



Brussels, 19 September 2014

Dear Members of European Parliament,

On behalf of the 15 child rights organisations and networksⁱ that constitute the Child Rights Action Group (CRAG), we congratulate you on your (re-) election as a Member of the European Parliament.

For the next 5 years, you are the holder of an important and privileged position. We urge you to use your influence to impact positively on the lives of the 2.2 billion children in the world. Much has been done internationally and within the EU to create a legal framework to promote children's rights. But the truth is that in many countries both in Europe and beyond, the practical implementation of these rights is painfully lacking.

Therefore, we want to raise the concerns and status of children in all societies to ensure they are treated as rights-holders of today - not just tomorrow.

We are calling on you to ensure the advancement of new and more ambitious EU legislation and policies on children's rights which allow all children to reach their full potential and to fully integrate in society and that the interests and well-being of all children are promoted through the legislation, policies and budgetary decisions of the European Parliament.

How children are supported and empowered today will be of decisive importance for their lives and for the whole of society – now and in the future. Therefore, the right investment in children is the best way to ensure a high return for society and to overcome social and economic inequalities in the long-term. EU policies, legislation and funding must promote a positive, immediate and lasting impact on children's rights and well-being.

To support you in this endeavour, CRAG has produced a child rights manifesto, with user-friendly tools to facilitate you in becoming a champion of children's rights:

- The Child Rights Manifesto contains a vision statement about the realisation of children's rights in Europe and around the world, and provides clear guidelines on how you can support the realisation of children's rights in your role as MEP. The manifesto exists in various languages.

- 94 MEPs have already endorsed the manifesto, and pledged to mainstream child rights across the work of the European Parliament over the next five year period. If you have not yet done so, you can join your colleagues and sign up to be a Child Rights Champion today (www.childrightsmanifesto.eu)

- The manifesto has a specialised website (www.childrightsmanifesto.eu) and twitter account, which we put at your service to promote information about your work on children's rights in the committee(s) you are serving on. As a Child Rights Champion, these communications channels will provide you with outreach to all of the child rights organisations in CRAG, their members and supporters, letting them know about your work in the Parliament. In

order to share information with us about your work and request information is shared, your office can write to us at: info@childrightsmanifesto.eu

We would like to take this opportunity to invite you to a **Roundtable discussion** on championing children's rights in the European Parliament and ways forward, at **13.30–15.00 on 24 September 2014, in Room ASP 6 D 128** of the European Parliament. A networking buffet lunch is to take place ahead of the meeting in the same venue at 12.30-13.30.

Finally CRAG members are seeking the support of all MEPs for the creation of a new permanent mechanism in the EP to mainstream children's rights across its work. We will contact you over the coming months to discuss further. Please do not hesitate to contact us about this in the meantime should you be pursuing a similar goal.

We thank you for your attention and your time. If you have questions about children's rights or feel that you need more information, please do not hesitate to contact us at: info@childrightsmanifesto.eu

We look forward to working with you.

Yours sincerely,

Children Rights Action Group (CRAG)

ⁱ *Children of Prisoners Europe – Eurochild – European Federation for Street Children – European Youth Forum International Falcon Movement - Socialist Educational International – International Juvenile Justice Observatory – Alliance for Childhood – Missing Children Europe – Plan EU Office – Platform for International Cooperation on Undocumented Migrants – Save the Children – SOS Children's Villages – Terre des Hommes International Federation – The World Organization of the Scout Movement, WOSM – World Vision*