

A World fit for Children in a Europe fit for Children
Meeting of S. Rossore 2007
19 July 2007

CONCEPT PAPER

Rationale

The United Nations General Assembly will meet in December of 2007 to review progress achieved over the five years that have followed since the Special Session on Children, held in New York in 2002. The Plan of Action of the Special Session on Children, agreed upon by Heads of State and Government, calls on the promotion of a World Fit for Children and identifies key priorities, namely promoting healthy lives; providing quality education; protecting against abuse, exploitation and violence; combating HIV/AIDS; and mobilizing resources to achieve the goals agreed upon at the Special Session. Heads of State and Government committed to regularly monitor at the national level and, where appropriate, at the regional level, progress towards the agreed goals.

In lead up to the mid-decade review of the Special Session on Children, important initiatives are being promoted in different regions. In Europe, in June 2006, an Intergovernmental Conference was organized in Palencia, Spain, by the Spanish Government and UNICEF to examine progress of child rights in Europe and Central Asia, and to launch the process of review of World Fit for Children at the national level. The Conference counted on the participation of the Council of Europe, EU institutions, Governments from across Europe and Central Asia, and representatives from civil society. In November 2006 a meeting was organized by EURONET and UNICEF, in Florence, with the participation of UN agencies, the Committee on the Rights of the Child, the Council of Europe, European Institutions and a wide range of NGOs, with a view to assessing overall progress and promoting civil society input into the Special Session on Children Special Session on Children +5 review.

In the framework of the institutional collaboration between the Tuscany Region and UNICEF, in 2006, the President of the Region announced his commitment to devote the 2007 annual meeting of S. Rossore to children's rights and the preparatory process of the Special Session on Children +5 review.

The agenda of the Special Session on Children placed a strong emphasis on the role of local governments and authorities in the promotion of good governance for children's rights and in strengthening partnerships to ensure that children are at the centre of agendas for development. The 2007 meeting of S. Rossore will reiterate the important role played by regional and local governments in advocacy and social mobilization to achieve tangible results for children.

S.Rossore 2007

The annual meeting of S. Rossore was initiated in 2001 by the President of the Tuscany Region. It has been conceived as an occasion to facilitate dialogue between public institutions, international experts, academics, policy-makers and civil society, and represents a forum to debate issues of global concern and propose solutions inspired by ideals of solidarity, accountability and democracy.

The 2007 S. Rossore meeting will be devoted to children and will take place on July 19. Guided by the agenda agreed upon at the Special Session on Children, it will give particular attention to child poverty and social exclusion, including amongst migrant children, and will consider the role of regional and municipal authorities in the promotion of local good governance for

children's rights. Addressing child poverty and social exclusion is instrumental to advance the UN Millennium Agenda and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. It further constitutes a central dimension of the EU social inclusion agenda.

As in previous years, S. Rossore 2007 is expected to be a high level policy and advocacy meeting, bringing together governmental representatives and decision makers from European and developing countries, regional and municipal authorities, civil society organizations, intellectual leaders, children's rights experts and academic institutions.

Placing children at the centre of the political debate, and organized around high level expert roundtables, the meeting is expected to adopt a Declaration reaffirming a strong commitment to children in Europe and beyond, and to advance the process of follow-up to the Special Session on Children.

Agenda of S. Rossore 2007

The day of July 19 will be organized into plenary and expert roundtable sessions. Expert roundtables will be held around three themes:

- a) addressing child poverty and deprivation;
- b) preventing social exclusion including amongst migrant children;
- c) promoting local good governance for children's rights.

10.00am Opening session chaired by UNICEF

- **Welcome**
- **Introductory remarks** by UNICEF on the situation of children and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) / World Fit for Children (WFFC) achievements.
- **Introduction of the main topics of the day** – child poverty and social exclusion – by two high level independent experts. The presentation will underline the situation in industrialized and in developing countries from both an academic and social policy point of view, with special focus on the Millennium Declaration, MDGs and WFFC commitments.

10.45

- **High level panel on child poverty and social exclusion** with the participation of special guests representing diverse sectors of society: policy makers, decision makers, as well as voices from the civil society.

Lunch break (1.30pm- 3pm)

3.00pm

- **Thematic discussions** in three expert roundtables on:
 - addressing child poverty and deprivation;
 - preventing social exclusion including amongst migrant children;
 - promoting local good governance for children's rights.

5.00pm

- **Reports and Conclusions** from the working groups presented in plenary

5.30pm

- **Closing remarks** by UNICEF, Tuscany Region, Italian Government and a representative of civil society

6.30pm

- Presentation of **the S. Rossore Declaration**