



OFFICE OF THE SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ON
VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN

Reaching the heights for the rights of the child

**Council of Europe Strategy for the Rights of the Child
2016-2021**

High-Level Launching Conference

Sofia, 5-6 April 2016

Statements

Ms Elda Moreno

Director

Office of the Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General on
Violence against Children

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The preparation and the follow-up to the UN Study triggered an unprecedented and world-wide mobilization to end violence against children. Its recommendations have influenced the agendas of the UN, Regional Organisations, civil society organisations and countries around the world.

And yet. A study published in 2016 estimates that in 2014, about 1 billion children suffered from violence. As SG Ban Ki-moon recently stated “we may feel powerless and overwhelmed by this daunting figure. But we shouldn’t. Violence can be prevented. And we know how.”

Since the adoption of the UN Study on violence against children in 2006 and the launch, the same year, of the Programme “Building a Europe for and with Children”, the consecutive **Council of Europe strategies on the rights of the child have consistently aimed at eliminating violence against children.**



Bulgarian Chairmanship
Council of Europe
November 2015 – May 2016
Présidence de la Bulgarie
Conseil de l'Europe
Novembre 2015 – Mai 2016



During the past ten years, the Council of Europe has translated the key recommendations of the Study in legal instruments, policy guidance, campaigns and programs that are guiding and supporting member States' efforts to prevent and respond to violence. The groundbreaking nature of this work has also resulted in progress in other regions and at global level.

The effort invested in mainstreaming children's rights in the whole organization has increased the coherence, the relevance, the impact and the visibility of this important work.

So: when it comes to violence against children, I believe that:

Europe has a **clear objective**,
knows what needs to be done,
has the **expertise** to implement its design **and**
has a cutting-edge toolbox!

So: what is happening? Why are so many millions of children in Europe still suffering from violence?

I think there is something wrong with the values we have entered into the equation, because we are getting miniatures, instead of full-sized results.

Clearly, to end violence against children we have to scale up and invest in the three dimensions:

1. The height: Violence against children has to be much higher in the agenda;
2. The depth: children's rights need to be integrated much deeper in the social values-set;
3. The width: we need a much broader mobilization. We have to bring many more professionals, organisations, institutions and individuals on board.

Now, the good news is that, thanks to the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development, we have a fantastic opportunity to invest in these three dimensions and make a real breakthrough, so that we can really reach the heights for all children!

As you know, the 2030 Agenda includes the elimination of all forms of violence against children as a specific target and a cross-cutting concern.

I am convinced that, **through its new Strategy on the Rights of the Child, the Council of Europe can make a decisive contribution** to the implementation of this universal and transformational Agenda.

How?

As you know, member States will now have to integrate the global goals in their national frameworks. They will also have to report to the UN on progress achieved. A set of global indicators is being agreed, but they are very limited in scope. For instance, for target 16.2 (end all forms of violence against children), the indicators are:

1. Percentage of children aged 1-17 who experienced any physical punishment and/or psychological aggression by caregivers in the past month

2. Number of victims of human trafficking per 100.000 population, by sex, age group and form of exploitation
3. Percentage of young women and men aged 18-24 who experienced sexual violence by age 18.

Obtaining this data will be of course a huge achievement. But this cannot be the only indicator of progress and States will also have to identify other indicators and benchmarks that they will use at national level.

States have also committed to mobilise resources to achieve the SDGs.

I see at least four key interventions for the Council of Europe:

1. First, the Council of Europe can **support member States in the integration of the elimination of violence against children in their national frameworks**, in particular by promoting its recommendation on integrated national strategies to protect children from violence and by encouraging multi-stakeholders reviews at national level to promote inclusive processes and increase accountability at national level.
2. Second, the Council of Europe can help to preserve **the universality and the integrity of the 2030 Agenda**. The 2030 Agenda is not a plan for less developed countries. It is an agenda for ALL countries. All the targets and goals are mutually reinforcing and the Council of Europe can help to **establish the necessary links between violence against children and other key targets** (such as those related to quality education, social protection and inclusion, gender equality, accountable and transparent institutions, and access to justice for all).
3. Third, the Council of Europe can use its **various bodies and institutions to support the collection of data and information** needed to review progress. For instance, the Lanzarote Committee could support countries in achieving and reviewing progress on sexual abuse and exploitation; GRETA on trafficking, GREVIO on gender-based violence against girls... The new Ad Hoc Committee on the Rights of the Child or other Steering Committees could also identify a set of key policy interventions that could be used as indicators of progress (such as legislation to ban violence, national integrated strategies, data collection mechanisms, safe and child sensitive counselling and reporting mechanisms, etc). The standards of the Council of Europe and the outcome of its monitoring bodies are an excellent basis for this work.
4. Fourth: the Council of Europe could use **its institutions, networks and convening power to trigger further commitment and to contribute to movement building**. I would like to mention in particular the crucial contribution that the youth sector could make, also by facilitating children and young people participation and leadership in these efforts.

The bottom-line is that, by taking all these measures, the Council of Europe can become a **regional forum to assess and stimulate progress by European countries on violence-related targets** in the SDGs, bridging the national and the global processes. By doing so, the Council of Europe would also make **a quantum leap in its own agenda**, preserving a rights-based approach

in States' actions, ensuring greater levels of implementation of Council of Europe standards and a more efficient international cooperation.

Dear friends:

A month ago, our Office launched the High Time to end violence against children initiative. It is a time and talent raising effort that aims at obtaining a higher political commitment, a deeper integration of zero violence values in society and a broader social mobilisation to end violence. In the countdown to 2030, everybody counts and everybody is needed! I trust you will join this effort.

Together, we can make zero Mankind's favourite number. Zero violence!

Thank you for your attention