

Third Annual International Women's Day Celebration Breakfast
"Global Dispatches: Eliminating Violence and Discrimination Against the Girl Child"
March 8, 2007

Global Dispatch: Convention on the Rights of the Child
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The Convention on the Rights of the Child* states that:

- 1) A child is defined as a person under the age of 18.
- 2) Each Member State will respect and ensure the rights set forth by the Convention regardless of sex, race, language, religion, or nationality.
- 3) The best interests of the child must be the primary concern when making decisions that affect us.
- 4) Governments have a responsibility to take all available measures to make sure our rights are respected, protected and fulfilled. We have the right to be protected from all forms of violence.
- 5) We have the right to live and develop healthily.
- 6) Adults should listen and respect the views of the child and involve us in decision-making processes concerning us.
- 7) Children have the right to an identity – name, nationality and family ties.
- 8) All children have the right to a free primary education that develops each child's personality, talents and abilities to the fullest.
- 9) Children have the right to access and share information as long as it is not harmful to us or others. The freedom of expression includes sharing information in any way we choose including talking, drawing or writing.

In addition to this, the United Nations Security Council actually named six grave rights violations against the **girl child** in United Nations Security Council Resolution 1612. Member States should impose targeted measures against any governments or groups carrying out any of these violations. Governments should bring national legislation in line with international norms regarding the rights of women and girls and prohibition against: 1) the killing or maiming of girls; 2) using, recruiting, conscripting or enlisting girls in armed forces and groups; 3) rape or other grave sexual violence against girls; 4) abduction of girls 5) attacks against schools or hospitals; 6) denial of humanitarian access; 7) sexual exploitation of girls; and 8) forced marriage during situations of armed conflict.

These essential rights are for our future; for everyone's future.

*Source: UNICEF. Convention on the Rights of the Child: Rights under the Convention on the Rights of the Child. <http://www.unicef.org/crc/index_30177.html>