**Integrating Human Rights in Sustainable and Resilient Recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic**

Intersessional meeting for dialogue and cooperation on Human Rights and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

**Oral Statement**

This statement is delivered on behalf of Child Rights Connect, Humanium, Plan International, Save the Children, and World Vision International.

The COVID-19 pandemic has unleashed an unprecedented social and economic crisis threatening to undermine decades of progress on children’s rights and on the Sustainable Development Goals. Without urgent action, we risk seeing these hard-won gains lost or even reversed, putting the world further off track for achieving the 2030 Agenda and the pledge to Leave No One Behind.

The social and economic impact of the pandemic have pushed millions of children into poverty which not only risks their own lives, but undermines the future of all our societies. An entire generation of children are seeing their education disrupted, and according to our predictions, almost 10 million children may never return to school. The crisis has widened inequalities and exposed children to increased harm, including gender-based violence, such as child marriage, pushing the most deprived children further behind, including the poorest, children with disabilities, girls, children on the move or children living in fragile and conflict settings.

Now, more than ever, world leaders have an opportunity to put in place bold and transformative solutions that respond to the crisis, and build back a more resilient, greener, sustainable and equitable recovery rooted in inter-generational justice and accountability to both present and future generations.

A resilient recovery must also fully recognise the interlinkages between all the SDGs and international human rights standards and requires a holistic response addressing the full spectrum of rights, civil, political, economic, environmental, social and cultural rights.

We call on the UN and Member States to:

* Use the SDGs and the child rights framework, including the recommendations from human rights mechanisms, as a compass to guide COVID-19 recovery and accelerate action;
* Ensure an enabling civic space by creating safe, accessible and child-friendly online and off-line spaces for children’s participation, including for the most deprived and marginalised children, in decision-making, including in COVID-19 response and recovery measures, and by strengthening the legal and policy frameworks guaranteeing all children’s civil and political rights enshrined in the CRC;
* Recommit to the pledge to Leave No One Behind and to prioritise children that are furthest behind from achieving SDG targets within COVID-19 response and recovery. Equity and inclusion must be driving principles that underpin global recovery;
* Design and implement policies, programmes, investment and recovery packages that considers age, gender and other diversity considerations, supported by disaggregated data;
* Seize the accelerated digital shift to enhance inclusivity of children in vulnerable situations by bridging the digital divide.

Thank you for your attention.