



UN Human Rights Council 37th Session – 6 March 2018
Oral Statement on Interactive Dialogue with the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence Against Children

Thank you, Mr./MS President.

This statement is delivered by Defence for Children International, in collaboration with Terre des Hommes International Federation, Plan International, ECPAT International and Global March Against Child Labour, who are working together in the Girls Advocacy Alliance to effect policy change to eradicate violence against girls.

We welcome the annual report of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence Against Children and thank her for her global efforts to end violence against children. Many elements contribute to a child's experience of violence. Gender influences how violence is perpetrated and experienced. A gender perspective is thus necessary to understand and address violence against children, including sexual abuse and exploitation.

Girls at all stages of their childhood are disproportionately affected by gender-based violence. Their subjection to violence is intrinsically linked to patriarchy and control, and men's perceived right to assert power over women and children. As the Special Representative has emphasized in her report, we all need to work towards a world where no child is left behind. This includes examining and addressing gender stereotypes and discrimination that play a critical role in fuelling violence experienced by over one billion children every year.

We therefore:

1. Encourage Member States to design gender-sensitive policies on combating violence against children, and to collect age- and gender- disaggregated data on violence against children;
2. In view of the interconnectedness of the Sustainable Development Goals, encourage linkages between national responses on Target 16.2, and Targets 5.2 and 5.3 on violence against women and girls, and harmful practices;
3. Call on the Special Representative to address and further elaborate in her upcoming work the different gender-related risks and barriers faced by children in the context of early childhood development and children on the move.

Thank you.