



20 September 2016

HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL – 33rd regular session

Annual Half-Day Discussion on Violence against Indigenous Women and Girls

Oral Statement delivered by Defence for Children International (DCI)

Defence for Children International commends the Human Rights Council for its commitment to examine the causes and consequences of physical and psychological violence against indigenous girls and women.

Through its work in over forty countries worldwide, Defence for Children International continues to witness explicit acts of discrimination and violence against indigenous groups, in particular against girls and women. Factors such as age and gender lead to discrimination on a multidimensional basis, making girls and women more vulnerable than other members of the indigenous community.

Indigenous girls and women continue to be subject to physical and psychological violence, sexual abuse, and are often victims of human trafficking and/or sexual exploitation for commercial purposes. Defence For Children International - Colombia reports that health and social services are unfit to treat indigenous girls and women, reinforcing their vulnerability. In cases of sexual violence, health services tend to revictimize the victims causing heightened psychological damage, especially when these victims are girls.

Defence for Children International, in order to effectively address the issues of violence and discrimination against indigenous girls and women, not only in Colombia but across the globe, calls upon Member States to:

- ✓ Comply with ratified human rights instruments in order to fully promote and protect the human rights of indigenous people, especially girls and women.
- ✓ In collaboration with indigenous groups, adopt and implement a national agenda on reducing violence, which should include the strengthening of preventive and monitoring mechanisms to support girls and women at risk.
- ✓ Improve the quality and access to health services in order to prevent unlawful discrimination, causing physical and/or psychological violence against indigenous girls and women.
- ✓ Respect the territorial rights of indigenous communities and refrain from any form of unlawful displacement or forced migration.