



**CLOSING STATEMENT FROM THE
CHILDREN'S FORUM
TO THE UNITED NATIONS PLENARY
SESSION ON THE
COMMEMORATIVE EVENT SPECIAL
SESSION/WORLD FIT FOR CHILDREN+5**

13th of December, 2007

I am Millicent Orondo Atieno. I come from Kenya. I am 15 years old. I'm here to present the statement produced by all the participants from different parts of World, who have attended the Children's Forum on a World Fit for Children.

The path to a world fit for children has been, and still is, long and difficult. We still have so much more to achieve. Since 2002, we have started following this path. We the children, have always been ready and willing to keep on moving forward. We are the hope and the light that cannot be turned off. We have three more years to go. We have passed the half-way mark. This is our final chance to urge you to keep your promises, and your final warning, that action needs to be taken.

It is no longer a question of what to do or how to do it, but of what is given priority. We call on all adult decision makers to renew their commitments towards us and make us the number one priority. There should be no argument about the best interests of the child as being the number one priority. You often "consider" the best interests of the child, but just talking about it is not enough. It should be the guiding principle that should steer all your

decisions and all your actions. We recommend that when you are preparing National Budgets, for example, every decision should be consistent with the best interest of the child.

It is through the meaningful partnerships between government, civil society, private sector and young people that the cycle of poverty can be broken. Poverty is indeed the main obstacle that prevents us from building a better World for children and quality education is a key to breaking the horrible cycle of poverty. Therefore, we children demand access to quality education for each and every child. Teach the child of today, so as not to punish the adult of tomorrow. If adults commit to us for a better present, we commit to them a better future.

In my country, as in many other countries in the World, the lives of children and young people are threatened by HIV and AIDS. Access to life skills education, is for us a priority in the fight against such diseases. Life skills education helps us develop healthy styles of life. In this way, we can learn how to protect ourselves from the danger of diseases.

We call on you, governments and your local authorities to provide supportive environments for those children and young people living with HIV and AIDS. This is another example of what we mean by working in the best interest of the child.

You, the leaders of the World's countries, need to work together across national borders to ensure children's rights. Together we are strong. In the last few days we, the children have seen that friendship does not have barriers. Despite our cultural differences and language barriers, we all have the same goal. To make this World a better place for us, for all children.

As we look to the future, there are some notable achievements worth acknowledging. We have learnt from the Progress for

Children Report, that the annual global death of children under five years old, is for the first time below the 10 million mark. For us this is a very encouraging sign of progress and we hope that in the future, similar results increase. Our World has three more years – to save the lives of those children who are at risk. Unless we improve our performance, nearly 30 million more children will die by 2010.

Discussions are essential, especially with children. We want to be more involved. Let our voices be heard in our local communities; in our schools and our parliaments. Wherever people are making decisions that affect children, we want to be involved.

But what matters most to us are results. Children don't just want resolutions. Children want solutions. We don't want to hear any more good intentions; we want to see more actions.

We are ready.

Let us redouble our efforts.

Let us together make reality of a World Fit for Children.

I thank you for your attention.

Delivered by Ms. Millicent Orondo, 15 years, from Kenya on behalf of all the children and young people gathered at the WFFC+5 Children's Forum.

Short Bio of : Ms. Millicent Atieno Orondo, girl, 15 years old, from Kenya

Millicent lives with her father in an informal settlement known as Kangemi in the outskirts of Nairobi. Her father works as a cook in a nearby convent. Millicent is the second born in a family of three girls and one boy. Her mother lives up-country where she runs a small fish business and comes to Nairobi regularly to visit the family.

Millicent is active in promoting a toll-free helpline for children and is a member of the Child-to-Child (CTC) Club in her school. She joined the club as a child. Later, she was elected Chairperson of the Child Participation Committee in a democratic election. In this role, she oversees the activities of all the CTC Clubs in schools.

Millicent is also a member of the Scouts and she likes music, debates and drama clubs.