



**Defence for
Children International**
the worldwide movement for children's rights



**United Nations Human Rights Council
37th Session
15th March 2017
Consideration of UPR reports**

Consideration of the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) report of Ghana

Thank you, Mr President,

Defence for Children International (DCI), is delivering this statement on behalf of the Girls Advocacy Alliance (GAA), involving the Ghana NGO Coalition on the Rights of the Child (GNCRC), Defence for Children - Ghana and Plan International Ghana. The Girls Advocacy Alliance (GAA) aims to affect policy change to eradicate violence against girls and combat economic exclusion.

We welcome the report of the Working Group on the UPR of Ghana, especially the recommendations related to girls' rights.

We welcome the Government's commitment to enhance the protection of children's rights through legislation, policies and national strategies. We encourage the Government to continue working in partnership with civil society organizations and to ensure the effective implementation of child rights and child protection programs at all levels of implementation.

To further strengthen the effective realization of girls' rights, we would like to strongly encourage the implementation of the UPR recommendations concerning:

- The Ratification of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography (OPSC)¹.
- The allocation of adequate financial and human resources to the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection, Department of Children, Department of Social Welfare, Child Labour Unit, Domestic Violence and Victim Support Unit of the police².
- The full implementation of the Domestic Violence Act³

¹UPR recommendations: 146.1, 146.3, 146.4, 146.5,

² UPR recommendations: 146.156, 146.159, 146.160, 146.161,

³ UPR recommendations: 146.48.



- The harmonization of all relevant domestic laws with the UNCRC, ensuring the effective prohibition and criminalization of child early and forced marriage⁴
- The establishment of mechanisms, procedures and guidelines to end and combat child sexual exploitation and child labour⁵
- The adoption of a comprehensive sexual and reproductive health policy for adolescents, with a special focus on girls⁶

Furthermore, we urge the Government to reinforce its awareness-raising and educational programs that aim to prevent traditional harmful practices - such as child marriage and the resurgences of female genital mutilation (FGM) with an alarming 27% rise in Upper East part of Ghana against women and girls, and further ensure that victims' rights to justice, remedy and reparation are upheld.

We appreciate the collaboration and partnership between the Government and civil society organisations in the UPR process, and we look forward to continued collaboration in the follow-up thereto.

Thank you.

⁴UPR recommendations: 146.152, 146.160, 146.161, 146.162, 146.163, 146.164, 146.165, 146.166, 146.167, 146.167, 146.168, 146.169

⁵ UPR recommendations: 146.3; 146.4., 146.5, 146.172, 146.173., 146.177, 146.182, 146.178, 146.191.

⁶ UPR recommendations: 146.176