

JOINT STATEMENT
UPR Adoption of The Netherlands
Geneva, 24th March 2023

This statement is delivered on behalf of the Dutch NGO Coalition for Children's Rights.

Key members of the Coalition are Defence for Children the Netherlands, Kinderpostzegels, the National Youth Council, Save the Children Netherlands and Terre des Hommes Netherlands, in cooperation with UNICEF the Netherlands.

This statement presents our position regarding the government of the Netherlands' views on the conclusion and/or recommendations and will focus on the four issues that were highlighted with our joint concluding statement during the Pre-session. We want to thank all state parties that contributed to the review.

Within the topic of sexual exploitation and trafficking of children five out of six recommendations were supported. We hope this will effectuate a comprehensive national approach to prevent and respond to all forms of child trafficking and sexual exploitation including those online. We continue to stress the importance of prevention of revictimization, equal access to appropriate and timely support and addressing the decreasing visibility of child victims. All these challenges have to be taken into consideration when improving policy, legislation and coordination.

Within the topic of asylum-seeking children only two out of six recommendations were supported. In its coalition agreement the government states it will consider the best interest of the child more thoroughly in the asylum procedure. We welcome this development but are yet to see its definite implementation in law, policy and practise. Additionally, recent reports by various inspectorates have expressed an acute concern with regard to access to education, healthcare and overall (psychological) wellbeing of children who remain in the asylum reception facilities.

Within the topic of international norms and reservations and child justice, we regret that all recommendations were noted. The recommendations concerned the ratification of the third Optional Protocol and reservations made to the UNCRC. However, we welcome the recent research and thorough approach and we trust it will give rise to stronger and more effective legal standing for children.

We call on the government of the Netherlands to accept and carry out all recommendations to achieve a higher standard of children's rights in the Netherlands. We will continue to contribute to the implementation of the recommendations and we look forward to see further progression and collaboration regarding the annual children's rights dialogues.

Thank you for your time.