

# Exhibition "The ILO's fight against child labour: Dreaming of Freedom"

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“I congratulate IPEC on its 20th anniversary and commend it for its leadership, courage and unwavering efforts to combat child labour around the world. IPEC has provided a strong and experienced voice for children who are engaged in exploitative and hazardous forms of work - whose lives are endangered on a daily basis. On behalf of the Committee on the Rights of the Child, I greatly appreciate the strong support and partnership of IPEC in the fight against child labour.



Childhood is a unique period of physical, mental, emotional and spiritual development and violations of children's rights, such as exposure to child labour may have lifelong, irreversible and even transgenerational consequences. In situations of armed conflict, children are at a particular risk of being used by armed groups, including non-State armed groups, which is a worst form of child labour.

Although remarkable progress has been made in combating such forms of child labour, important challenges remain. The global economic crisis is impacting severely on development budgets, and important programmes to fight child labour are being curtailed. The impact of the business sector on children's rights has tremendously grown in the past decades. The Committee continues to emphasise, including in its recently adopted General comment No. 16, that a State engaged with international development, finance and trade organizations 'must take all reasonable actions and measures to ensure that such organizations act in accordance with the Convention and

the Optional Protocols,' including through the eradication of child labour.

IPEC has been able to robustly document and expose various manifestation of child labour in different contexts and effectively advocate on crucial areas of concerns, including the situation of children in domestic work, children sold or trafficked for child prostitution and child pornography or those trapped in debt bondage, forced or compulsory labour. The IPEC's 20th anniversary provides us with renewed opportunities to strengthen partnership between the Committee on the Rights of the Child and IPEC, as well as with all key stakeholders to take urgent and accelerated action to eliminate child labour.

I look forward to continue this long-standing collaboration with IPEC. ”

*Kirsten Sandberg  
Chairperson  
The Committee on the Rights of the Child*