

**Preparatory Committee for the GA Special Session on Children
Third Substantive Session: New York, 11-15 June 2001**

**Synthesis of discussions on Item 5, Report of the Secretary-General
“*We the Children: End-decade review of the follow-up to the World Summit for
Children*” (A/S-27/3)**

Introduction and presentation

After a welcome and opening statement by **Ambassador Patricia Durrant**, Chairperson of the Preparatory Committee for the United Nations Special Session of the General Assembly on Children (19-21 September 2001), **Deputy Secretary-General Louise Frechette** presented the report of the Secretary-General, *We the Children: End-decade review of the follow-up to the World Summit for Children (A/S-27/3)*. She highlighted the ‘mixed results’ achieved for children over the decade, noting that significant progress in a number of areas has been offset by setbacks in others, with some setbacks serious enough to threaten earlier gains. She sounded a call for renewed commitment and political will at the Special Session on Children to make the needs and rights of children a priority in all development efforts, including through increased investment. The four most urgent priorities are identified as promoting healthy lives; providing quality education, protecting children from abuse, exploitation and violence, and combating HIV/AIDS and the risks it poses to children.

UNICEF Executive Director Carol Bellamy welcomed delegates to the session, noting that we were all embarked on a momentous undertaking to reshape the world such as to allow children to grow to adulthood in health, in peace and in dignity. Recalling the promises of the World Summit for Children, she praised the high level of political commitment, action, and partnerships that have combined to bring about remarkable progress for children over the decade as documented in the Secretary-General's report. She echoed the call for renewed commitment, vision, and leadership in building on the successes and lessons of the 1990s and in drafting a bold agenda for children to address the challenges of the 21st century. Noting the vitality of regional events taking place in preparation for the Special Session as well as the prominent role played by children in these events, she presented a video excerpt from the *Say Yes for Children* campaign, and urged delegates not to let slip this unique opportunity to say yes to the right of every child to a full and healthy life.

In the ensuing discussions, which covered five sessions over three days (11-13 June), the report of the Secretary-General garnered much support and praise from the delegates, who used it as a springboard into broad-based discussion of national-level actions, regional review and consultation processes, and priority issues for the future, including issues they wished to see included in the Outcome Document. A total of **80 Governments and Permanent Observers** to the UN were represented in the discussions, often by the personal representative of the Head of State or Government, and some speaking on behalf of regional groupings (for example, the Rio Group, EU, African Group and Pacific Island Group). Additionally, the President of the UNICEF Executive Board provided a summary of comments on the report made by **UNICEF Board members** during Board discussions the previous week. Representatives from **9 UN agencies**, offices and related bodies as well as from more than **14 non-governmental organizations (NGOs)** (some in coalition or association) also presented their views and concerns. Among the speakers were **9 young people**, 3 from government delegations and 6 from NGOs.

In a separate event, **Her Majesty Queen Rania of Jordan** addressed the Preparatory Committee Meeting. While not commenting directly on the Secretary-General's report, her statement included reference to the end-decade review and its clear relevance for future action, as follows: *"We have fully achieved very, very few of the global goals set at the World Summit for Children; at the same time, we have achieved significant progress on virtually every single one of those goals. An over-arching priority for this meeting and for the September Special Session on Children could be to identify the reasons for this apparent paradox, before we embark on the next stage of our efforts."*

Comments by Government Delegations and Permanent Observers

Delegates commended the hard work and organizational efforts of members of the PrepCom Bureau, expressing particular appreciation for the leadership of Ambassador Durrant. They also congratulated UNICEF Executive Director Carol Bellamy and her entire team for their outstanding commitment to children and for their role as substantive secretariat for the Special Session. Further expressions of thanks and appreciation were offered to Secretary-General Kofi Annan, for his commitment to children in general and for the **high quality** of his report in particular, which was **endorsed** enthusiastically. Wholehearted agreement was expressed with the Secretary-General's articulation of the **universal aspiration for children's well-being** which guides all of our efforts.

Many delegates praised the report for its **comprehensive scope, thoroughness, factual detail, and depth of analysis**. Several drew attention to the **wide range of information and data** drawn upon – including contributions from numerous **national reports** - and lauded the adoption of the **evidence-based approach**. Others commented positively on its **clarity of style, structure and presentation**. One delegate called the report *"a landmark in the analysis of the situation of the world's children,"* citing it as cornerstone analysis because it is based on fact and the contributions of such numerous national reports. Another said the report was *"of excellent quality, highlighting effectively the issues of concern to children, giving them the necessary global perspective"*. Yet another delegate remarked that the report was *"one of a kind,"* which stands out not only in its *"comprehensiveness of detail, its fresh, novel approach, absence of rhetoric and cliché, and the elegance of language and presentation"* but also in *"the hope and optimism that filters through it from beginning to end,"* with the fundamental principles of our mandate reiterated *"with passion and conviction."*

Several delegates commended the report for its **frank, open, and candid appraisal of both progress and constraints** for children over the decade, noting that both positive and negative results were presented **objectively, without bias** and in **appropriate perspective**, providing **excellent insight** into the problems that children around the world continue to face.

Many delegates concurred with the Secretary-General's assessment that much progress has been made for children over the decade, citing in particular the **political commitment** resulting in efforts to place children higher on national and international agendas, including through the development of **national programmes of action**; the positive outcome of concerted efforts to achieve **health and nutrition goals** and to **expand educational opportunities**; and the move towards **improved protection for children** and **implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child**, including through extensive processes of national law reform and policies. A number of delegates highlighted the positive character of their own national experiences in these domains and others commented on the number of national end-decade review reports submitted as an encouraging sign of commitment. One delegate suggested that the positive trend toward **democratic governance and the expanded role of civil society** merited a more prominent placement in the text of the report in view of its importance for children.

Many delegates also echoed the concern expressed in the report over the **numerous constraints** encountered and acknowledged that **enormous challenges remain** both in completing the unfinished agenda of the last decade and in addressing new emerging issues. Many concurred with the identification of poverty, armed conflict, HIV/AIDS, discrimination, abuse and exploitation as the key obstacles impeding progress. **Poverty** in particular was singled out for special attention. As one delegate remarked on the analysis presented in the report, *"The linkages between poverty, denial of children's rights and the security of the future could not have been brought out in simpler or more lucid terms."* Many delegates drew attention to the clear message of the Secretary-General on the need to **invest further in children**, advocating **increased mobilization of resources** at both the **national and international** level. Comments from others addressed issues of **eroding official development assistance, debt relief**, the impact of **economic embargoes and sanctions**, access to **trade and markets**, and the need to devise *"structural adjustment with a human face."*

Many delegates agreed with the importance given in the report to **political will and sustained commitment**, which should be considered as a key development resources. One delegate cited the Secretary-General's assessment, *"The world has fallen short of the goals of the World Summit for Children, not because they were too ambitious or were technically beyond reach. It has fallen short largely because of insufficient investment"* (paragraph 33). Another quoted UNICEF's *Progress of Nations* report: *"The day will come when nations will be judged not by their military or economic strength...but by the well-being of their peoples...."* Yet another delegate noted that even with limited financial resources, countries can achieve goals, if governments commit to strategic planning and budgetary prioritization for children and basic services. Many agreed that a shift in resource allocation was needed in order to make children a priority, and that political will was needed to bring about this shift.

Many delegates pointed to the issue of **widening disparities** highlighted throughout the report, pointing in particular to the clear evidence that **African children** are falling behind other children in the world and merit particular attention. One delegate, speaking on behalf of the African Group, spoke of Africa as *"the endangered continent"* and, while outlining the efforts by African governments and regional organizations to improve the situation of children, called for complementary efforts by the international community to enhance resource mobilization. Another delegate spoke of the need to consider African children as a *"global public good"* and presented the *"African Common Position"* emanating from the Pan-African Forum for African Children, a group to which many other African delegates referred. Much support was expressed for the Secretary-General's call (in Box 1 of the report) to heed the proposal set forth in the Millennium Declaration for a **'first call for the children of Africa'**. One delegate also commended the Secretary-General's proposal on imaginative reform of public institutions and accountability by governments as a prerequisite to achieving improved and sustainable quality of life for children in Africa.

HIV/AIDS was recognized as a major threat by numerous delegates, and statistics from the report were cited, with calls for renewed efforts to combat this terrible scourge. One delegate regretted that the Secretary-General's report did not highlight the Caribbean region as the most-affected region next to Africa and stressed the usefulness of simple, cost-effective treatment for the disease. Another delegate cautioned against letting our guard drop on the **other main diseases** such as **malaria** and **vaccine-preventable diseases** that are still taking the lives of children.

Some delegates stressed the importance of addressing **adolescent health needs** in more concerted fashion. One urged an **expanded focus on women's health** and expressed concern that the report did not place more emphasis on **environmental health problems** stemming from both natural and

technological disasters. This concern was echoed by another delegate who pointed to the dramatic increase in the **scale of natural and technological disasters** over the last two decades, with over 200 million people affected each year. He decried the difficulty of attracting attention to the after-effects of 'forgotten' disasters, such as Chernobyl, and urged measures to **guarantee stable and predictable levels of assistance** to all victims of natural and technological disasters through the creation of an International Disaster Response Law.

As reflected in the Secretary-General's report, **conflict and war** were seen to be inimical to progress, with many delegations stressing the need to both mitigate the effects of war on children (including through humanitarian assistance, cessation of recruitment of child soldiers, and other means) and to address the root causes of war. A few delegates expressed regret that the report did not mention the plight of **children living under foreign occupation**, one pointing out that this category of children had been identified as a source of concern in the World Summit for Children (WSC) Declaration and Plan of Action.

Many delegates highlighted the **importance of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)** in providing the framework and basis for action for children, and commented favorably on this aspect of the report. One pointed to the clear relevance of the rights-based approach in promoting the interests of children, as articulated in the WSC Plan of Action itself, which called for universal ratification and implementation of the CRC. The Plan of Action is seen by many to have functioned as an important tool to encourage implementation of the Convention, and the review at end-decade shows clearly that the CRC has inspired and guided national policies, plans of action, legislation and other measures. Another view expressed was that the CRC has entailed basic changes in the approach to children, which the Special Session must support and strengthen, with child rights promoted within the wider realm of human rights, including the rights of women. One delegate commented that the *"goals for children are vehicles for the realization of rights."* Another stressed that in this era of rights, we are no longer called upon to pledge commitments to children, but to fulfil obligations: *"The Special Session on Children is therefore not the 'Second World Summit for Children'. Rather it is the first Session on the realization of the rights of the child."* As another delegate put it, we need to develop a *"culture of keeping promises"*.

Many delegates agreed with the Secretary-General's report that **partnerships** are essential – with civil society at all levels (particularly local), the private sector, religious groups, the media (properly directed), and children themselves. **Youth and child participation** was especially highlighted by a number of delegates, who pointed in agreement to paragraph 415 of the report stating, *"Recognition of the right of children to participate...is one of the most significant advances made during the last decade."* Three Government Delegations included young people, who presented their views at the meeting, while several delegates described children's active involvement in national reviews, regional consultations, and other fora. A number of delegates pointed to a crucial lesson learned over the decade on the **need to listen to children**, whose views and participation add to the quality of policies and programmes. **New methods and models to facilitate child participation** need to be continuously devised, along with new indicators to measure and assess effectiveness. One delegate noted that her country is translating the global 'Say Yes for Children' campaign into a national 'Hear our Voices' campaign. Others spoke of the usefulness of opinion polls for youth. One delegate suggested that the 'lesson learned', highlighted in the Secretary-General's report as *"Seeing children differently and acting accordingly,"* could be taken as a fitting motto for the collaborative work over the course of the PrepCom deliberations.

Many delegates expressed agreement with the Secretary-General's emphasis on the need to support **families and parents as the primary caregivers** of children and the source of values, particularly in view of the changing nature of the family and the circumstances which affect it, including HIV/AIDS. As one delegate put it, "[The nation] will be as strong as its families." The importance of **early childhood care and education** was also acknowledged. A number of delegates drew attention to the need to attend more to the **psychosocial and emotional needs** of children, particularly as these are changing in response to evolving circumstances such as processes of transition or the challenges of life in post-industrial societies. **Child protection issues** were seen by many delegates to be of increasingly critical importance, as were problems related to **discrimination**. One delegate commended the report for highlighting disparities involving gender and indigenous children, hoping to see references to both the indigenous peoples and migrants in the Outcome Document. Another delegation hoped to see importance attached to special measures for **rights and freedoms**, as outlined in the Secretary-General's report, reflected in the Outcome Document as well; the same delegation acknowledged the useful reference in the Secretary-General's report to the development of **instruments to measure human rights**.

Specific challenges mentioned by delegates as requiring heightened efforts, including more effective international and regional collaboration, include **emerging social issues** such as violence and sexual exploitation; substance abuse, drug trafficking, terrorism, environmental degradation, the adverse effects of information and communication technology, and trafficking in persons, especially women and children. One delegate said that the first bilateral accord on child trafficking in the West African region should be taken into account in the report. Other elements mentioned as meriting particular emphasis in the Outcome Document include a focus on adolescents as a distinct group; sexual and reproductive health issues; juvenile justice; the accountability of governments; and inter-agency coordination.

Delegates welcomed the efforts made by the Secretary-General to **draw on lessons from the past** in order to define **priority actions for the future**, with some delegates expressing the hope that these would be taken into consideration in the Outcome Document and in the **elaboration of future actions** for children. Lessons learned highlighted by members of the UNICEF Executive Board included: the need to wed **advocacy to concrete action**; the importance of **partnerships at all levels**; the need to **invest in health and social services**; the policy and pragmatic value of a **goals-based approach**; and the synergistic effect of combining **vertical and horizontal approaches**. Delegates generally **endorsed the 4 main priority areas** for the future: promoting healthy lives, providing quality education, protecting children from abuse, exploitation and violence, and combating HIV/AIDS. A number of delegates commented on the **forward-looking nature** of the report, its **broad vision for the future**, and the **usefulness of its assessments** for the **definition of future goals and strategies**. One delegate planned **wide national dissemination** of the report as a basis for further reflection and an input into the formulation of a new national plan for children, urging other States to do the same.

A few delegates wished to see **regionally specific concerns** reflected more clearly in the report and/or in the Outcome Document, in particular the challenges faced by **countries in transition** which, although noted and appreciated in the report, need to be more clearly highlighted, and the special needs of **island States**. Delegates from a number of regions made reference to the **regional events and consultations**, which have helped them take stock of specific regional problems and define regional priorities, urging that these be reflected in the Outcome Document, or even included as annexes. These include the Pan African Forum on the Future of Children resulting in the 'African Common Position' (Cairo, May 2001); the Middle East and North Africa Regional Youth Forum on 21st Century Issues (Amman, November 2000); the Arab Regional Civil Society Forum on Children (Rabat, February

2001); the Arab-African Ministers of Finance Conference (Marrakech, May 2001); the Berlin Commitment for Children of Europe and Central Asia (Berlin, May 2001); the Fifth East Asia and Pacific Ministerial Consultation resulting in the 'Beijing Declaration on Commitments for Children' (Beijing, May 2001); the South Asia High Level Meeting on Investing in Children, resulting in the 'Kathmandu Understanding' (Kathmandu, May 2001); and the Fifth Ministerial Meeting on Children and Social Policy in the Americas resulting in the 'Kingston Consensus' (Kingston, October 2000); and the Tenth Ibero-American Summit resulting in the 'Panama Declaration' (Panama, November 2000).

Comments from the UN system

Representatives of UN agencies and offices took the occasion to identify priorities for children falling within their mandates, with some representatives outlining activities pursued by their agencies in follow-up to the WSC and other related conferences, and others stressing issues they wished to see included or strengthened in the Outcome Document.

- ◆ **World Health Organization (WHO):** stated that the spirit of the report, with its focus on measuring progress and drawing lessons from experience, was vital to achieving the goals of the coming decade. Recalling that 23 out of 27 goals of the WSC were health-related, it stressed that healthy growth and development were fundamental human rights of every child and adolescent and that investment in health was vital to poverty reduction. Priorities include the need to complete the unfinished child survival agenda; to focus specifically on the health of adolescents; to step up efforts to address child nutrition and the health of newborns, including through improved maternal health and nutrition and better care; and to invest in health systems for quality public services, particularly as a means of reducing maternal mortality. WHO reiterated its commitment to identify research needs for the next decade; to review the evidence and identify effective strategies to attain goals; to develop clear targets and indicators for health-related goals; and to support capacity-building and institution-strengthening.
- ◆ **International Labour Organization (ILO):** noted the growing consensus on child labour, particularly its worst forms, which are seen as a major challenge to be taken up with urgency, building on the international legal framework established to combat the problem and supporting the global movement developing against it. ILO offered specific text to strengthen references to child labour in the Outcome Document.
- ◆ **United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA):** reiterated its full commitment to the WSC follow-up and review process. Representatives identified key lessons learned from its own activities, in partnership with other groups and organizations over the decade, to promote the health of women, adolescents, children and infants, including reproductive health and prevention of HIV/AIDS. Programme success, they said, depends on several factors: building on the socio-cultural context; focusing on outcomes, promoting capacity-building for sustainability, and involving clients in programme design. In line with the broad commitments of ICPD, gains in reproductive health depend on addressing contextual factors, including unequal gender relations and poverty, and on increasing investments in preventive health care and social services. Finalization of the Outcome Document can build on the WSC review as well as other global conference review outcomes as a compass to guide future directions.
- ◆ **Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO):** expressed appreciation for the documents under consideration, saying that they well reflect the situation of children around the world as well as

what remains to be done to meet the WSC goals. At the same time the organization urged that more emphasis be given to the contextual factors conditioning children's lives and directly affecting their ability to secure rights and meet needs. Pointing out that malnutrition is not an issue that can be dealt with by the health sector alone, one FAO representative stressed the importance of investment in rural development and agricultural productivity to ensure children's right to food. This was noted as one of the most important lessons of the World Food Summit (WFS), to be taken up again in WFS+5. In conclusion, he said, "*The world must look to its farms, not to its pharmacies, to meet people's nutritional needs*".

- ◆ **World Food Programme (WFP):** welcomed and supported the Secretary-General's report which "*presents in a clear manner the goals and targets set, and progress made in reaching them.*" While finding many parts of the report encouraging, WFP noted with concern the worsening situation in Africa, and called for renewed efforts to address key constraints. Priorities include improving the nutritional status of adolescent girls, pregnant women and mothers; providing nutritious complementary foods; and focusing on particularly vulnerable women and children. WFP noted that support to school lunches can boost educational enrollments. The UN system's Sub-Committee on Nutrition (ACC/SCN) promotes partnerships and coordination of efforts for salt iodization, vitamin A and iron supplementation and, increasingly, fortification of foods.
- ◆ **Committee on the Rights of the Child:** noted that the WSC placed CRC ratification and implementation at the centre of the international agenda for children and that a decade of experience proved the importance of reinforcing the existing consensus on grounding all commitments on the human rights of children. The Committee then went on to suggest specific language and amendments to text in the Outcome Document to strengthen its alignment with the rights enshrined in the CRC.
- ◆ **Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR):** noted the importance of the CRC in shaping international consensus on a new vision of children as fully fledged subjects of rights, pointing to the clear and very welcome emphasis in the Secretary-General's report on child rights and the Convention in the sections on WSC follow-up and monitoring and lessons learned. Citing paragraph 489, "*Experience in the 1990s also confirmed that approaches based explicitly on the child rights principles can make a difference in development implementation,*" OHCHR urged that the Outcome Document be framed firmly within the Convention so as to reflect the experiences of the past decade. It further noted that a human rights approach based on the principle of non-discrimination requires efforts to eliminate disparities, saying that the Secretary-General's report on the collection of disaggregated data reveals evidence of unacceptable and in many cases growing disparities. OHCHR also welcomed the current attention given to reduction of gender discrimination in education, but urged that a similar gender focus be applied to health and protection issues. It also urged that targets for the elimination of other kinds of discrimination on the basis of race or minority status be included. It identified juvenile justice and human rights education as issues to be strengthened and also pointed to the obligation under the CRC to promote and encourage international cooperation to implement the economic, social and cultural rights of children.
- ◆ **Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR):** welcomed the Secretary-General's report, saying that it provides a valuable synthesis of a broad range of reviews and reports and complements the Outcome Document under discussion. It urged sufficient focus in the Outcome Document on protection-oriented goals, targets and strategies for refugee children and

other people in similar situations, highlighting the following issues: birth registration; family reunification; asylum-seeking; training and capacity-building; strengthened monitoring and reporting to ensure implementation of international standards; and allocation of sufficient resources by the international community. It then quoted a refugee child who said: *“If we are the future and we are dying, there is no future.”*

- ◆ **World Bank:** thanked UNICEF for its preparatory work, noted World Bank participation in regional consultations and technical meetings, and recognized the *“exceptional work that has been gathered together in support of the Secretary-General's report.”* It then highlighted areas requiring greater attention before the Special Session. These include: a) early child development, with a focus on synergistic effects of health, nutrition and stimulation as the foundation for human development; b) child health and the integrated management of childhood illnesses, focused particularly on the poorest and most disadvantaged children; c) nutrition, including a focus on household food security as a core part of any approach to poverty reduction and children's well-being; d) school health to achieve both health and education goals through collaborative action; and e) enhanced participation of children and young people.

Comments from NGOs

Most NGOs took the occasion to present particular areas of concern, with many recommending modifications to strengthen attention to these areas in the Outcome Document. A number of NGOs highlighted the role of civil society and particularly the participation of children and youth. Some NGOs referred specifically to the Secretary-General's report, offering support and endorsement as well as particular comments.

Rotary International spoke of its efforts in child immunization and its success in mobilizing volunteers in the fight against polio. A young **Kiwanis Club** representative spoke of her group's work in service to others as testimony to the ability of youth to make a positive difference to the world. An under-18 representative speaking on behalf of several NGOs, including **Save the Children Canada, Save the Children US** and **World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts**, welcomed the philosophy behind the Secretary-General's report and its comprehensive nature, but urged that the children behind the statistics be remembered. The representative called for heightened child and adolescent participation in decision-making and commented that issues of children's alienation and disenfranchisement are insufficiently addressed in both the report and the Outcome Document.

The **Environment and Health Caucus** encouraged greater emphasis in the Outcome Document on environmental health hazards for children, proposing several key recommendations that included specific goals and targets. A young representative for the **Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids** (in association with the **World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts, World Information Transfer, World Federation of Ukrainian Women's Organizations, the US Committee on UNIFEM, and ARUAC 2000**) strongly endorsed the Secretary-General's report but called for a stronger message against tobacco in the Outcome Document that would include recommendations from the draft WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control. The representative of the **Breastfeeding Promotion Network of India** congratulated the Secretary-General on an excellent report in general and on the extensive treatment of infant feeding issues in particular, offering comments he hoped would be incorporated in the Outcome Document. These focused on: a) the May 2001 recommendation by WHO to set six months as the optimal duration for exclusive breastfeeding; b) the need for monitoring and follow-up to the International Code of Marketing of Breastmilk

Substitutes; c) the need to address the absence of maternity benefits for women working in the formal sectors; and d) the need for childcare services for working women.

International Federation Terre des Hommes recommended strengthening provisions related to child trafficking in the Outcome Document, while **Global Unions** (including **International Confederation of Free Trade Unions and Education International**) emphasized the link between the provision of free education and efforts to eliminate child labour, urging full implementation of the CRC in the realization of the right to education. A young representative of the **Global March Against Child Labour** offered specific recommendations on this issue. A young **Disability Caucus** representative spoke of the Special Session as an opportunity to review progress in protecting the rights of children with disabilities, underscoring the message in the message in the Secretary-General's report that "*the greatest problems faced by individuals with disabilities are social, economic and cultural – not medical – in nature,*" (paragraph 393), and calling for the wider establishment of 'inclusion' as a concept, practice and human rights objective.

The **Violence against Children Caucus** reinforced proposals of the **NGO Child Rights Caucus** to strengthen children's right to protection from all forms of violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation. The Caucus called for the Outcome Document to promote full implementation of the CRC and to provide specific action-oriented, time-bound and forward-looking goals and indicators appropriate to the next decade, not the previous one. A spokesman for the youth delegates of the **Children's Rights Alliance for England** suggested the Outcome Document adopt stronger language on protecting children from corporal punishment. The **Fraternite Notre Dame** spoke of its mission to respond to both material and spiritual needs.

World Vision appreciated the honest assessment of the situation of children in the Secretary-General's report, noting that the elimination of poverty must be at the centre of a strong action plan to address the central challenge stated in the report: disparities between rich and poor countries. The organization called for more efforts to be focused on contemporary conflicts, a new challenge singled out in the report. It noted that the Convention is more than a framework for World Vision's actions - it serves as a practical tool to help improve the lives of children and their families. World Vision further called for international mechanisms to protect children from violence; measures to strengthen the Committee on the Rights of the Child; and heightened attention to children's issues in the Security Council.