

UN News

New Guidelines for Child Victims and Witnesses

The Guidelines on Justice in Matters Involving Child Victims and Witnesses of Crime were adopted by the United Nations Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice at its 14th session, held in Vienna from 23-27 May 2005. They were finalised by an intergovernmental group of experts convened by the UN Secretary General, which met in Vienna earlier this year thanks to the financial support of the Government of Canada.

The Guidelines provide a framework to ensure that children who have been victims of crimes or witnesses to crime are treated in a fair, dignified and secure manner when they are involved in a judicial process. The Guidelines are based on the guidelines on justice for child victims and witnesses of crime finalised in 2003 by the International Bureau for Children's Rights (IBCR).

In addition to adopting the Guidelines, the UN resolution - originally presented by Canada and co-sponsored by more than 50 Member States - invites Member States to draw on them when drafting legislation regarding children. It will be submitted for final adoption at the next session of the United Nations Economic and Social Council in July. For more information, contact: International Bureau for Children's Rights 1185, St-Mathieu, Montréal, Qc, Canada H3H 2P7 Tel: + 1 514 932 7656; Fax: + 1 514 932 9453 Email: info@ibcr.org Website: <http://www.ibcr.org>

New Members of the Committee on the Rights of the Child

In accordance with Article 45 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, elections for nine members of the Committee on the Rights of the Child were held on 23 February 2005.

Of the seven Committee members, running for re-election, five were re-elected in the first round of voting. Ms. Ghalia Al-Thani (Qatar), Ms. Lucy Smith (Norway), Ms. Yanghee Lee (Republic of Korea), Ms. Joyce Aluoch (Kenya), and Ms. Nevena Vuckovic-

Sahovic (Serbia and Montenegro). Mr. Ibrahim Al-Sheddi (Saudi Arabia) lost in the second round of voting and Ms. Marilia Sardenberg (Brazil), who was attempting an unprecedented fourth term, was eliminated after the first round. Mr. Luigi Citarella (Italy) and Ms. Saisuree Chutikul (Thailand) did not run for re-election.

New Committee members elected in the first round included Mr. Kamal Siddiqui (Bangladesh), Mr. Jean Zermatten (Switzerland), and Mr. Brett Parfitt (Canada) and Mr. Awich Pollar (Uganda). Committee members, who were not up for re-election and remain on the Committee through to February 2007, are Ms. Anderson (Jamaica), Mr. Doek (Netherlands), Mr. Filali (Algeria), Ms. Khattab (Egypt), Mr. Kotrane (Tunisia), Mr. Krappmann (Germany), Mr. Liwski (Argentina), Ms. Ortiz (Paraguay) and Ms. Ouedraogo (Burkina Faso). For more information, contact: Laura Theytaz-Bergman Liaison Unit Program, NGO Group for the CRC c/o Defence for Children International 1 rue de Varembe, PO Box 88, CH-1211 Geneva 20, Switzerland Tel: + 41 22 740 47 30; Fax: + 41 22 740 1145 Email: ngo-crc@tiscalinet.ch Website: <http://www.crin.org/NGOGroupforCRC> Biographical data on the new members can be obtained at: <http://www.ohchr.org/english/bodies/crc/SPmeeting.htm>

New International Organisation Based In Australia

Children's Rights International is an initiative of the World Congress on Family Law and Children's Rights and arose from a direct recommendation of the Congress's Bath meeting in September 2001. It aims to bring together judges, lawyers, psychologists, medical practitioners, mediators, counsellors, mental health workers, media representatives, child cares, teachers & allied professionals to contribute their specialised expertise in a practical manner through education, legal and other advocacy to promote and protect the interests of the most vulnerable amongst us, our children and youth. For more information, visit www.childjustice.org/html/index.htm or contact Bill Jackson, Chief Executive Officer, World Congress Inc and Children's Rights International PO Box 163, Newtown, Sydney, Australia 2042, Phone: +61 2 9519 9506 Fax: +61 2 9519 9505