

# The day of general discussion (DGD 2018) on children as human rights defenders



## A note for children to help understanding

### What are Human Rights?

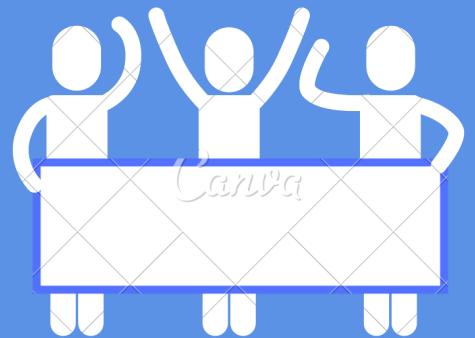


Human rights  
are  
**PROMISES**  
governments make to  
people in their country  
to make sure that  
everyone can lead a good life.

### Who are Human Rights Defenders?

Human Rights Defenders (HRDs)  
are people who take action to  
**PROMOTE & PROTECT**  
their own rights or those of others.

When defenders are under 18 years old,  
they are  
**CHILDREN HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS (CHRDs)**  
even if people do not think that  
or call them that.



## Who are Child Human Rights Defenders (CHRDs)?



They are children who work  
for their **OWN RIGHTS**  
OR the **RIGHTS OF OTHERS**.

CHRDs work on **MANY ISSUES**  
like bullying at school,  
protecting the environment  
or  
stopping child marriages.

## What is already being done to support and protect HRDs?

20 years ago  
the UN published  
an important document called

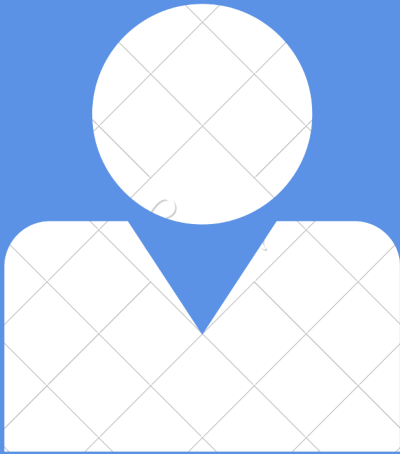
“the Declaration  
on Human Rights Defenders”

It advises governments  
and others  
about the rights  
of those who  
promote and protect human rights.

These rights are also children’s rights.



## Who is working on this issue?



The Committee on the Rights of the Child  
**ADVISES** governments about  
children's human rights in  
the United Nations Convention  
on the Rights of the Child (CRC).

It has decided to have this day of discussion.

There is also a person called  
the **UN SPECIAL RAPPORTEUR (SR)**  
on HRDs whose job it is to keep an eye  
on what is happening to HRDs  
across the world and to advise governments.

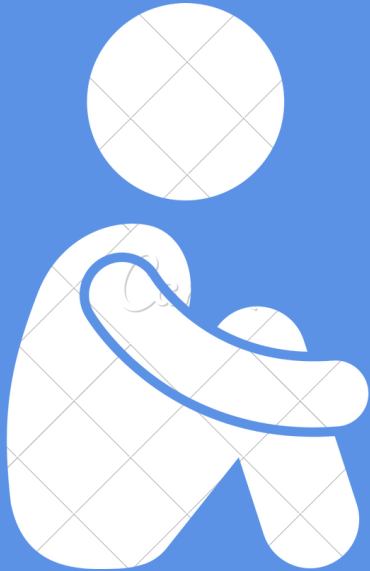
## Why is it important to discuss Child Human Rights Defenders (CHRDs)?

Encouraging everyone,  
**INCLUDING** children, to be HRDs,  
can stop governments from  
breaking their promises about human rights  
and help build societies that respect them.

Although lots of children are acting as HRDs,  
often children are **NOT** included  
in national and international documents  
on protections and support for HRDs.



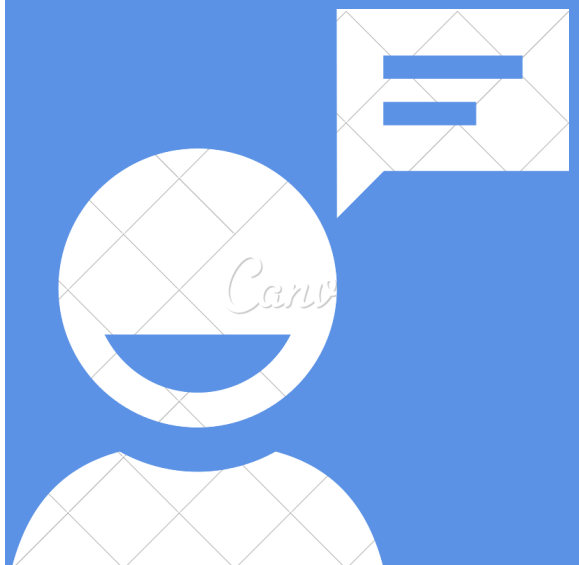
## What are some of the challenges facing CHRDs?



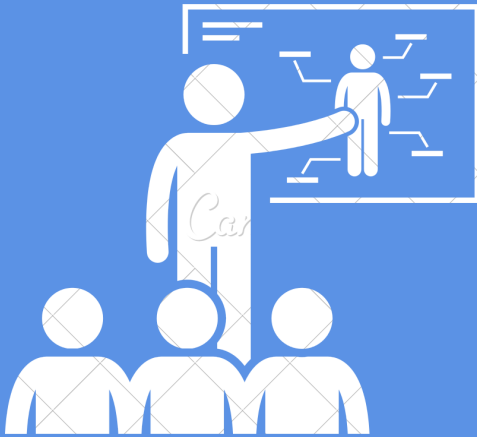
- Children cannot access information that **ALLOWS** them to become defenders.
- They are **AFRAID** to speak up in case they get hurt.
- **Laws STOP** them setting up groups.
- **ADULTS** decide that children cannot get involved.
- Adults do not take children **SERIOUSLY**.

## Which children's rights matter here?

- **ACCESS** to information.
- Express **VIEWS** freely.
- Have views taken **SERIOUSLY**.
- Be **SAFE** and protected from harm.
- **JOIN** a group or a public gathering (such as a protest).
- Human rights **EDUCATION**.



## What is the purpose of the DGD?



The DGD is not just a meeting –  
it's a long term project.

The Committee wants as many people  
as possible to understand:

- The definition of CHRDs and their role.
- The experiences and the views of CHRDs.
- What helps children to act as CHRDs.
  - What makes it difficult for them.
  - What protections they need.
- Any gaps in laws or rules, guidance, advice.
- Governments' obligations to protect and empower CHRDs.
- How adults can provide support.

## How can people, including children, get involved?

Have a discussion in their country  
on the topic of the DGD.

- Send public or private information to  
the Committee before the DGD  
([link to call for submissions](#)).
- Ask to take part in the DGD in Geneva  
or watch it online.



## How is the Committee involving children?



The Committee will make sure that

- children across the world are asked for their views before the day (link to our website).
- Child advisors plan the DGD.
- Children take part in the discussions on the day itself.
- There will be child-friendly versions of any reports and information.

## What will happen at the day of discussion?

The Committee, governments, the UN, children's groups and children themselves will meet on Friday, 28th September 2018, in Geneva in Switzerland.

They will discuss how best to encourage and protect the rights of CHRDs.

Everyone has agreed to do their best to make sure that children can take part in the DGD in a fun, interesting and useful way.



## What will happen afterwards?

In early 2019,  
the Committee will publish guidance on this issue for:

- Children who are or want to become CHRDs to help them claim their rights.
- Adults to respect and support children.
- Governments to understand what they have to do.
- The UN to support and include the voices of CHRDs.
- UNICEF and other children's organisations to work with CHRDs and support them.
- The media to report fairly on CHRDs.
- Businesses and companies to stop harming the rights of CHRDs.

