



Defence for Children International (DCI) statement before the 47th session of the UN Human Rights Council

Item 2: Interactive dialogue on the report of the High Commissioner on the central role of the State in responding to pandemics and other health emergencies, and the socioeconomic consequences thereof

Brazil's political and economic crisis, prolonged by COVID-19, poses a challenge for regional and international security. Indeed, the current social instability in Brazil spearheaded by the advance of the extreme right to power along with the widespread neoliberalism in the country, has led to recurrent and unprecedented blows to democracy. This has taken place due to the failure by the Brazilian government to comply with the Federal Constitution of 1988.

Brazil is in a situation of legal insecurity, increased poverty, and strikingly high levels of backsliding in public policies, destabilising social protection systems aimed at protecting impoverished populations. Among the most affected are children, with school closures and the widening digital divide hindering children's access to education.

Children, women, human rights defenders, and indigenous communities are under threat. The government's disregard of all WHO guidelines to contain the advance of the pandemic have been evidenced in public hospitals being left without oxygen and intubation kits; the increase in the number of orphaned children; and resulting in nearly 500,000 deaths. In Brazil, COVID has claimed more lives in the first four months of this year than in all of 2020.

DCI remains concerned about the high death toll the virus is having on children in Brazil due to the lack of timely and adequate access to healthcare, we urge the State of Brazil to provide universal health coverage founded in human rights, that guarantees non-discrimination in the right to health of marginalized communities.

We further call on the State of Brazil:

- to uphold its international child rights obligations and include the best interests of the child in its decision-making process
- and to ensure that emergency measures that may result in restrictions on human rights are time-bound, non-discriminatory, legal, necessary, and proportional in compliance with international standards.

I thank you