

# THE UNITED NATIONS SPECIAL RAPPOREUR ON THE SALE OF CHILDREN, CHILD PROSTITUTION AND CHILD PORNOGRAPHY

## A FACT SHEET

### SPECIAL PROCEDURES OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

The special procedures are a group of **independent human rights experts** with mandates to **report and advise on human rights violations and concerns** from a thematic or country-specific perspective. They are a human rights mechanism of the Human Rights Council, a United Nations (UN) inter-governmental body constituted of 47 UN Member States.

The **independent experts are not UN staff and are not remunerated**. They work with the support of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. Their tasks are defined in the resolutions of the Human Rights Council creating or extending their mandates.



*Special Rapporteur on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, Ms Maud de Boer-Buquicchio, speaks with a group of adolescents during a country visit to Armenia.*

The mandate of the Special Rapporteur on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography was established by [resolution 1990/68](#). It has since then been renewed, including through [resolution 7/13](#). **It is the only mandate with an exclusive focus on children.**

A **child-friendly version** of this fact sheet is also available to help children who would like to engage with the Special Rapporteur and speak out against the sale and sexual exploitation of children in their country. You can find it on the Special Rapporteur's and Plan International's website.

## FUNCTIONS OF THE SPECIAL RAPPOREUR ON THE SALE OF CHILDREN, CHILD PROSTITUTION AND CHILD PORNOGRAPHY

- To analyse the **root causes** of the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography.
- To identify **new patterns** of sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography.
- To identify, exchange and promote **good practices** on measures to combat the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography.
- To promote **comprehensive strategies on the prevention** of sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography.
- To analyse the **impact** of child pornography.
- To **make recommendations** on the promotion and protection of human rights of children who are **actual or potential victims** of sale, prostitution and pornography.
- To **make recommendations** on the aspects related to the **rehabilitation and reintegration** of child victims of sexual exploitation.
- To **integrate a gender perspective** throughout the work of the mandate.

## VIOLATIONS ADDRESSED BY THE SPECIAL RAPPOREUR

- The **sexual exploitation of children** and related violations having led to it such as sale and trafficking.
- The **prostitution of children**.
- The **sale of children** for purposes of use in criminal activities, armed conflict, begging, forced labour, sports, adoption, marriage, transfer of organs, or other purposes.
- The **exploitation of children** for sexual purposes in **travel and tourism**.
- The possession, production and dissemination of **child abuse material**, which includes visual and non-visual depictions.
- The **grooming or solicitation of a child**, which involves conditioning a child to ensure he or she agrees to engage in sexual activity.

# ACTIVITIES OF THE SPECIAL RAPPORTEUR

## COUNTRY VISITS

At the invitation of governments, the Special Rapporteur conducts country visits. The objective is to **assess the human rights situation** under the scope of the mandate and to **issue specific recommendations** to improve the protection of children and their rights.



## THEMATIC REPORTS

The Special Rapporteur presents **annual thematic reports** to the UN Human Rights Council (in March) and to the UN General Assembly (in October) on issues of major interest to the mandate.

## AWARENESS-RAISING

The Special Rapporteur engages with multiple stakeholders and **raises awareness on the issues** covered by the mandate through the Rapporteur's **participation at conferences, seminars and other events**. The Rapporteur also issues media statements and press releases in reaction to violations of the rights of the child.



## COMMUNICATIONS

The Special Rapporteur acts upon information received **with regard to cases of child rights violations or legislation**, policies, programmes or other measures which affect or may affect child rights. **Complaints can be sent by victims, their representatives, NGOs** or other stakeholders claiming to have knowledge of such violations based on direct or reliable information.

The **Special Rapporteur can send communications to all States**, regardless of their status of ratification of international human rights treaties. There is no requirement to exhaust domestic remedies prior to submitting a complaint to the Special Rapporteur.

Through these communications, **the Special Rapporteur seeks to obtain further clarification on the allegations, requests an ongoing violation to be halted, encourages accountability of perpetrators and calls for redress for victims**. Such redress includes compensation as well as the promotion of measures to protect children and to prevent future violations from occurring.

The Special Rapporteur **prioritises safety and confidentiality** in order to protect children and their representatives from any risk of reprisal. **Communications are confidential until their publication** in the [Communications Reports of Special Procedures](#). The reports are published three times per year prior to the Human Rights Council sessions. The

If you are the victim or the witness of a violation of the rights of the child you should lodge a complaint or report it to the appropriate national authorities, such as judicial and administrative authorities or national independent human rights institutions.

sources of the information are never disclosed by the Special Rapporteur. **If the victim is under 18 years old, his or her name is made known in the confidential letter to the Government but it is not published in the Communications Reports.**

The [Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on a communications procedure](#) is an alternative avenue for addressing child rights violations. This complaint mechanism is quasi-judicial and decisions are taken by the Committee on the Rights of the Child. It can be pursued in parallel to a complaint sent to the Special Rapporteur, after domestic remedies have been exhausted.

## RIGHTS OF THE CHILD ENSHRINED IN INTERNATIONAL TREATIES

The work of the Special Rapporteur is guided by the [Convention on the Rights of the Child \(CRC\)](#) and its [Optional Protocol on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography](#), among other instruments.

*“States Parties undertake to protect the child from all forms of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse.” (CRC, Art. 34)*

*“States Parties shall protect the child against all other forms of exploitation prejudicial to any aspects of the child’s welfare.” (CRC, Art. 36)*

The activities of the mandate integrate the principles enshrined in the Convention on the Rights of the Child, namely **non-discrimination, the best interests of the child, the right to life, survival and development and respect for the views of the child.**

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## HOW TO CONTACT THE SPECIAL RAPPORTEUR

For any further information or media inquiries, contact the mandate on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography at [srsaleofchildren@ohchr.org](mailto:srsaleofchildren@ohchr.org) or visit the website at <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/Children/Pages/ChildrenIndex.aspx>. You can also submit allegations at the following link: <https://spsubmission.ohchr.org/>

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A fact sheet by the Special Rapporteur on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography

With the support of:



Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken



The Netherlands



**Terre des Hommes**  
International Federation

*For children, their rights  
and equitable development*