

16th session of the Human Rights Council, agenda item 6

UPR Lebanon

Statement on behalf of World Vision Lebanon, delivered by World Vision International

World Vision Lebanon wishes to acknowledge the growing acceptance in Lebanon that children have the right to participate and to be heard in matters which affect them. In this respect, the contribution from World Vision to this UPR process was a report about child rights which was researched and written entirely by members of the Children's Council aged between 9 and 17, and we thank the Government that they have now invited children to be part of the civil society consultations for the upcoming State party report to the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Of the issues that the Children's Council identified as of particular concern to them, we welcome the recommendations that the Government has accepted concerning the trafficking of children, child labour and to increase efforts with respect to clearing land mines.

The members of the Children's Council who participated in this report came from 3 very different contexts and experiences within the country - from urban Beirut, the Bekaa Valley, and from southern Lebanon. One concern that they all raised was the situation of children who do not have identity papers or who are stateless even though they were born in Lebanon. Such children have great difficulties accessing education, health care and later, employment. According to Lebanese legislation, only a Lebanese father can transmit their nationality to their children. The right to acquire a nationality is enshrined by article 7 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and we would strongly urge the Government of Lebanon to reconsider its rejection of the recommendations which were made asking them to ensure this right.

During the UPR Working Group review of Lebanon, the Government reported that it had been unable to amend the citizenship law as they said "Society was still divided on the conditions to grant citizenship, due to the unique composition of Lebanese society." However, the very varied members of the Children's Council of Lebanon have spoken with one voice in their calls that this law be amended as a matter of urgency and in accordance with Lebanon's commitments under the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

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