

**We, the Ministers responsible for Childhood met in Lucca
the 25th and 26th of September 2003 and declared as follows:**

Considering:

- 1.1 the UN *Convention on the Rights of the Child*¹ approved by the *General Assembly* of the UN on 20 November 1989, that has transformed the view of the child from being a mere object to be safeguarded and protected into a subject of rights;
- 1.2 the *Charter of Fundamental Rights of the EU* officially proclaimed by the *EU Council of Ministers* in Nice of 7 December 2000 in particular art. 24 and art. 32;
- 1.3 the meeting of *Ministers responsible for Childhood* of the EU Member States, of 20 November 2000 in Paris that set up the Permanent Intergovernmental Group called *L'Europe de l'Enfance*, which meets periodically on an informal and voluntary basis;
- 1.4 the Meeting of Ministers of 9 November 2001 in Brussels that promoted the creation of a *European Network of National Observatories on Childhood* (ChildONEurope) which was officially constituted in Florence on 24 January 2003;
- 1.5 the *World Summit for Children* of 1990;
- 1.6 the UNGASS which was held in New York on 8-10 May 2002.

2. *The fight against the phenomena of intra-familial and extra-familial sexual abuse and sexual exploitation² of children in the EU*

We, the Ministers responsible for Childhood, reaffirm our adhesion to the objectives and contents of:

- 2.1. the *Commitment and Plan of Action* adopted at the “Conference of European and Central Asian Countries on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation” (Budapest, 20-21 November 2001);
- 2.2. the *Global Commitment* that concluded the work of the “Second World Congress against the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children” (Yokohama, 17 - 20 December 2001);
- 2.3. the still relevant *Declaration and Agenda for Action* adopted at the “First World Congress against the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children” (Stockholm, 27-31 August 1996).

¹ For child, as for minor, we mean any individual less than 18 years of age, as defined by art. 1 of the UN Convention cited here.

² In the following, the phenomena of “intra-familial and extra-familial sexual abuse and sexual exploitation” are named with the shorter definition of *sexual abuse and exploitation*.

We, the Ministers responsible for Childhood, declare that it is important:

- 2.4. **to support** all actions for preventing and combating the sexual abuse and exploitation of children, also supporting the involvement of civil society, NGOs, associations and children themselves and to develop and consolidate the action of the international organisations which are also committed to combating these phenomena;
- 2.5. **to value** a multidisciplinary and multisectoral approach in the policies and actions taken at local, national and European level, in consideration of the complexity of the phenomena including its transnational nature, the links existing between the various forms of sexual abuse and exploitation and the need to integrate the actions of the various sectors that have the competence to intervene;
- 2.6. **to encourage** the creation of systems for collecting data and for monitoring the phenomena and **support** research on the risks and on protective factors and to reinforce the processes for the rehabilitation of the victims;
- 2.7. **to sustain and set up** projects of interventions like those implemented by the programmes of the EU, in particular *Stop* and *Daphne*, welcoming with satisfaction and interest the decision of the EU to promote a second edition of the *Daphne programme* which we consider to be particularly effective. Furthermore, **to encourage and create** opportunities and mechanisms for the assessment of the impact of the actions and the exchange of experiences, their results and best practices;
- 2.8. **to ensure** that child victims are effectively protected and supported during judicial proceedings by strengthening where necessary the legal, judicial and inquiry instruments;
- 2.9. **to ensure** that child victims of sexual abuse and exploitation have access to appropriate welfare services, educational and social support, rehabilitation and short and long term therapeutic treatment;
- 2.10. **to support and improve**, with the involvement of children themselves, actions for early prevention of sexual abuse and exploitation and **to support** parenthood with the aim of assisting the family to assume its natural role as promoter of the development of the child and for the purpose of interrupting the intergenerational cycle of violence;
- 2.11. **to further and strengthen** research on and evaluation of the therapy to be given to the perpetrators of this kind of offence, with special attention paid to underage perpetrators;
- 2.12. Furthermore in consideration of the transnationality of sexual exploitation, **to support** international cooperation and to adopt a “**zero tolerance**” approach.

3. *The fight against child labour in the EU*

We, the Ministers responsible for Childhood reaffirm our adhesion to the objectives and contents of :

- 3.1 the *Universal Declaration on Human Rights*, the *UN Convention on the Rights of the Child*, the *UN Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action* on women's rights, the *UN Copenhagen Social Summit Declaration and Plan of Action* , the *ILO Convention 138 on the minimum age for employment and 182 on the worst forms of child labour*, the *ILO Declaration of fundamental principles and rights at work* and the (revised) *European Social Charter of the Council of Europe*;
- 3.2 the document *A World Fit for Children* adopted at the UNGASS;
- 3.3 the documents approved by the EU Council of Ministers in the Lisbon (23-24 March 2000) and Barcelona (15-16 March 2002) meetings.

We, the Ministers responsible for Childhood, declare that it is important:

- 3.4 **to give priority** to eliminating the worst forms of child labour; to continue to support the ILO in its work to combat child labour; and to promote the universal ratification and implementation of the ILO Conventions 138 and 182;
- 3.5 **to focus special attention** on children who are at particular risk of economic exploitation, including for example girls, migrant children, street children, foreign unaccompanied children, *Roma* children and other minority groups;
- 3.6 **to give attention** to child labour in the informal economy as this is where much child labour occurs, often in the most hazardous and hidden forms, including forced labour and slavery and situations where children are confined to the premises of the employer;
- 3.7 **to further** the debate on child labour and, where possible, **strengthen** the work carried out in recent years at national level, recognising that a co-ordinated approach by Governments, social partners, international organisations, local bodies, NGOs, other relevant organisations and individual citizens is the most effective way to obtain positive results;
- 3.8 **to promote** better understanding of child labour at national and European level, including through monitoring systems, advancements in research, discussion forums, round tables, comparisons among various experts and all the governmental and non governmental organisations involved;
- 3.9 **to support**, where appropriate, the participation of children in the development and the implementation of Plans of Action against child labour;
- 3.10 **to support** the role of the school in promoting life skills, in particular in the "learning to do", one of the undividable four pillars of education, as underlined in the UNESCO *International Commission Report on the Education of the XXI Century* (Delors Report 1996);

- 3.11 **to encourage and create** opportunities and mechanisms for assessing the impact and results of action taken in regard to combating child labour; and to exchange experiences and best practices.

ACRONYMES

EU	European Union
ILO	International Labour Organization
IPEC	International Programme for the Elimination of Child Labour
NGO	Non Governmental Organisations
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNGASS	United Nations General Assembly Special Session on Children
WHO	World Health Organization