



UNITED NATIONS SECRETARY-GENERAL'S STUDY ON VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN

1. THE VIOLENCE STUDY

The United Nations Secretary-General's Study on Violence against Children has been a global effort to paint a detailed picture of the nature, extent and causes of violence against children, and to propose clear recommendations for action to prevent and respond to it.

In 2001 the General Assembly decided to request the Secretary-General to conduct 'an in-depth study on the question of violence against children' and in 2002 the Commission on Human Rights suggested that an independent expert be appointed to lead the Study, in collaboration with OHCHR, UNICEF and WHO. On 12 February 2003, the Secretary-General appointed Professor Paulo Sérgio Pinheiro as the independent expert and a small Secretariat was established in Geneva to support the work.

Since 2003, thousands of people all over the world have contributed to the Study:

- More than 3,000 people were involved in nine regional consultations held to consolidate information and explore ways forward at regional level;
- 14 thematic consultations produced new knowledge on crucial areas to understanding violence against children, preventing it and responding when it occurs;
- Subregional and national meetings – often driven by and including children and young people – have been held across the globe;
- NGOs have been active through various channels including an NGO Advisory Panel set up to centralize NGO efforts;
- Other UN agencies and international and regional bodies were involved, including ILO, UNHCR, UNESCO, UNODC and DAW-DESA;
- A record 136 Government responses¹ to a detailed questionnaire were received. In many cases, preparation of responses generated national debate about the question of violence against children and inspired action to address the problem;
- More than 270 individuals and organizations from many parts of the world responded to the call for public submissions;
- Researchers, children's groups, corporations and individuals were mobilized to contribute in different ways.

The report presented to the General Assembly on 11 October 2006 is just one result of these efforts. A book containing the full results of the Study, nine regional summaries and an educational package for children and young people are among the tools that will be used to take the Study's recommendations forward. Importantly, in all regions processes have been put in place to continue the Study's work and to act upon its recommendations.

While everyone has a part to play in ending violence against children, ultimately the recommendations focus on the need for governments to fulfil their obligation to prevent and eliminate violence against children.

¹ As of 20 September 2006, 135 member states and one observer had submitted responses.