

Human Rights Council - 8<sup>th</sup> Session  
Item 6 – Consideration of UPR Reports

Report for the UPR of the United Kingdom – 10 June 2008

Mr President,

Save the Children is pleased to participate in the consideration of the UPR report on the UK and calls on the UK Government to establish adequate institutional frameworks for the promotion and protection of children's rights.

The UK Government must withdraw its reservations to the CRC. It is clear that its general reservation concerning immigration and citizenship is against the object and purpose of the CRC. We welcome the Government's current review and urge it to remove the general reservation as soon as possible.

It must introduce with urgency clear, non equivocal legislation, which fully prohibits physical punishment in the home. Numerous bodies have made it clear that the current legislation fails to fully protect children, is a clear breach of their rights and undermines the Government's welcome commitment to ensure that all children are kept safe from harm.

Child poverty is unacceptably high throughout the UK with 3.8 million children living below the poverty line. Despite the Government's commendable commitment to end child poverty by 2020, independent estimates suggest that the Government will still miss the half way point of 2010 by at least 450,000 children.

Mr President,

The UK Government must fully protect asylum seeking children, some of the most vulnerable in our society. Separated children need a guardian so that these children receive the support they require. The detention of children with their families in immigration removal centres continues despite a plethora of evidence showing that it is damaging to children's health and welfare. Government policy states that detention should be used only as a last resort but in practice this is not the case.

The juvenile justice systems in the UK continue to violate CRC standards. The age of criminal responsibility is much too low. – 10 years in England, Wales and Northern Ireland and 8 in Scotland. Custody is not used as a last resort and Anti-Social Behaviour legislation allows children to be named and shamed in public despite the CRC Committee urging the UK Government to ensure that it respected the privacy of children in trouble with the law.

We strongly urge the UK Government to accept all recommendations made in the course of its Universal Periodic Review and to commit to implement them urgently. It should also organise regular NGO follow-up meetings with all relevant Government departments and report annually to the Human Rights Council on progress being made.

Thank you Mr President.