



PRESS RELEASE

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Make them part of it

On the 20th anniversary of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child over a thousand individuals and organisations demand the rights of street children to be realised.

As the world celebrates the achievements of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child on its 20th anniversary the Consortium for Street Children, a network of 50 organisations operating in over 120 countries, are drawing attention to the estimated 100 million street children whose rights are as elusive as ever.

Children living and working on the streets have no access to education, healthcare and a stable supportive family environment. These children are at extreme risk of physical violence and sexual abuse, yet they are denied their basic rights every day.

In the lead up to the 20th anniversary of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child the Consortium for Street Children launched a campaign and online petition drawing attention to the unacceptable and horrendous levels of violence street children face from the police around the world, including targeted round ups particularly in the lead up to large international events. In the space of one month, leading up to today, over one thousand individuals and organisations, representing 69 countries, signed the petition demanding an end to all violence against street children.

Louise Meincke, Advocacy Manager at the Consortium for Street Children said: "All children have the right to live a full and dignified life, yet for children on the street everyday is a struggle for survival. They are denied their rights in the most atrocious of ways, often by the very people who are supposed to protect them. We call on all governments, donors and individuals to ensure that street children are able to realise their rights as set out in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child".

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Notes to Editors:

1. The Consortium for Street Children (CSC) is the leading international member-based network dedicated to advocating, promoting and campaigning for the rights of street-involved children. We are committed to creating a better and sustainable future for some of the most disadvantaged and stigmatised children by working together to inform and inspire research and action that influences policy and best practice worldwide. For more information please visit www.streetchildren.org.uk, including a full list of our current members.
2. The Consortium for Street Children's campaign, *Realising Rights: Stop Violence Against Street Children*, are calling for:



- Training and sensitisation of police in street children's rights, needs and protection issues;
 - Decriminalisation of so-called 'status offences';
 - And end to all round ups;
 - Awareness raising campaigns on violence against street children.
3. For more information about the campaign go to:
<http://www.streetchildren.org.uk/content.asp?pageID=32>. For more information about the petition go to: <http://www.thepetitionsite.com/1/Realising-Rights>.
 4. CSC member Street Action <http://www.streetaction.org> works in partnership with Umthombo Street Children <http://umthombo.org> in Durban, South Africa. The experience for many street children in Durban is one of seeing their rights constantly violated by those who are supposed to protect them:

‘Themba, a street child in South Africa, reports having been chased by the police into a road, hitting a car and breaking his leg. Themba’s experience is just one of many. For example in the lead up to the FIFA World Cup in South Africa 2010 the municipal police are rounding up street children almost daily, forcefully removing them by forcing them into trucks using teargas, striking them with batons and whips, and then dumping them outside the city limits. The street children are told that they are breaking the municipal bylaw prohibiting ‘loitering’, a so-called ‘status offence’. Their belongings are confiscated, burned or dumped in refuse bags’.
 5. The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) was adopted by the UN General Assembly on 20th November 1989. It is the only Convention which has been ratified by all members of the United Nations, except USA and Somalia. All nations which have ratified the Convention are bound to it by international law. The UNCRC sets out a total of 54 articles detailing children’s right to life, education, health, participation, non-discrimination, and to protection from all forms of violence and torture.
 6. For further information please contact Louise Meincke, Advocacy Manager, Consortium for Street Children, Louise@streetchildren.org.uk, 020 7274 0087.