

Concept note for a thematic session on

## **Children Forum**

at the 5th Global Conference on the Elimination of Child Labour, Durban, South Africa

Thursday 9 May from 14:45 to 16:30 pm

### **The Background**

Participation is a fundamental right of children. It is also a means through which their other rights can be realised. The active engagement of girls and boys provides information on, and insights into, their lives that can inform legislation, policies, budget allocations and services, and can lead to improved outcomes across a range of rights, including health, education and family life. Through participation, children learn to cooperate with adults and other children.

Participation is a key element of accountability and promoting good governance. It is a means through which governments and other duty-bearers can be held to account. Recognising children's right to be heard can therefore make an important contribution towards more transparent and open government. In this way empowered children can become active and effective advocates for the realisation of their own rights and other others, thus becoming "child human rights defenders"

In 2009, the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child adopted nine Basic Requirements for effective, ethical and meaningful participation of children in "all processes in which a child or children are heard and participate" (CRC/C/GC/12).

Throughout the conference, children from all the 5 ILO Regions will participate. The host country, South Africa will be afforded 30 children to attend the physical session. The children will play an active part in all aspects of the conference. They will speak at the Opening Plenary Session on Sunday as well as in the High Level Panel on accelerating progress and achieving impact at scale on Monday. They will also play a prominent part in other Thematic Panels and Side Events.

This plenary session will allow all children to engage on issues affecting children in the space of child labour and agree on advocacy issues; Other children will be able to join the session virtually from all the participating regions. Voices from all five regions will be heard and their closing remarks will form part of the outcome document towards Call for Action towards the elimination of child labour.



The event will increase awareness and advocacy by listening to the child's voice on the elimination of child labour. The children have been carefully using categories fairness in terms of representation (geographical, religious/beliefs, age, gender, urban/rural areas, economic background etc.) and the focus before, during and after the conference is on the well-being of children.

