

1st NGO

Our reference
Domestic programme
Karin Fyrk

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Save the Children
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Item 6

Mrs Devinia Orett Bonoli

Consideration of the UPR report of Sweden

Mr. President,

Thank you for giving us the floor.

Save the Children welcomes the report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) of Sweden (A/HRC/15/11), in particular the recommendations relating to children's rights.

We call on the government to prioritise the following issues:

1. The rights of undocumented children to access to health and education:

Recommendations no. 96.8, 96.40, 96.43 and 96.46 call on the Government to adopt a legislative framework to ensure that all migrant children, including undocumented children, have access to the same health care services as persons with residence permits.

Undocumented children who have never sought asylum still do not fully enjoy their right to health care. They are entitled only to urgent health care and services, without subsidies. As mentioned by the government in its comment to the recommendations, there is an ongoing government inquiry working on this issue. Save the Children is concerned that the instructions to the inquiry include migration policy considerations, which might have a negative influence on the results of the commission from a child rights point of view.

Recommendation 96.40 was not accepted by the Government, on the grounds that it also includes adults. Save the Children would like to stress the importance of including both undocumented children and adults in the right to health care, since the wellbeing of a child is linked to that of its parents. For example, undocumented pregnant women have a right to emergency care only, for which they are required to pay the full cost. This limitation endangers the health of both mother and child.

2. The rights of unaccompanied children

Recommendation no. 95.80 calls on the Government to ensure that the principle of the best interest of the child will be a primary consideration and guide all related processes and decisions, especially in asylum cases involving children.

The Government has not taken any effective measures to ensure that child-specific reasons for or forms of persecution are taken into account when children's asylum applications are being processed. Save the Children proposes that the Government should appoint an inquiry

charged with framing legislation which establishes that child-specific reasons for or forms of persecution may serve as grounds for granting refugee status or other protective status.

The government has still not implemented the recommendation of the Committee on the Rights of the Child to ensure that a temporary guardian is appointed for every unaccompanied child within 24 hours of arrival in the country. Save the Children proposes that the government should conduct a thorough evaluation of trusteeship for unaccompanied children, and should thereafter formulate national guidelines and clear directives defining the work of a trustee.

Save the Children appreciates and is looking forward to the Government's continued cooperation with civil society organisations in the follow-up to the UPR.

Thank you