

## **SYNOPSIS OF FOCAL POINT 1 PANEL DISCUSSION**

### Towards putting an end to all forms of violence and exploitation (SDG Target 16.2)

As indicated in the policy position paper on this thematic focal point, to speak of violence against children and adolescents and its eradication is to speak of human rights and of a multidimensional and complex phenomenon.

In this sense, addressing the issue at this Congress, as one of the highest-level forums for inter-American dialogue and exchange on issues related to the human rights of children and adolescents, is no doubt a challenge, due to the complexity mentioned above, but at the same time, also extremely rewarding.

The three panels carried out under this focal point concluded, as proposed at the opening, that to make progress in the eradication of violence it is necessary to work on family, institutional, community and virtual environments and on the basis of prevention, care and reparation of damage and access to justice, and this, both in the normative and public policy dimensions, which involve not only efficient design and realization, but also the need for effective implementation.

To summarize, the different topics addressed by the panel presentations and the discussions arising in their regard are listed below, together with the conclusions related to the challenges and recommendations identified throughout the focal point discussion and the contributions made by the Third Pan American Child Forum.

#### **Topics addressed in the presentations and Plenary discussions on the 3 focal point panels**

National plans were shown for the eradication of all forms of violence against children, including strategies for prevention, care and restitution of rights. Strategies in line or consistent with target 16.2 of the Sustainable Development Goals. Experiences of national protocols or routes for the protection and care of migrant children and adolescents were also addressed.

Presentations under this theme highlighted the INSPIRE strategies and the global partnership against violence as a mechanism or platform for accessing successful experiences and strengthening national action.

Particular reference was made to the prohibition of physical and humiliating punishment.

The normalization of violence was addressed and how that situation needs to be changed. Light was shed on the existence of multiple forms of violence.

Violence in the family environment was addressed.

Consideration was given to the invisibility of children and adolescents whose adult caregivers are deprived of their liberty, as they are exposed to multiple forms of violence and social exclusion, and as their rights are rarely taken into account by the justice system, the prison system and public policies.

Normative components were addressed, showing elements that could be included to improve access to justice and protection.

With regard to violence in digital environments, mention was made of the need to differentiate between violence committed by adults such as grooming, or sexual abuse of children and adolescents to produce pornographic material for digital media, and violence perpetrated between peers, such as cyberbullying or sexting among teenagers.

The complex issue of commercial sexual exploitation and its trends in Latin America were discussed.

Data were revealed showing the increasing trend of children and adolescents in human mobility. As well as the coexistence of two approaches; one focusing on security and the other on rights.

Causes of migration, with its expulsion and attraction factors were discussed.

### **Conclusions: Challenges and recommendations**

1. Break the cycle of violence by creating work plans focused on the prevention and care of child victims, implementing and delivering on commitments made through national plans.
2. Denormalize violence.
3. Strengthen children's access to justice. An important part of this is the strengthening of judicial actors who make decisions in cases of violence against children.
4. The need for a clear conceptual framework on different forms of violence to provide a response focused on comprehensive protection from a rights and gender-based perspective or approach, and as part of this conceptual framework, to identify the causes of violence in order to better address them.
5. Aim to generate evidence-based public policies, have indicators that make it possible to monitor the impact of public policy.
6. Generate application tools such as guides or protocols that allow the different actors in contact with children and adolescents who suffer violence to be clear about the strategies for dealing with different situations, which would lead to improving the quality of care, as well as homogenizing basic standards. Along the same lines, work with families to provide them with tools to improve their protective capacity and positive parenting skills.
7. Commit to training in social-emotional skills, strengthening emotional intelligence and building positive relationships with others.
8. Include the participation of all parties and actors: educators, parents, civil society and State organizations, community leaders, and children and adolescents in action plans to eradicate domestic violence.
9. Strengthen cross-sectoral partnerships for prevention, care and research that includes all public, social and private initiative sectors.
10. Strengthen the capacities of children and adolescents to recognize, understand and determine that they are being subjected to violence, and provide them with tools to confront it, including reporting.
11. Create public policies aimed at comprehensive sex education, as well as family school programmes to involve parents and caregivers in this issue, which allows for the creation of areas where children and adolescents can discuss their issues, rethink their ties and learn about caring for their bodies.
12. With regard to migration, data collection and the identification of expulsion and attraction factors are necessary, as well as monitoring indicators and results, for the generation of more efficient public policies and programmes,
13. There is a need to achieve comprehensive protection throughout the migration process and to reinforce migration protection programmes and policies, such as for the prevention of violence.
14. Have multinational protocols and subregional reception agreements that take into account the particularities of the additional situation of being a migrant.
15. Address the issue with a focus on human rights rather than security; and also, with a holistic and inter-agency approach, avoiding discrimination and social and economic exclusion.

## Contributions and recommendations of the Third Pan American Child Forum:

1. The State, as guarantor of our rights, should raise awareness and educate families in coexistence through internal agreements, within a two-year period.
2. Respect for the rights of others is peace (Benito Juárez, Culture of Peace Project). We revolve around our family, where the recommendation to the State is to strive to generate a safe environment in our homes by guaranteeing our right to health education and an environment free of violence.
3. We recommend that States should include family violence control in their legislation, and foster awareness-raising by implementing public policies for homes and creating a specialized group to monitor compliance.
4. Local governments should promote the effective participation of children and adolescents by creating and strengthening participation scenarios, to enable this population to fully exercise their rights and identify any kind of breach.
5. Institutions responsible for safeguarding the rights of children and adolescents should have sufficient and suitable professional practitioners to provide follow-up and support to children and adolescents who have been victims of any type of violence.
6. Persons who harm children and adolescents should be punished and their social rehabilitation ensured in order to prevent recidivism.
7. We recommend that the executive, legislative and judiciary should safeguard the integrity of children and adolescents, ensuring their full development, equal opportunities and eradication of all forms of violence against them.
8. Most policies in which the OAS, the UN and the State have influence should focus primarily on the prevention of violence, providing clear and concise information, with alternatives for changing social paradigms based on violence.
9. We recommend that all private and public institutions, organizations, groups and others hold workshops or talks to raise awareness among all children and adolescents and families about violence against them and the different ways of solving problems without violence. In addition, teachers should be trained on psychological approaches, since, according to the Save the Children 'Voices' consultation, 56% of children and adolescents are not interested in school.
10. We request that children and adolescents be involved in action plans to eradicate domestic violence in homes, shelters and other places, from our perspective and our thinking; the best solutions will be found by including our opinions. The State should invest in better means of protection so that we are provided with adequate information to know how we should act and that policies be generated according to each need without portraying us as merely another statistic.
11. We recommend that States and national protection systems, regional and local governments should strengthen and generate programmes for the inclusion, protection and promotion of the rights of children and adolescents, in order to learn about them and reduce ill-treatment of children and adolescents and thus eradicate domestic violence. This is linked to the creation of new institutions and a greater budget to protect children and adolescents within the family in the event of domestic violence. A venue should be created where these children of the committees and adults can monitor the actions of institutions and thus ensure that they function appropriately. Finally, we recommend that State legal frameworks be strengthened in order to protect children and adolescents.
12. Design public policies for comprehensive sex education, engaging the best psychologists for schools in order to track students, recognizing their capabilities to create an environment of trust and security.
13. Develop family school programmes to involve parents and caregivers in education on sexual and reproductive rights, engaging health care institutions to provide guidance on sexuality in schools.

14. We recommend that all governments should institute a zero-tolerance policy against all forms of punishment of children and adolescents.

15. We urge all of the States of the Americas to create mechanisms to prohibit corporal punishment, and develop methodologies and strategies to guide healthy relationships between families and children.

16. We recommend that family members should be trained in healthy relationships for the development of children and adolescents.

17. We recommend that school authorities should implement better solutions to deal with violence, and finally, we recommend that governments, educational institutions, school counsellors and staff working in schools should support students and encourage them to participate actively in strategies to generate healthy environments in schools.