



The Association for Childhood Education International (ACEI) and the World Organization for Early Childhood Education-U.S. National Committee (OMEP-USNC) joint statement in support of the United States Ratification of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)

“Because children are both the present and the future of every nation, they have needs, rights, and intrinsic worth that must be recognized and supported.”-Global Guidelines for Early Childhood Education and Care in the 21st Century, ACEI and OMEP.

The Association for Childhood Education International (ACEI) and the United States National Committee of the World Organization for Early Childhood Education (OMEP-USNC) have actively pursued long-standing commitments to ensure the rights of children in the United States. Both organizations are respected for their knowledge of child development, children’s education, and devotion to child well-being. We have joined together in this statement to support the U.S. ratification of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and, in that regard, to highlight issues that impact both the today and the tomorrow of all children in the United States, where the CRC remains a promise to children that we have yet to fulfill.

CRC Overview

The United Nations commenced efforts, in 1979, to develop an inclusive, legally binding human rights treaty for all the world’s children. On November 20, 1989, the CRC was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly, and instituted as international law in 1990. It has since been ratified by 193 United Nations member countries. Only two members have not ratified the CRC: Somalia (which is without a functional central government), and the United States.

Why should the United States ratify the CRC?

Children occupy a unique status in society. It is imperative that the United States protect children’s basic rights so that they will grow and develop to meet their full potential. As the next generation of decision-makers and leaders, children are the future of every nation. They will shape the future of our society and culture, and the lives of generations of U.S. citizens to come. Human rights belonging to all children derive from four foundational principles: The right to survival; the right to develop to the fullest; the right to protection from harmful influences, abuse and exploitation; and the right to participate fully in family, cultural and social life. The CRC provides the most comprehensive legal framework for basic human rights for children everywhere. By ratifying the CRC, the United States will reaffirm its place in the international community concerned with human rights.

Who is responsible for ratification?

Ultimately, the CRC will be ratified by the United States Senate through the efforts of the Foreign Relations Committee.

Summary

The CRC is the world's most-recognized, legally binding human rights treaty and was drafted with the specific purpose of safeguarding and advancing the rights of all children. The 193 ratifying countries have used the document to guide the development and implementation of policies and programs that address and fulfill children's needs.

Countries commit resources to children's programs and services to ensure their quality of life. Each ratifying nation submits a five-year report that is reviewed and commented on by the Committee for the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Efforts of ACEI and OMEP-USNC to support the ratification of the CRC

ACEI and OMEP-USNC support the ratification of the CRC by participating as partners with the Campaign for the U.S. Ratification of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, by promoting the CRC during public speaking engagements, by sharing information about the CRC on our respective websites and in newsletters, by establishing linkages with collegial organizations, by reaching out to solicit advocates of the CRC, and by distributing factual information about the CRC and the implications of U.S. ratification.

About the supporting organizations

ACEI and OMEP-USNC continue to declare their support for the CRC and describe reasons for advocating U.S. ratification. Both groups are non-governmental organizations (NGOs) with strong connections to UNICEF.

* ACEI began as the International Kindergarten Union (IKU) in Saratoga Springs, New York, USA, in 1892. Its mission is to promote and support in the global community the optimal education and development of children, from birth through early adolescence, and to influence the professional growth of educators and the efforts of others who are committed to the needs of children in a changing society.

* OMEP, the World Organization for Early Childhood Education, was established in Prague, Czechoslovakia, now the Czech Republic, in 1948, by persons interested in early childhood education. Today, OMEP is represented by members in more than 60 countries around the world. The mission is to promote optimum conditions for the well-being and happiness of all children within their families, institutions, and society. OMEP supports scientific research and advocates for many issues related to young children throughout the world. (OMEP's U.S. National Committee developed this joint statement with ACEI).

Contacts

For additional information about these organizations and the CRC, visit the following websites: ACEI, <http://www.acei.org>; OMEP-USNC, www.omep-usnc.org; Campaign for the U.S. Ratification of the CRC, <http://www.childrightscampaign.org>; and UNICEF, <http://www.unicef.org>.

Appreciation

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