

Annual full-day meeting on the rights of the child

“Information and communications technology and child sexual exploitation”

Concept note (as of 7 March 2016)

Date and venue: 7 March 2016, 9 a.m. - 12 p.m. and 3 - 6 p.m., Palais des Nations, Room XX, Geneva
(will be broadcast live and archived on <http://webtv.un.org>)

Objectives: The annual full-day meeting will constitute an opportunity to discuss different national, regional and international initiatives to empower children through information and communication technologies (ICTs) and enhance their protection, including against child sexual exploitation online and offline, in order to identify a holistic approach to the enjoyment of the rights of the child through ICTs, and to share good practices and challenges on the issue.

It will contribute to the realization of the rights of the child to participation, education, and protection from abuse, violence and exploitation in the digital world¹ through:

- Deepening the understanding of the relations between ICTs and the rights of the child, including opportunities and challenges to the realization of these rights;
- Exchanging of good practices and lessons learnt aimed to promote regional and international cooperation on this issue;
- Developing of appropriate strategies to empower children to make better use of their online interaction, and to contribute to their online protection;
- Exploring of recommendations to guarantee safe and equal access for children to ICTs and to ensure the criminalisation of online child abuse and exploitation

Morning panel (9 a.m. - 12 p.m.) **ICTs and child sexual exploitation: international framework and challenges**

Chair: H.E. Mr. Choi Kyonglim, President of the Human Rights Council

Opening statement: Ms. Kate Gilmore, United Nations Deputy High Commissioner for Human Rights

Video: Messages of children victims (3 min.)

Moderator: Mr. John Carr, Founding Director of Internet Watch Foundation

Panellists:

- **Mr. Benyam Dawit Mezmur**, Chairperson of the Committee on the Rights of the Child
International framework regulating child sexual exploitation and ICTs – focus on the right to privacy of children and necessary balance between promoting the opportunities provided by digital media and information and ICTs while protecting children from harm
- **Ms. Maud de Boer-Buquicchio**, Special Rapporteur on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography
New forms of child sexual exploitation through ICTs

¹ Articles 12, 13, 16, 17, 19, 28, 34 and 35 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child; and articles 2 and 3 of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography.

- **Mr. Ernie Allen**, Chairperson of the International Advisory Board of the United Kingdom initiative WePROTECT and Founder, former President and Chief Executive Officer of the International Centre for Missing & Exploited Children
Importance of public-private partnership and of reporting hotlines in combating child sexual exploitation through ICTs
- **Mr. Preetam Maloor**, Acting Head of the Corporate Strategy Division, International Telecommunication Union (ITU)
International cooperation on child online protection

Afternoon panel (3 - 6 p.m.)	Combating and preventing child sexual exploitation through ICTs – Role of ICTs, multi-stakeholders approach and good practices
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Chair:	H.E. Mr. Ramón Alberto Morales Quijano , Vice-President of the Human Rights Council
Moderator:	Ms. Marta Santos Pais , Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children
Panellists:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr. Andres Franco, Deputy Director, Private Sector Engagement, United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) <i>Prevention programmes of UNICEF on the ground</i> • Mr. Håkon Fostervold Høydal, Senior feature writer, VG (Verdens Gang AS) <i>Profile (and location) of perpetrators of child sexual exploitation through ICTs</i> • Mr. Michael Moran, Assistant Director Vulnerable Communities, International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL) <i>Role of law enforcement agencies, investigation and prosecution – how law enforcement agencies identify and find the “real” victims</i> • Ms. Brittany Smith, EU Policy Lead for Child Safety, Google Inc. <i>Role and actions of Google Inc. (and internet services providers) in combating and preventing child sexual exploitation through ICTs</i> • Ms. Gaby Reyes, Founder and Director of Asociación Crecer en Red, Peru <i>Use of ICTs for prevention and empowerment of children – Latin-American perspective and good practices</i>
Outcome:	The sharing of informed, fact-based and expert knowledge will provide concrete suggestions as to how the issue of information and communication technologies, while protecting the rights of the child, can be further integrated and mainstreamed in the United Nations agenda.
Mandate:	In its resolution 7/29 on the rights of the child adopted in March 2008, the Human Rights Council affirmed “its commitment to effectively integrate the rights of the child in its work and that of its mechanisms in a regular, systematic and transparent manner, taking into account specific needs of boys and girls” and “to incorporate into its programme of work sufficient time, at a minimum an annual full-day meeting, to discuss different specific themes on the rights of the child.” In this vein and on the basis of its resolution 28/19, the Human Rights Council decided to convene at its 31 st session a panel discussion on ICTs and child sexual exploitation.

Format:

Opening statements and initial presentations by the panellists (estimated to take up 1 hour) will be followed by two rounds of an interactive discussion. The list of speakers for the discussion will be established at the beginning of the panel and, as per practice, statements by high-level dignitaries and groups will be moved to the beginning of the list. States and observers, including representatives of civil society, take the floor for a 2-minute intervention each (total 45 minutes), followed by responses from panellists (15 minutes). A second round of interventions from the floor (45 minutes) will be followed by responses and concluding remarks from the panellists (15 minutes). To make the panel interactive, speakers are encouraged to focus their interventions on the themes of the panellists either by asking questions to the panellists or sharing relevant national experience. The panel discussion will be advertised on social media and children will be encouraged to actively participate in the debate by sending in their comments. The moderator will moderate the discussion between the panellists and make closing remarks.

Interpretation will be provided in the six United Nations official languages (Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish).

Background:

ICTs, the Internet and the so-called new, digital and / or social media are part of children's daily lives. More and more children are increasingly relying on them to learn, engage, participate, play, work or socialize. However, along with these opportunities, risks and harmful practices have also emerged, such as exposure to violent images, abuse material, new forms of bullying and harassment, more risks of sexual solicitation or online grooming, and facilitation of sexual exploitation. The main challenge is how to keep a balance in protecting children without restricting the benefits they can have through the Internet and ICTs. It is therefore important to review the impacts that new ways of communication are having on children, in order to empower them to make the best use of the online environment.

Benefits and risks of ICTs vary across the different regions and according to age, sex, socio-economic status, cultural context or disabilities. One of the key challenges is how to ensure equal accessibility to ICTs for all children, and how to address differences in the quality and ways of accessing them. Moreover, a number of United Nations stakeholders are conducting research, producing thematic reports, and are organising awareness raising activities on the impact of ICTs on children's rights as well as the challenges and opportunities they entail. Additionally, they develop initiatives and good practices to empower children through ICTs, and reflect on measures on how to prevent and protect them from abuse, violence and exploitation.

Background documents:

- [Human Rights Council resolution 28/19](#) "Rights of the child: towards better investment in the rights of the child"
- Report of the OHCHR on information and communications technology and child sexual exploitation ([A/HRC/31/34](#))
