



*Organisation Mondiale pour l'Éducation Préscolaire
Organización Mundial para la Educación Preescolar
World Organization for Early Childhood Education*

DECLARATION
from the OMEP World Assembly in Panama, July 23, 2019

RENEW YOUR COMMITMENTS!
THIRTY YEARS AFTER THE ADOPTION OF THE CONVENTION ON
THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD (CRC)

We, members of the World Executive Committee of the World Organization for Early Childhood Education (OMEP), presidents and delegates of the National Committees present at the 71st World Assembly in Panama endorse our commitment to move forward in the realization and implementation of the CRC, always giving priority to the best interests of the child. The CRC proposes four guiding principles for its interpretation and application: the best interests of the child, the right to non-discrimination, the right to life, survival and development, and the freedom of expression and to be heard.

By ratifying the CRC, State parties are obliged to respect and protect all children, and to guarantee and promote the human rights of children. However, we recognize that there are still major challenges. The international context presents inequities and injustices to be faced in order to fulfil the rights of young children. Today, too many children around the world are living under conditions that deserve immediate action;

- children in poverty, inequality, famines and other difficult conditions, e.g. armed conflicts. For young children, every single day is of vital importance for their physical, emotional and mental health,
- children in migration in all regions of the world. There are displaced children living in camps, separated from their families, sometimes even imprisoned,
- children who are affected by climate change, pollution, environmental degradation and increased frequency of natural disasters,
- children affected by racism, xenophobia and gender discrimination,
- children suffering from sexual and labour exploitation.

Since 1948, OMEP has been working with education for peace and for the fulfilment of children's rights to education, health, well-being, food, housing, care and development from the earliest years.

According to the CRC, children have the rights to play, health, education and care, and it is our joint efforts that make this possible. Education relies on well trained and well-respected teachers. Children also have the right to express themselves in all matters that relate to them. Thus, children are important citizens with the right to participate in the development of our societies, and for a sustainable future. The Agenda 2030 is based on international human rights standards, with the goal of leaving no one behind, the imperative of equality and non-discrimination. The sustainable development goal No 4 addresses the availability, accessibility, affordability and acceptability of lifelong education for all. Education is a fundamental human right of every person, and the basis for the realization of all other goals and rights.

Now is the time for State parties to renew their commitments, redouble their efforts and take all possible actions to fulfil the rights of all children and especially for the most vulnerable and children at risk. We call on all governments to take immediate action to guarantee the children a safe life and for each boy and every girl to develop to their fullest potential, leaving no one behind.

OMEP is an international, non-governmental and non-profit organization concerned with all aspects of early childhood education and care. OMEP was founded in 1948 and has consultative status with UN, UNESCO and UNICEF. OMEP has 72 national committees in all regions of the world, www.worldomep.org