Action on Juvenile Justice

In 2008, DCI's International Secretariat (DCI-IS) continued to implement its strategic plan of action on juvenile justice. Its overall goal is to "make the situation of children and juvenile justice in the world known internationally, promoting actions that aim to include juvenile justice as a priority item on political agendas on an international, regional and national level and to strengthen national juvenile justice systems, guaranteeing the rights of children and adolescents in conflict with the law".

In 2008, with ongoing and renewed support from ICCO/Kerkinactie, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Luxembourg, the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Norad), the Paul Schiller Foundation, Stichting Kinderpostzegels, Loterie Romande and the Oak Foundation, DCI was able to translate its objectives into the following outcomes:

Objective 1: Monitoring the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, its optional protocols and other human rights instruments, in particular those related to juvenile justice

Outcomes:

- DCI-IS highlighted and raised awareness about gaps in the implementation of juvenile justice standards at national level, by attending and preparing reports on the 47th, 48th and 49th sessions of the Committee on the Rights of the Child, especially with respect to juvenile justice. These reports were circulated electronically to DCI's network of partners.

- DCI-IS released a report entitled "From Legislation to Action? Trends in Juvenile Justice Systems across 15 countries". The report is a preliminary mapping of the implementation of relevant international standards on juvenile justice in 15 countries and aims to identify trends, explore successes and chal-

lenges, and propose recommendations for action. DCI national sections in Albania, Argentina, Belgium, Bolivia, Canada, Chile, Costa Rica, France, Ghana, Italy, the Netherlands, Niger, Palestine, Sierra Leone and Uganda participated in the study. The report led to a greater awareness about gaps in the implementation of juvenile justice standards and has proved to be a useful tool for sharpening the focus of future research and refining ongoing strategies for the implementation of children's rights in juvenile justice. Two follow-up reports, whose foci were developed from the outcomes of the first report, will be produced in 2009.

Objective 2: Advocating for juvenile justice systems that are respectful of children's rights, and their vulnerability to sexual and other forms of abuse, and that aim at preventing situations where children come into conflict with the law.

Outcomes:

- Via the working group on the Human Rights Council, DCI-IS staff gave input to the paragraphs relating specifically to the question of juvenile justice. In particular, DCI-IS called for the development of comprehensive alternative measures to be included in the Resolution on the Rights of the Child and will continue to lobby for an improved text in 2009.

- DCI met with permanent missions to the United Nations to raise awareness about and advocate for their government to implement the recommendations of General Comment No.10 on children's rights in juvenile justice

- DCI worked with its national sections to follow-up the Committee on the Rights of the Child's concluding observations related to juvenile justice at the national level.

Objective 3: Lobbying for the inclusion of the issue of juvenile justice as a priority item on political agendas, in order to prevent human rights violations and protect the rights of the child, particularly those in conflict with the law.

Outcomes:

- The DCI International Secretariat acted as a platform for national sections by representing them in Geneva and bringing their concerns to the international level. This included delivering oral statements on their behalf during the Human Rights Council, participating in meetings and lobbying for their specific concerns to be brought to the agenda.

- DCI conducted advocacy and worked to build relationships with the Special Procedures mandate holders of the Human Rights Council with the goal of mainstreaming juvenile justice issues into the various mandates. In particular, DCI liaised with the Chair of the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention, with the aim of increasing the Group's focus on the arbitrary detention of children. DCI was pleased when the Working Group dedicated its annual report to detained children, also highlighting the conditions of detention and the particular plight of migrant and asylum seeking children.

Objective 4: To network for building international alliances for the promotion and defence of children's rights, particularly those in conflict with the law.

Outcomes:

- DCI continued to host and supervise the Secretariat of the Interagency Panel on Juvenile Justice which at the end of 2008 included 14 members (7 UN Agencies and 7 NGOs). DCI was also actively involved

as a member of the Panel and its Steering Committee.

- In August 2008 DCI accepted the request of Terre des Hommes to become co-convener of the NGO Working Group on Juvenile Justice. At its annual meeting in October, the Working Group approved the proposal of the co-convenors to redirect its attention to addressing the worst violations of the rights of children in conflict with the law. More specifically, the Working Group will be concentrate on the following issues:

- death penalty
- arbitrary killings and execution of children
- illegal and abusive detention of children

DCI believes the best use of this Working Group set-up will be to undertake and share in-depth analysis and provide background reporting on these various issues.

- DCI's Executive Director participated in the III World Congress Against Sexual Exploitation of Children and Adolescents, providing an opportunity to network with Latin American partners and strengthen ties with the Americas sections present at the Congress.

Objective 5: To build the capacities of different bodies of DCI so that they can defend children's rights in a more holistic and effective manner.

Outcomes:

- DCI organised four key capacity building training sessions which were well attended by national sections and other NGOs. Topics included: Working with Children and Adolescents to Advocate Against Violence; Advocacy for Follow-up to General Comment No. 10 on Children's Rights in Juvenile Justice; Reporting to International Complaints Mechanisms; Conducting Research and Data Collection on Juvenile Justice.

- The International Secretariat supported national sections in engaging with the mechanisms of the Human Rights Council. For example, DCI-IS coordinated meetings between the Special Procedures and DCI national sections during their country visits and assisted national sections in submitting urgent communications to the Special Procedures. DCI-IS also supported national sections to engage with and report to treaty bodies, in particular, the Committee on the Rights of the Child.

- The DCI-IS offered technical assistance to national sections in report writing, the drafting of funding proposals and technical assistance in communications. DCI-IS informed sections of opportunities for training at the international level. For example, members of DCI-Sierra Leone and DCI-Uganda were selected to participate in a Geneva-based training on international complaints procedures and the litigation of torture cases.

Objective 6: To raise awareness among the general public and target groups about children's rights and juvenile justice issues

Outcomes:

- DCI-IS published six editions of its bi-monthly newsletter on juvenile justice in English, French and Spanish, and distributed them widely. In 2008, each issue of the newsletter addressed a different theme of juvenile justice; for instance, juvenile delinquency, diversion, and the minimum age of criminal respon-

sibility. These thematic issues will continue into 2009.

- DCI-IS made a number of presentations on its work and the issue of juvenile justice. In particular, the Juvenile Justice Programme Officer delivered a presentation on the history of the child rights movement and juvenile justice issues to students at the University of Fribourg's Advanced Master in Child Rights Course

B) Follow up to General Comment No. 10 on Children's Rights in Juvenile Justice

After successfully securing funds in 2007, DCI began the implementation of a project on the Follow-up to General Comment No. 10 (GC10) on Children's Rights in Juvenile Justice in March 2008. The project combines advocacy, awareness-raising, and monitoring activities at the national and international level to ensure that GC10 is understood and implemented by States Parties. The project received the full endorsement of the Committee on the Rights of the Child when it was first developed in 2007.

Eight DCI national sections (Albania, Cameroon, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Ghana, Sierra Leone, Sri Lanka, and Uganda) were involved in the first phase of the project piloted by the International Secretariat in Geneva.

Outcomes at the International level were:

- Production and dissemination of 7 Fact Sheets (in English, French and Spanish) on key themes in General Comment No.10, namely: an introduction; preventing juvenile delinquency; promoting diversion; ensuring appropriate minimum ages of criminal responsibility; guaranteeing a fair trial; prohibiting the death penalty and life imprisonment; and, deprivation of liberty as a last resort.

- The International Secretariat organised a Panel Discussion on June 5th at the United Nations with the aim of raising awareness about General Comment No.10. Participants on the Panel included Committee on the Rights of the Child members Jean Zermatten and Nevena Vuckovic-Sahovic, as well as DCI-Vice President of the Americas, Virginia Murillo Herrera, and Coordinator of the Interagency Panel on Juvenile Justice, Davinia Ovett, with Nigel Cantwell, Child rights expert and founder of DCI in the chair. The event was well attended by a number of NGOs and permanent missions to the UN in Geneva.

- The International Secretariat produced a training manual on advocacy strategies to promote the use of GC 10 by State Parties and concerned civil society. A training for national sections on the manual was held during DCI's conference on violence against children in justice systems. A final version of the manual will be printed and disseminated at the beginning of 2009.

Outcomes at National Level:

- Dissemination of Fact Sheets and translation into national and local languages of the sections concerned – eg: Albanian and Sinhala.

- Organisation of press conferences, radio talk shows and wide coverage in the media in several countries – eg: Ghana and Sierra Leone

- Trainings held with justice and social service professionals including police, judges and lawyers and so-

cial workers – eg: Sierra Leone and Uganda

- Advocacy and awareness-raising meetings conducted with government officials – eg: Sri Lanka and Albania

- Meetings held with children and young people to raise awareness about GC10 and gather their views and ideas – eg: Costa Rica and Sierra Leone

C) Interagency Panel on Juvenile Justice

In 2008 DCI continued to host and supervise the permanent Secretariat of the Interagency Panel on Juvenile Justice.

The Interagency Panel on Juvenile Justice (IPJJ) was mandated by the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) to facilitate and enhance country and global level coordination in the provision of technical advice and assistance in juvenile justice[1] The Panel is currently composed of fourteen members – seven United Nations bodies and seven non-governmental organisations[2] – that work to ensure that juvenile justice systems comply with the Convention on the Rights of the Child and other international norms and standards.

In 2008, the Panel Secretariat was funded through contributions from UNICEF, UNODC, Terre des Hommes - aide à l'enfance (Tdh) and DCI.

Outcomes:

- The Panel enhanced its visibility by expanding its membership to fourteen member organisations. New members in 2008 include: the International Association of Youth and Family Judges and Magistrates (IAYFJM); the International Juvenile Justice Observatory (IJJO) and the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI).

- The Panel raised the visibility of juvenile justice as an international issue through Panel member events in international fora. These included: a side-event on "Strategies to address Violence against Children in Conflict with the Law" during the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (CCPCJ) in Vienna, Austria, on 17 April 2008; a presentation on follow-up to the Committee on the Rights of the Child's General Comment No. 10 (2007) on "Children's Rights in Juvenile Justice and the Work of Panel Members" at DCI's side-event at the Human Rights Council on 5 June 2008; and a workshop on "Best Practices in Diversion and Alternatives to Deprivation of Liberty" during the DCI International Conference and Training in Brussels.

- The Panel assisted members in developing common positions, including an oral statement on behalf of eight Panel members presented at the 17th session of the CCPCJ in April 2008. The oral statement, delivered by the Secretariat Coordinator, was the only intervention to explicitly raise concerns relating to juvenile justice and violence against children in conflict with the law during the CCPCJ.

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1 See ECOSOC resolutions 1997/30 and 2007/23.

2 Panel members include: the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Institute (UNICRI), the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC), Defence for Children International (DCI), the International Association of Youth and Family Judges and Magistrates, the International Juvenile Justice Observatory (IJJO), Penal Reform International (PRI), Save the Children UK, Terre des hommes – aide à l'enfance (Tdh) and the World Organisation Against Torture (OMCT).

- The Panel increased the availability of technical resources on juvenile justice through an up-dated and expanded website with over 5000 resources, events and links in English, French and Spanish (www.juvenilejusticepanel.org) and twelve editions of its trilingual electronic newsletter that provides information on new tools and resources on juvenile justice to over 950 juvenile justice professionals (http://www.juvenilejusticepanel.org/en/newsletter.html).

- The Panel informed its members of technical assistance requests by preparing and circulating compilations of Committee on the Rights of the Child Concluding Observations that make reference to juvenile justice, including children in conflict with the law and child victims and witnesses of crimes, after each session of the Committee. A final compilation for 2008 in English, French and Spanish was circulated in January 2009. In these recommendations, the Committee often encourages State parties to "seek technical assistance and other cooperation from the United Nations Interagency Panel on Juvenile Justice, which includes UNODC, UNICEF, OHCHR and NGOs." The compilation has allowed Panel members to follow-up with State parties at country level.

DCI-IS wishes to express its gratitude towards Tdh, UNODC, UNDP and UNICEF for their generous contributions towards the costs of hosting the Panel Secretariat.

D) Follow up to the UN Study on Violence against Children

As an elected member of the NGO Advisory Panel for the follow up of the UN Study, DCI has been actively involved in pushing for action on the recommendations of the Study, including for the establishment of a UN Special Representative on Violence against Children.

In particular, DCI has focused its attention on advocating for follow-up to Chapter 5 of the Study on "Violence in Care and Justice Institutions" and in particular, the violence experienced by children in all areas of the juvenile justice system.

Outcomes:

- Production of a "kit" of tools and materials on various components of the UN Study. This kit includes: a mapping of good practices within the DCI movement; the draft of a manual on advocacy against violence to be published in early 2009; a summary of the regional consultations conducted in preparation for the UN Study; and a series of leaflets on the key themes in the UN Study. This kit will be used by DCI national sections and other national NGOs in their advocacy work. This initiative was coordinated jointly by DCI-Costa Rica and DCI-IS.

- As part of its participation in the follow-up to the UN Study, DCI held an international conference and training entitled "Ending Violence against Children in Juvenile Justice Systems: From Words to Action" to address the Study's recommendations for ending violence against children in institutions. The aim of the conference was to mobilise and train civil society to engage in effective follow-up actions to the UN Study, specifically in relation to violence against children in juvenile justice systems. Throughout most of 2008, DCI-IS and the hosting section, DCI Belgium worked intensively towards the success of this conference, which took place from 1-3 October in 2008.

E) International Child Rights Advocacy

In addition to its thematic focus on juvenile justice, DCI-IS has maintained broader attention to other children's rights issues and where possible reacted to serious violations of children's rights on a case by case basis – particularly in countries where DCI has a national presence. These statements and advocacy letters of appeal can be viewed on DCI's website: www.dci-is.org.

DCI continued to participate as an active member of the NGO Working Group for the Human Rights Council. This included drafting statements on behalf of the group and attending lobby meetings with government representatives. A particular focus of the group in 2008 was lobbying for a Resolution on the Rights of the Child and for child rights to be mainstreamed into all mechanisms of the Human Rights Council.

Outcomes:

- Urgent letters of appeal sent to governments and other stakeholders in response to 6 urgent cases of child rights violations; a number of position statements drafted and disseminated on urgent child rights concerns

- The 1st Resolution on the Rights of the Child was adopted by the new Human Rights Council in March 2008 with special acknowledgement of the need to mainstream the rights of the child into the Council's work and mechanisms.

- Child rights NGOs including DCI ensured a focus on child rights during the Universal Periodic Review of the Human Rights Council by submitting stakeholder reports and lobbying Member States of the Council to make recommendations on child rights.

- Several parallel events on mainstreaming child rights into the Universal Periodic Review were organised by the Working Group during the year.

VII. DCI–IS: AN OVERVIEW OF FUNDING SOURCES IN 2008

Throughout 2008, DCI's activities continued to be funded by the following organisations:

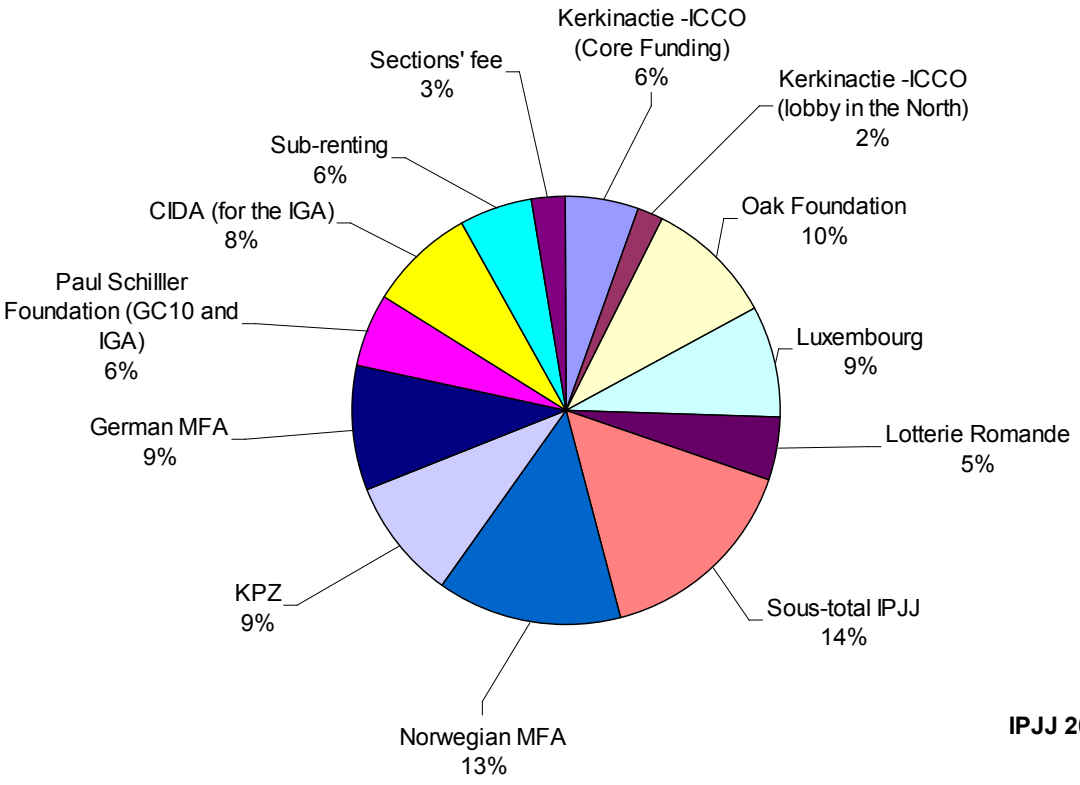
- The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Luxembourg, ICCO/Kerkinactie, the Oak Foundation and Loterie romande – for DCI's Strategic Plan of Action on Juvenile Justice;

- The Paul Schiller Foundation, Kinderpostzegels Nederland, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Norwary and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Germany for their support to the juvenile justice programme, and in particular, DCI's Follow-up Project to General Comment No.10;

- Terre des Hommes, UNODC, UNICEF and UNDP for the functioning of a permanent Secretariat for the Interagency Panel on Juvenile Justice;

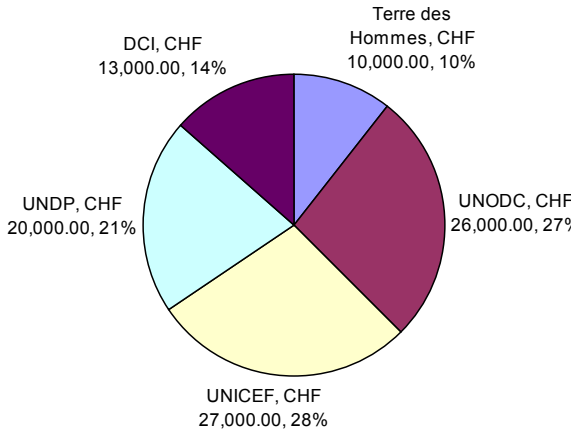
As well as all DCI national sections who provided membership fees to support the International Secretariat.

Income DCI-IS 2008

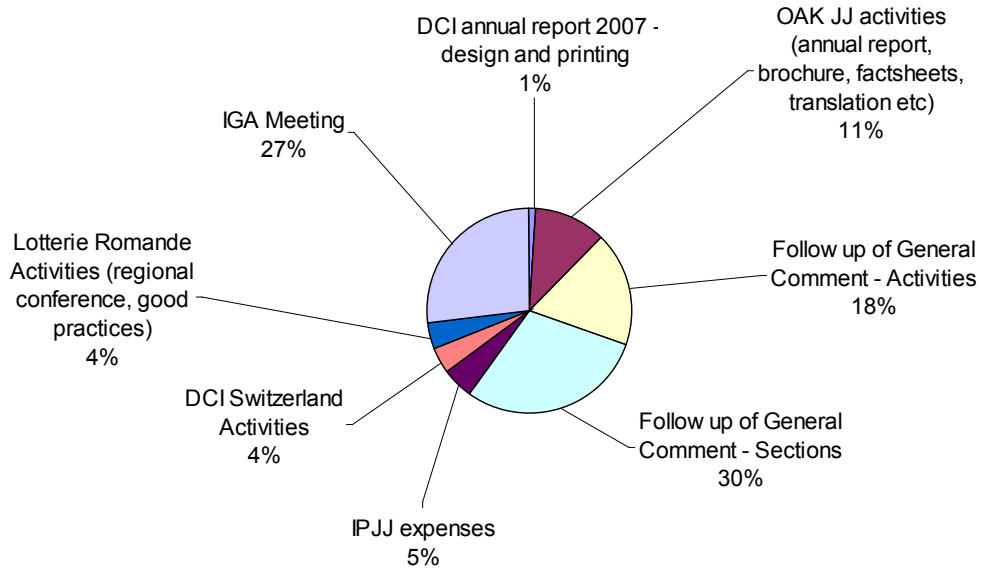


Overview of Funding Sources

IPJJ 2008



DCI-IS Programme Expenditures 2008



VIII. DCI-IS STAFF AND EXECUTIVE COUNCIL IN 2008

a) Staff of the International Secretariat

Executive Director – Rebecca Morton (until 31st July)
Executive Director - Laetitia van Haren (from 1st of August)
Communications & Advocacy Officer – Julia D'Aloisio
Juvenile Justice Programme Officer – as of 1st April: Anna Volz
Secretariat Coordinator for the Interagency Panel on Juvenile Justice –Davinia Ovett
Coordinator of the Resource Centre – Camille Kryspin

Interns:
Julia Knittel, Marie Dominque Faye, Leonor Garrido, Evelyne Monnay, Marie Abeng, Marianne Hochuli, Fatemeh "Saideh" Eftekhari, Danica Hanz, Lauren Hovey and Mayda Saldana.

DCI also acknowledges the generous support of its network of volunteer translators who support the translation of DCI's newsletters and other publications into English, French and Spanish.

b) International Executive Council Members until 28 September, 2008 [3]

President: Rifat Odeh Kassis
Treasurer: Benoit Van Keirsbilck
Vice President, Africa – Laurencio Akohin
Vice President, Americas – Virginia Murillo Herrera
Vice President, Europe – Majorie Kaandorp
Vice President, Asia, Pacific & Middle East – Masaaki Fukuda
Member – Marcos Guillen
Member – Innocent Garakumbe

International Executive Council members as of September 29, 2008:

President: Rifat Odeh Kassis
Treasurer: Benoit Van Keirsbilck
Vice President, Africa – Abdul Manaff Kemokai
Vice President, Americas – Marcos Guillen
Vice President, Europe – Jean-Luc Rongé
Vice President, Asia, Pacific & Middle East – Rifat Odeh Kassis
Member - Laurencio Akohin
Member - Juan Fumeiro

3 The International Executive Council met 4 times in 2008

IX. ANNEXE

DCI BRUSSELS DECLARATION

From Bethlehem to Brussels: Towards Justice for All Children

On 29-30 September 2008 Defence for Children International (DCI) came together in Brussels, Belgium, to celebrate and hold its 10th International General Assembly. This meeting was followed by an International Conference, held from October 1-3, 2008 entitled: "'Ending Violence against Children in Juvenile Justice Systems: From Words to Action''. The present Declaration is the result of the work and debates held during these two important events.

DCI is a human rights movement dedicated to the promotion and protection of children's rights. DCI demands that States adopt public policies that effectively guarantee children's rights and the enjoyment of those rights in societies where justice for all children prevails.

DCI believes that there are no rights without justice. The Convention on the Rights of the Child and its Optional Protocols form the fundamental basis of all our work, and are complemented by other international human rights instruments.

DCI is deeply concerned about the short and long term consequences of the current global environmental, social, political and economic crisis that affects everyone but especially vulnerable groups in society, including children. One serious impact has been the global food crisis. These combined, interactive crises have grave consequences for the situation of children in conflict with the law. There is a direct cause-effect relationship between the poor and deteriorating living conditions of millions of children resulting from this comprehensive crisis and the number of them who will come in conflict with the law. By the same token the capacity of States to develop preventive policies and to introduce a juvenile justice system in conformity with the principles set out by the Convention of the Rights of the Child is greatly compromised.

The critical situation demands that the DCI movement take the next steps in the following three years, to ensure that children remain a priority at the international, regional and national level and that juvenile justice principles as outlined in the CRC and in the Committee on the Rights of the Child's "General Comment 10: Children's Rights in Juvenile Justice" are fully implemented.

With this in mind, DCI continues to prioritise the issue of juvenile justice as the overarching theme of the movement at the international level. At the same time, the DCI movement continues to address other needs and concerns of children including violence against children, economic exploitation and child participation.

To achieve these priorities, the DCI movement commits itself to the following strategies :

1) Strengthen its advocacy, lobbying and monitoring, thereby being alert to, responding to, and systematically protesting grave violations of children's rights, such as the death penalty or life imprisonment.
2) Build and consolidate strategic partnerships and alliances to respond adequately to the challenges that the rapidly changing global context presents.
3) Improve the capacity to analyse and respond to children's rights issues proactively, by establishing thematic task forces in the DCI movement, involving DCI sections and associated members.
4) Make better use of existing international and regional human rights instruments and mechanisms, especially the Convention on the Rights of the Child and all others that are binding and have enforcement mechanisms.
5) Monitor the policies of UN agencies as they are working towards the realisation of the Millennium Development Goals and the implementation of international and regional declarations adopted by the States.
6) Continue to strengthen our active presence in all regions of the world, to strengthen the capacity of all the components of the Movement and build programmes at the international, regional and national levels.

Brussels, October 3, 2008

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