BACKGROUND NOTE ON SOMALIA’S RATIFICATION OF THE CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD


The ratification means that Somali children now hold legally binding rights with the CRC providing a framework for the Government to promote and protect those rights. The Somali Government will have to bring its legislation, policy and practice into accordance with the standards in the CRC. The ratification provides the basis for the system building and capacity development of the Government.

Somalia’s children continue to face daily challenges posed by conflict, displacement, malnutrition and disease. Child and maternal mortality rates are among the worst in the world. One in seven children die before reaching the age of five mostly from preventable illnesses and a polio outbreak still poses a risk. Only four in ten children are in school while nearly 800 children were recruited by armed groups last year.

UNICEF has supported the Somali authorities to provide basic services including in 2014 providing lifesaving treatment for over 140,000 children suffering from severe malnutrition, providing sustainable water for a quarter of a million people and vaccinating more than 90% of children against polio in accessible areas.

The Convention on the Rights of the Child was adopted on 20 November 1989 by the UN General Assembly. The Convention articulates a set of universal children’s rights, based on four core principles – non-discrimination; the best interest of the child as primary consideration in matters that affect them; rights to life, survival and development, and respect for the views of children. Two countries – South Sudan and the USA - have yet to ratify the CRC.

About UNICEF

UNICEF promotes the rights and wellbeing of every child, in everything we do. Together with our partners, we work in 190 countries and territories to translate that commitment into practical action, focusing special effort on reaching the most vulnerable and excluded children, to the benefit of all children everywhere.

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