

Joint declaration for the defense and protection of children and adolescents against all forms of sexual violence so that no child and no adolescent are left behind



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Assuming that a child is every person under 18 years old, the signatory organizations of Angola, Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique, Portugal and S. Tomé and Príncipe, based on the Convention on the Rights of the Child, Agenda 2030 with the Sustainable Development Goals, CEDAW and ICPD 25, as well as international and regional instruments and mechanisms ratified and to be ratified,

Call to the Secretary General of the Nations and through him to UNICEF, UNFPA, OHCHR and WHO, and urge national and regional entities to pay special attention to the dire realities experienced by many of the children and adolescents in our countries, and mobilize to build a common and transformative agenda of effective intervention of Zero Tolerance to all forms of sexual violence on children and adolescents, and which affect mostly girls and females adolescent, realities that have been exacerbated by the current pandemic of COVID19, including:

- Harmful practices that violate the rights of children such as:
- Abuse, harassment, trafficking, exploitation and sexual violence in their different forms
 - the different forms of child, early, forced and arranged marriages and unions;
 - female genital mutilation;
 - food taboos;
 - "buying and selling of the bride" and symbolic kidnapping;
 - preference for male children;
 - children deprived of family support such as street children, children in begging, migrant and refugee children;
 - head-of-household children;
 - children in conflict situations used as shields and weapons of war;
 - children accused of being witches;
 - talib (*talibé*) children and albino children;
 - children in situations of slavery and forced labor.
- Exposure to domestic, intrafamily violence and pornography as well as other enunciated forms of gender-based violence,
- Stigma and social exclusion on children;
- School dropout and non-schooling of girls;
- Special vulnerability of children and adolescents with disabilities and specific needs.

We call on the Secretary-General of the United Nations to strengthen intervention and collective awareness that guarantees the rights of every child and adolescent to personal safety and to be protected from all forms of sexual abuse, exploitation and violence, including through:

- Strengthen the universality of birth registration systems for their decisive positive impact on citizenship, health care, schooling and social integration;
- Strengthen mechanisms and dialogue for the promotion and defense of the rights of children and adolescents for greater sustainability of empowering action;
- Ensure that law and traditional 'law' meet the essential requirements of human rights and development;
- Invest in education, training and services in sexual and reproductive health and rights;



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- Promote prevention and protection services and care in humanitarian settings and also children outside the education system;
- Strengthen the primary prevention approach and programs that include the necessary training of professionals, parental education and comprehensive sexuality education
- Invest in addressing the problems and discriminations responsible for the bio-psycho-socio-economic and legal vulnerabilities that leave many children behind;
- For a more adapted and child-friendly justice system, recognize the importance of hearing rooms for children and adolescent victims of sexual violence with teams made up of professionals with specific qualifications;
- Strengthen the capacity of national, bi- and multilateral civil society organizations for prevention and advocacy suitable for intervention - multi-sectoral - targeting professionals, families, governments, parliamentarians, and leaders of public entities and associations;
- To develop training based on rights and competencies that allows avoiding stigmas and prejudices that affect the self-image and development of each child and adolescent;
- Strengthen the protection and defense of children and adolescents with the existence of focal points for the rights of children and adolescents in educational and health institutions;
- Recognize the necessary organization, collection and processing of data as well as case studies and dissemination of good practices in the promotion and defense of children's rights so that none is left behind;
- Strengthen Zero Tolerance to Violence against Children and Adolescents with the necessary legislation, mandatory training, and specific codes of conduct on violence, exploitation, abuse, and sexual harassment for professionals, employees, and leaders of public and private entities and civil society organizations, inspired by the linking of partnerships with the United Nations.

Signed in Angola, Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique, Portugal, Sao Tomé and Príncipe, on 12 June 2021 .

Signatories & Promoters

ACRIDES - Associação de Crianças Desfavorecidas, Cabo Verde (*Association of Disadvantaged Children*), Cape Verde

ACM – Associação Chã de Matias (*Chã de Matias Association*), Cape Verde

AMIC – Associação dos Amigos da Criança (*Children's Friends Association*), Guinea-Bissau

ARCAR - Associação para a Reinserção de Crianças Abandonadas em Situação de Risco (*Association for the Reintegration of Abandoned Children at Risk*), S. Tomé and Príncipe

CNAPN - Comité Nacional para o Abandono de Práticas Nefastas à Saúde da Mulher e da Criança (*National Committee for the Abandonment of Harmful Practices against Women's and Children's Health*), Guinea-Bissau

CRL Project - Intervenção Humanitária e Social em Portugal e África (*Humanitarian and Social Intervention in Portugal and Africa*), Portugal



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Fundação Arte e Cultura (*Art and Culture Foundation*), Angola

P&D Factor - Association for Cooperation on Population and Development, Portugal

Plataforma Fondinkê Na Fayé (*Fondinkê Na Fayé Platform*), Guinea-Bissau

Rede da Criança (*Children's Network*), Mozambique

ROSC - Forum da Sociedade Civil para os Direitos da Criança Civil (*Society Forum for the Rights of the Child*), Mozambique

Signatory:

CEPIA - Cidadania, Estudo, Pesquisa, , Informação e Ação (*Citizenship, Study, Research, Information and Action*), Brazil

RECAC - Rede de Comunicadores Amigos das Crianças (*Network of Children' Friends Communicators*), Mozambique

