



Violence Against Children
Save the Children

República Dominicana



His Excellency Ban Ki-moon
Secretary-General,
The United Nations,
1 United Nations Plaza
New York, New York 10017-3515

Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, May 7 2008

Dear Mr Secretary-General,

RE: Appointment of the SRSG on Violence Against Children

We are writing to you as one of the many organisations that signed the petition calling for the appointment of the SRSG in October 2007. As you know, over 1,000 organisations from around the world called on the United Nations to establish such a mandate, a call endorsed by 183 Member States in the GA Resolution A/62/141.

We welcome the progress that your Office is making towards the appointment of the Special Representative on Violence Against Children. We would, however, like to raise some concerns with you regarding the process, which we know are shared very widely among those working at international, regional and national level to eliminate violence against children. In particular:

1. **Independence:** Resolution A/62/141 requests that the mandate of the SRSG should be "*effective and independent*". We welcome the assurance that the SRSG will report independently and directly to yourself and will be free to appoint his/her own core staff.
2. **Terms of Reference and process of appointment for the SRSG:** The GA Resolution provides detailed terms of reference for the appointment, reinforced in the recent Human Rights Council Resolution A/HRC/7/L.34, adopted in March 2008. These should be used in the appointment process. We can see no justification for re-writing the terms of reference agreed by Member States. Furthermore, the appointment should be made following adoption of appropriate criteria, using a transparent process of nominations and recommendations, similar to that adopted by the Human Rights Council for the appointment of special rapporteurs and other mandate-holders.

Fundación para el Desarrollo Comunitario, Inc.

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3. **Level of appointment:** The Resolution further refers to the appointment '*at the highest possible level*'. This plainly suggests an appointment at the same level as the SRSG on Children and Armed Conflict - Under Secretary-General. Making it at a lower status does not reflect the terms of the resolution and effectively suggests that the overall topic of violence against children is of lesser importance.
4. **Location:** We feel that the office of the SRSG should be located in Geneva – rather than New York – to be able to work in close proximity with the full range of related UN agencies (OHCHR, WHO, ILO and UNICEF's focal point for the UN Study are all located in Geneva, as are the Human Rights Council and the Committee on the Rights of the Child. The SRSG should collaborate with all relevant UN agencies, but should have independent premises and this should be included in the Terms of Reference.

The process of the UN Secretary-General's Study on Violence against Children was open and inclusive, and as NGOs, we hope this cooperation and consultation will continue.

We sincerely hope that you will take these issues into account before appointing a SRSG.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Beatriz Ferrer'.

Beatriz Ferrer

Children's Rights Director

Save the Children Dominican Republic

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