



On the Record for Children

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From the AP Editorial Desk

About the Special Session:

PrepCom Chair Issues New Version of Outcome Document

Jamaica's Patricia Durrant, Chair of the Preparatory Committee of the Special Session, has prepared a new version of 'A World Fit for Children,' the Outcome Document for the Special Session with about 30 changes to the last version.

The new text has been circulated to members of the Child Rights Caucus, which will release a new alternative version by mid to late April. Though few of the changes in the official text are drastic, Jo Becker, who chairs the Caucus, points to a watered-down reference to the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC).

Paragraph 29 of the new text says: 'The Convention on the Rights of the Child and its optional protocols contain a comprehensive set of international legal norms for the protection and well-

being of children.' This is much weaker, says Becker, than the original text, which said: 'The Convention on the Rights of the Child and its optional protocols and other relevant international treaties and conventions are essential standards for building a world fit for children.'

Becker says that the Caucus is concerned at the gradual erosion of the previously agreed text. As a result, the Child Rights Caucus will produce two position papers on how child rights issues have been handled at the UN, as well as the debate over reproductive rights issues.

'We'll set out a bottom line in these papers,' says Becker. 'And we'll make clear that we cannot have any backsliding in the Outcome Document. There can be no going back to the days before Beijing and Cairo.' The position papers will be available on April 22.

The Child Rights Caucus and the Working Group on Child Rights of the NGO Committee on UNICEF will distribute an abbreviated version of the alternative Outcome Document to government delegates when formal negotiations resume in late April. The abbreviated alternative text will suggest proposed language for paragraphs that have not yet been agreed upon.

Becker says that a number of governments have acknowledged the importance of the NGO contribution, and she is hoping that governments in Africa and Asia that have yet to fully weigh in on the Outcome Document will listen carefully to non-governmental actors. Members of the Child Rights Caucus and the Working Group on Child Rights are hoping to reach these delegates in late April.

- For more information on the Child Rights Caucus and to view the group's alternative document and position papers once they are available, visit the website.

Poor Turnout Expected by Heads of State From Developed World

Only a handful of the 74 heads of state who have confirmed their attendance at the May Special Session on Children are from the developed world.

Liechtenstein, Monaco, Spain, Finland and Andorra will send heads of state to the Special Session. Members from the royal families of three countries-Belgium, Jordan, and Morocco-have also confirmed their attendance. One hundred and twenty additional countries will be sending delegations headed by ministers and other high level dignitaries. Governments can still confirm their attendance at the Special Session.

UNICEF officials say the May Special Session will be one of the top five most attended special sessions in UN history. It will serve as a follow-up to the 1990 World Summit for Children, which was attended by many heads of state from the developed world including the then US President George Bush and French President Francois Mitterand. A total of 71 heads of state attended the 1990 Summit.

'We're still hoping donor countries will send heads of state to the UN in May,' says Patsy Robertson of the UNICEF media department. 'This special session is taking place at a time when the world community is beginning to focus on poverty and its impact on peace and development.'

It makes a lot of sense to invest in young people and to protect them from the abuse and neglect that create insecurity in the world. We hope world leaders will realise this.'

UNICEF officials are hoping for a good turn-out of heads of state because it will give young participants a chance to air their concerns to their leaders directly. They say that young people in key donor countries are working to pressure their governments to send heads of state. They also hope that the clout of Nelson Mandela and Graca Machel will help persuade developed countries to send their top officials.

Record Number of Youth Delegates to Participate

So far, a total of 255 young people have signed up to attend the Special Session. This is a record number of young participants at the UN. One hundred and forty-nine of the youth participants will be official government delegates. They represent 84 countries so far and will sit alongside their governmental delegations as the General Assembly meets. Another 106 of the youth participants will accompany non-governmental delegations, representing 73 NGOs. The deadline for confirming attendance of youth delegates to the UN is April 19, after which the UN will reconfirm delegates' attendance by double-checking identities and affiliations.

Calendar of NGO Side Events Now Available

A total of 65 NGO side events have been confirmed for the May Special Session. The deadline for re-confirming side events that were originally scheduled for September has now passed and no more side events will be allowed. The majority of NGO events will take place at the Church Center.

Details of most official side events, such as the children's forum and a parliamentary forum, are now available on the UNICEF website.

Opinion:

By Naomi Lightman (Young People's Press, Toronto)

Never Again

'Never Again' - this famous slogan of WWII and Nazi persecution reverberated through my mind as I stood last week in the death camps of Auschwitz. No emotional or educational preparation could have prepared me for this terrifying reality check.

I was part of a delegation of young people from around the world to witness the devastating war sites in Poland. We saw ghettos where thousands of political prisoners had been crammed together and work camps that seemed to rival death in their intolerable conditions. We saw a memorial of 18,000 stones, each one commemorating a Jewish Polish community that was extinguished in the gas chambers.

I left Poland determined not to carry with me the grievances of my ancestors. Instead, I vowed to try to use the experience as a warning against the cruelty that humankind can all too easily inflict

upon itself. Abrasions from century-old grudges are still being felt and justifications made to carry on historical resentments.

It is the children who suffer the most from this cruelty. And it is children who realise the absurdity of these situations and who have the courage and optimism to affect change.

Around the world, young people continue to be injured and brutalised, victims of nations in conflict. Poverty, hunger and the unfair divisions of wealth in this world are all, at least partially, also a consequence of old prejudices and hatred.

The time has come for a new generation of global youth to rise together and say 'Enough!' Enough war. Enough anger. Enough retaliation.

Instead, let us focus on healing old wounds, moving forward and improving the living conditions of children wherever they may be. There can be no more justifications for the suffering of children.

As the United Nations Children's Session fast approaches, these are the very issues that should be addressed. And youth must have the right to be heard. Our voices will be those that guide the discussions forward, forgetting old biases and healing old wounds.

It is a time for us to voice our concerns, exchange ideas and learn from one another. And it is the time for world leaders to listen!

As a youth journalist for On the Record for Children, I am again inviting you, as interested young people around the globe, to tell us how YOUTH in your communities are organizing for social change or about what YOU would say if you had the opportunity to address world leaders at the Special Session. Please send your 150-200 word mini-articles to the Young People's Press newsroom.

It's time to show we mean business!

In the News:

NGOs and UN Struggle to Respond to 'Sex for Aid' Scandal

NGOs are struggling to respond to allegations that staff from more than 40 international aid agencies - including the World Food Program and UNHCR - have demanded sex in return for humanitarian assistance from refugee women and children in the West African countries of Guinea, Sierra Leone and Liberia.

At a March meeting of the NGO Committee's Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict, Andrew Johnson of Save the Children UK said that even though the charges had prompted an extraordinary amount of debate, from DC to New York to Geneva, there was minimal information sharing.

Meanwhile, UN agencies and NGOs are drafting separate codes of conduct for their workers - and this too has some NGOs concerned. 'We're worried that everyone will get so involved in drafting their own codes of conduct that the protection of women and children will once again be sidelined,' says Mary Diaz of the Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children, who serves as Chair of the Working Group.

The sex for aid scandal came to light in a report in late February by a research team comprised of an independent consultant, a UNHCR consultant and a staff member from Save the Children UK. The team was investigating the sexual exploitation of refugee girls in West Africa, in preparation for a December 2001 conference about Child Sex Exploitation in Yokohama, Japan.

Around the same time, an independent team was completing a global evaluation of UNHCR's child protection work throughout 2001. This team also uncovered allegations of sex exploitation in West African camps.

In focus groups with refugee children, allegations of sexual exploitation of refugee girls consistently came up unprompted, says team leader Beth Verhey. A draft version of this report was widely disseminated to NGOs and other stakeholders in November 2001. 'Children and women are two of UNHCR's policy priorities,' says Verhey. 'In our evaluation report, we highlight that a lack of accountability underlies shortcomings in UNHCR's protection of refugee children. There is the sense that both 'everyone' and 'someone else' are responsible for child protection. This allows for diffusion of accountability. The result is 'management a la carte.'

In an effort to prevent further abuse, a Task Force composed of UN and NGO staff is meeting weekly to monitor the situation, as well as ensure the safe and speedy distribution of food and other essential supplies. Eight UNHCR protection staff have arrived in the region and four more are on the way.

The Task Force is helping to establish a full staffing review of aid workers in the three countries. It has also called for codes of conduct, systems of accountability, safer means of distributing supplies through women, safe access to showers and latrines for women and children, and standardised and more thorough training for aid workers.

The Task Force is struggling to put in place an effective long-term system at a time when international aid agencies are suffering from massive budget cutbacks. Kamel Morjane, UN Assistant High Commissioner for Refugees, told the Associated Press that 'when an organization like ours sees its budget cut by 20 percent, these kind of consequences have to be expected.'

Last year, the UNHCR budget fell by some US\$150 million, and this has forced cutbacks in the agency's programs around the world. Given that refugee camps are often situated in extremely volatile, isolated and dangerous parts of the world, it has never been more difficult to attract international monitoring staff to these regions.

'Sixty percent of our staff around the world have to work and live in non-family areas,' says Ron Redmond, a spokesman for UNHCR. 'We operate in extremely dangerous and insecure regions of the world and several of our overseas staff have been kidnapped or endangered as a result. So

workers in these camps are often temporary and poorly-trained to deal with the tremendous challenges of their job.'

UN Secretary General Kofi Annan has ordered an urgent investigation into allegations against U.N. employees implicated in the 'sex for aid' scandal. The UN's Office for Internal Oversight Services and the UNHCR Inspector General are currently investigating the charges.

The investigation is purposely low-profile in an effort to protect the identity of the victims and the alleged perpetrators. Teams have been dispatched to Sierra Leone and Guinea while others are awaiting security clearances for Liberia. Mr. Redmond from UNHCR says that local NGO partners in the region are being regularly and confidentially informed when their staff members have been implicated in the 'sex for aid' abuses. No reparations have been announced for victims.

Researchers close to the investigation tell *On the Record for Children* that senior UNHCR management officials are not being held accountable, and that most of those accused are local staff. But holding a few staff responsible for a widespread breach of trust with the refugee population is not an adequate response, say some close to the investigation. Furthermore, they say, budget cuts have not touched senior staff, only those working on the frontlines.

Meanwhile, the Geneva-based Humanitarian Accountability Project (HAP) is proposing a follow-up study of the sex for aid scandal that would examine ways in which UNHCR and others implicated in the exploitation ring can more effectively incorporate accountability into their work while ensuring that known victims are protected. HAP, whose mandate is to implement systems of accountability in humanitarian projects, is currently seeking money for this project.

- For a copy of the detailed 'note' about the sexual abuse allegations, visit this website and search for the document entitled 'The experience of refugee children in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone.' The report of the Verhey-led team will be available on the UNHCR site in May. For more information on the response from NGOs, contact Mary Diaz For more information on the Humanitarian Accountability Project, visit this website.

UN Agencies Support NGOs in Calling for Independent Special Expert to Study Violence Against Children

UNICEF, the World Health Organization (WHO) and the office of the UN High Commissioner For Human Rights have all come out strongly in support of an NGO push for a high-level independent expert to study violence against children.

The decision was taken at a meeting in Geneva last Thursday (April 11), which brought together about 60 representatives from NGOs and the three UN agencies/bodies.

As reported in the last issue of *On the Record for Children* (Vol 3#6), the idea of a UN study on violence has created controversy. While supporting the idea in principle, the UN General Assembly has declined to call for an independent expert and also sidestepped any reference to the issues that would be reviewed.

NGOs feel that if it is to have any credibility, the study will have to be undertaken by an independent expert. This was strongly reaffirmed at last week's meeting. 'We think it essential that this study should have visibility and also political weight,' said one participant at the meeting.

NGOs have released a position paper that calls for children to contribute directly to the study. It also asks that NGOs have access to the expert - perhaps through some sort of advisory council. Finally, the NGOs are demanding that any study be based on the Convention on the Rights of the Child and follow the guidelines set out by the Committee.

Last week's show of support from the three UN agencies is certain to boost the NGO campaign. Carol Bellamy, Executive Director of UNICEF, is said to have written to Gro Harlem Brundtland, the head of WHO, and Mary Robinson, the UN High Commissioner, proposing a formal partnership on the issue. Ms. Bellamy is also reported to be writing to the UN Secretary-General in support of an independent expert.

NGOs are due to meet with the three agencies on April 25/26 to continue consultations. Many had hoped that the study could be formally launched at the Special Session itself.

With the UN agencies in their corner, the NGOs are now in a strong position to lobby governments, and their first goal is to ensure that the Commission on Human Rights, which is meeting in Geneva, passes a strong resolution on child rights that endorses the call for an independent expert.

There had been fears that this resolution would only be procedural, but NGOs in Geneva have been lobbying hard with the Latin American and European governments, (whose task it is to propose the draft resolution) to ensure that the resolution contains substantive ideas, including the independent expert on violence. Roberta Cecchetti, from the World Organization against Torture, who co-ordinates a caucus of child rights NGOs at the Commission, said there is growing optimism that the resolution will be strong.

If and when the UN General Assembly can be persuaded to accept the idea of an independent expert, many questions will still remain. The NGOs are calling for an independent secretariat that would only answer to the expert - and not to the agencies. But neither UNICEF nor WHO offered an opinion on this at Thursday's meeting and they may want a more direct and formal involvement. With UNICEF based in New York and the other two agencies in Geneva, there may also be some intense discussion over which city would be the best location for the secretariat.

Politically speaking, the most difficult issue would seem to be the scope of the study. NGOs will want the expert to study the entire range of issues that cause violence against children, including capital and corporal punishment, and even juvenile justice. But this is certain to be resisted by many governments. The more governments that are opposed, the harder it could be to secure funding for the study, which will depend on voluntary contributions.

As a result, for the moment NGOs are avoiding addressing the scope of the study, in order not to close off any options.

- For the NGO position paper and other information, contact Roberta Cecchetti, OMCT.
Tel: 4122 809 49 39.

Reproductive Rights Battle Heats Up

The US government has made it clear that it is prepared for a long and drawn-out campaign to dilute or remove any references to reproductive health care for women or young people in all UN documents.

Speaking at an April 1 meeting of the Commission on Population and Development, US Ambassador Sichan Siv rejected the very use of the term 'reproductive health services' because that could be interpreted to support 'the legalization or expansion of legal abortion services.'

Siv also stressed the Bush Administration's belief in abstinence as the only way to prevent adolescent pregnancy and Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STDs).

Many women's rights activists are now resigned to the fact that President Bush Administration seems determined to reverse the position of previous US administrations. But they are also increasingly worried that governments like Libya, Iraq, Sudan, Syria and the Vatican are also in favor of a rollback of reproductive rights. This, they fear, might mean that the progress made in Beijing and Cairo will be reversed by the May Special Session on Children.

Francoise Girard, of the International Women's Health Coalition (IWHC), points out that the new text of the Outcome Document for the Special Session contains language that allows parents to control the reproductive rights of adolescents. It also re-introduces the argument of cultural relativity, which could be viewed as giving the green light to exploitative practices such as Female Genital Mutilation (FGM).

'We're not terribly impressed with the new Outcome Document,' says Girard. 'The text and the negotiating trends at the UN reveal such a fear of adolescent sexuality.'

The IWHC has established an informal coalition of some 20 NGOs to lobby for the retention of reproductive rights language from Beijing and Cairo in all UN documents, including the Outcome Document of the Special Session on Children.

- For more information about the IWHC and its campaigns for reproductive freedom around the world, visit this website.

Global March Cries Foul Over Dedication of World Cup to Children

Representatives from the Global March Against Child Labor, a New Delhi-based NGO, are urging UNICEF and the International Federation of Football Associations (FIFA) to fully implement fair labor codes in advance of the 2002 World Cup.

UNICEF and FIFA have jointly dedicated the upcoming World Cup to children. This is the first time that the World Cup will be dedicated to a humanitarian cause and the move is expected to help UNICEF gain widespread publicity while advancing the cause of children's rights.

But Global March representatives maintain that thousands of children are illegally employed by the sporting goods industry-and many are under FIFA's watch. 'It's difficult to link a child who works from home making soccer balls to FIFA and the World Cup,' says Global March Chairperson, Kailash Satyarthi. 'But FIFA has agreed to uphold a labor Code of Conduct established by the World Federation of the Sporting Goods Industry and it's up to them to show how they are going to implement it.'

In response to a letter from the Global March, FIFA General Secretary Michel Zen-Ruffinen reiterated FIFA's commitment to ending child labor and said the organization was in the process of refining its monitoring systems. Ruffinen also said that FIFA feels confident that the Adidas equipment used during the World Cup is free of child labor.

Global March representatives are asking for proof. They say that FIFA has not responded to a letter from the Global March asking for specific examples of its monitoring systems. Instead, a study by Save the Children has found that more than 15,000 children are stitching footballs in India alone.

Furthermore, according to a report entitled 'The Dark Side of Football,' even adult workers are grossly underpaid. This usually means their children are often forced to work just to make ends meet for the family. Countless other children in Latin America and China, which has recently increased its production of sporting goods products, are suspected of being involved in child labor.

Global March has appealed to UNICEF to urge FIFA to take the problem of child labor more seriously. UNICEF replied in a December 12 letter from Carol Bellamy, who wrote that the agency had signed a 'Memorandum of Understanding' with FIFA that clearly underscores the Federation's commitment to the Code of Conduct.

'We expect more comprehensive and visionary leadership from someone like Carol Bellamy,' says Satyarthi. 'Instead, we get a bureaucratic reply. One of UNICEF's greatest responsibilities is to protect children and Bellamy should have used her office to pressure FIFA. Bellamy has been an extraordinarily dynamic leader when it comes to the girl child. We expect no less from her when it comes to child labor.'

The Global March has launched a World Cup Campaign to follow-up on its concerns. So far, the Campaign has generated a powerful media response in Japan, South Korea, Europe and the United States, where trade unions have joined the call to stop child labor.

- More information on the Global March World Cup Campaign.

Urgent Call to Help Palestinian Children

MADRE, an international women's human rights organization based in New York, has launched a campaign to help rebuild the IBDA'A Children's Center in the Deheisheh Refugee Camp in Palestine, on the outskirts of Bethlehem. Israeli soldiers have all but destroyed IBDA'A's computer and Internet center, children's library, kindergarten and guesthouse. Water, electricity, and access to the camp by the humanitarian community have been cut.

A number of children who attended classes and workshops at the IBDA'A center were also forcefully arrested and detained in blindfolds and handcuffs for more than 20 hours before being released without charges. Fifty-three percent of the Palestinian population is under the age of 18.

The IBDA'A center provided education and trauma counselling for Palestinian refugee children, and also ran oral history projects for children who grew up in the camps. MADRE is working to provide immediate relief to residents in the area by restoring basic services such as electricity and water. The organization is also calling on the US government to make its financial and military subsidies to Israel conditional on an Israeli pullout from the occupied territories.

- For more information on MADRE's campaign or to contribute to their fund to rebuild the IBDA'A center, visit the website or call 212.627.0444.

US-Based Group Integrates Convention on the Rights of the Child

The Washington, DC-based American Psychological Association (APA) has taken the bold move of fully integrating the Convention of the Rights of the Child (CRC) in its daily programming.

The decision was taken in February 2001. The APA has also asked its extensive network of state chapters to encourage their state and local representatives to adopt the CRC as well.

'Even though the US government hasn't ratified the Convention,' says the APA's Gary Melton, 'organizations, states, and municipalities can fully adopt the CRC in their work. In the US, laws protecting children's rights are often passed at the state and local levels.'

The APA is the principal professional association for psychologists in the United States and with 155,000 members, it is the largest such association in the world. It has partner organizations in each of the fifty states.

The CRC represented an important policy directive for the APA, says Melton, because psychologists work with young people in diverse contexts, from juvenile jails to schools. The APA resolution states that 'psychologists can contribute to an understanding of the nature of, and requisites for, children's sense of dignity. Psychologists can also contribute to the design of systems to ensure children's survival and to promote their healthy development.'

The APA has now established a working group to examine the implications of the CRC for the work of psychologists. The group will also devise specific ways in which individual psychologists, researchers, state associations and academics/psychology writers can implement

the CRC in their work. A plan of action should be in place in the next few months says Melton, who chairs the working group.

Meanwhile, the APA has been sharing its plans with other professional organizations such as the American Bar Association and the Child Welfare League, both of whom have expressed interest in following suit.

'This is not a short term task,' says Melton. 'And it shouldn't be for governments either.' One of the key obstacles in the path forward, he says, is overcoming the lack of knowledge about the CRC and the right wing propaganda about the Convention.

- For more information about the APA and its resolution to fully implement the CRC in its work, visit the website, e-mail, or phone (800) 374-2721 FREE.

Religious Women form Grassroots Network to Help Children in Conflict

The New York-based World Conference on Religion and Peace (WCRP) has launched a global network of religious women working to help children in situations of armed conflict.

The network came together in late March during a meeting co-sponsored by WCRP's Women's Program, UNICEF, and Olara Otunnu, the UN Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict.

The meeting featured presentations by religious women from every major area of conflict around the world. Women from Sri Lanka shared advice with women from Cambodia, while women from sub-Saharan Africa talked about ending patriarchy with women from Colombia. By the end of the meeting, UNICEF had invited four religious women leaders to participate in the May Special Session.

'Religious communities are the oldest social networks in the world, and within them, it is women who play the crucial role of nurturer,' says Azza Karam, Director of WCRP's Women's Program. '(Women) are the ones with the moral voice needed to overcome the divisions that lead to conflict.' They are also, says Karam, the ones whose contributions are rarely recognised.

Karam offers the example of Sierra Leone, where an inter-religious group of women successfully lobbied for the release of 50 children held by the notorious rebel leader, Fadoy Sankoh.

'During the height of the conflict, these women went right into the bush where no one else was willing to go,' says Karam. 'One child soldier even came to their car and said they reminded him of his mother. Clearly, religious women have an incredible platform of strength and capability, especially in times of conflict. WCRP is trying to galvanise that energy and get these women more money and support for the work they do on the ground.'

WCRP runs a list serve for religious women affiliated with their organization. Karam is also finalising recommendations from conference participants, and preparing a training manual that highlights the best practices shared at the meeting.

'UNICEF has traditionally overlooked the role that religious leaders-especially women-can play in advancing children's rights,' says Karam. 'We're suggesting that from now on, UNICEF offices world-wide seek out religious women leaders as partners.'

- For more information on WCRP women's programs, visit their website or email Azza Karam or Nancy Eng, or call (212) 687-2163.

Internal UNICEF Task Force to Assess Role of Civil Society

UNICEF has established an internal 'Task Force on Civil Society Partnerships' in response to the call of the Global Movement for Children to involve a broad range of people and organizations in the struggle for children's rights.

The initiative will focus on how UNICEF's work with civil society can be strengthened at the headquarters level. It is also meant to help prepare UNICEF for the implementation of its 'Medium Term Strategic Plan' (MTSP) for 2002-2005.

The Task Force was officially established in January. It has so far conducted interviews with staff in UNICEF headquarters as well as NGOs who have worked with the agency.

'We're examining the broadest spectrum of civil society participation,' says Janet Nelson, the Geneva-based director of the Task Force. 'Before we started this project, we at UNICEF did not have a clear picture of what we were doing right or wrong on this front. This Task Force is meant to encourage a more focused introspection.'

The group has carefully screened prospective NGOs for interviews. Business interest NGOs (so-called BINGOs) have not been involved in the review.

Some NGOs point out that limiting the Task Force to organizations that have experience with UNICEF presents too restricted a picture of the civil society role in the children's rights movement. Nelson says that once an office for civil society partnerships has been established, feedback from the broader NGO community will be welcome.

The aim of the Task Force is to better understand why the civil sector is important to UNICEF's work and how UNICEF can strengthen alliances with NGOs.

UNICEF has established five priority areas for its work over the next four years, and only those civil society partners who work in these areas are being interviewed. The areas are: girls' education; integrated early childhood development; the protection of children from violence, exploitation, abuse and discrimination; universal immunisation; and HIV/AIDS.

In mid to late April, the Task Force will release a preliminary report and make internal recommendations for UNICEF. New York-based Task Force member Ray Virgilio Torres, says the hope is that partnerships with civil society actors will now be considered at the planning stage, rather than after plans of action have already been set.

'To really change the lives of children,' says Torres, 'we at UNICEF are focusing on a results-based approach to programming. We know we cannot do it alone.'

**From the Editors:
About On the Record for Children**

On the Record for Children is the newsletter of the NGO Committee on UNICEF, a network of 125 nongovernmental organizations that work closely with UNICEF while remaining independent.

On the Record for Children has covered the run-up to the Special Session of the UN General Assembly on Children since January 2001. It will be produced in email form until the Special Session, which will be covered daily in email and hard copy versions. One issue will be produced by young journalists for the Children's Forum.

On the Record for Children is produced by **The Advocacy Project** (AP). Anaga Dalal is the principal writer and Colleen Malone serve as copy editor and manager. AP is also working with Young People's Press (YPP), a Toronto-based organization that trains and works with young journalists. Naomi Lightman, 16, from YPP, serves as youth editor for On the Record for Children.

The material in On the Record for Children is reviewed by an editorial group of the NGO Committee prior to publication. The editors welcome ideas for articles, letters, and opinion pieces, although they might be edited for length.

The material in this issue will be posted on the website of the NGO Committee, together with photos where appropriate. The website is currently being revised.