

Ratify OP3 CRC

INTERNATIONAL COALITION FOR THE OPCRC
ON A COMMUNICATIONS PROCEDURE

Item 3 – Promotion and Protection of all human rights, civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights, including the rights to development.

Annual full-day Meeting on the Rights of the Child

Joint oral statement on behalf of Child Rights Coalition Asia (CRC Asia), Groupe des ONG pour la Convention relative aux droits de l'enfant*, Child Rights International Network (CRIN), Eurochild, Kindernothilfe*, Plan International *, Red latinoamericana y caribeña por la defensa de los derechos de los niños, niñas y adolescentes (Redlamyc), Save the Children*, Terre des Hommes International Federation* and World Vision*.

Check against delivery

Thank you Mr President.

The following statement is made on behalf of ten non-governmental organisations forming the Steering Committee of **Ratify OP3 CRC – International Coalition for the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on a Communications Procedure**, which represents over 70 international, regional and national non-governmental organisations and networks working on child rights.

Mr President,

The Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on a Communications Procedure (OP3 CRC) has now been ratified by ten States, meaning that it will enter into force on 14 April 2014.

With this unique quasi-judicial complaint and inquiry mechanism, the international community strongly reaffirms that children are full rights-holders. It allows victims to seek justice internationally when they could not get redress for violations of their rights nationally.

OP3 CRC does not entail new rights, rather, it gives concrete meaning to the rights States already committed to when they ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child and/or its first two Optional Protocols. It upholds children's right to an effective remedy.

Until now, the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child was the only core international human rights treaty that had no such mechanism. While we welcome the upcoming entry into force of OP3 CRC, we are concerned that access to justice will only become a tangible

*NGOs with ECOSOC status

reality for all children around the world if States join the first ten States parties.

As discussed today, children face many obstacles and challenges in accessing justice. They may be required to act through their parents even in case of a conflict of interest, lack the advice they need, and remedies for violations of their rights may not exist at the national level. They may not be consulted or their views may be disregarded, thus compromising their right to be heard.

OP3 CRC will act as an important and useful tool for States to ensure that their national frameworks are effective in providing access to justice for children at domestic level. Where there are gaps within national systems, the new procedure will allow the Committee on the Rights of the Child to assist States by recommending measures and actions for improvement.

But for these achievements to happen, OP3 CRC must be ratified by national governments.

Our Coalition therefore urges States to ratify this new treaty without delay.

Thank you Mr President.