

Will for Children

11 December 2016

Two hundred years ago reformers came together to abolish the slavery trade. Yet, we have come once again to abolish modern day slavery, and make a compassionate and child friendly world, where every child is free, safe, healthy, educated and empowered.

One in ten children is still forced into work by poverty, coercion and trafficking, and shocking 5.5 million of them are still enslaved. Girls and young women make up the overwhelming majority of those trafficked for sexual exploitation. Millions of children and youth are not in school, and more than a half of these children are exposed to violence, or live in conflict areas, fragile states and in conditions of humanitarian emergencies. Millions of our children and young people are being denied a safe, secure, just and nurturing environment.

The last decades have seen a positive shift in the way children and their rights and education are viewed. This changing lens on the world's children has begun to inform public awareness, and in places, business ethics. These factors have come together with innovative solutions, and long-term investments, but the pace of progress has been neither uniform nor fast enough to reach the hardest-to-reach children.

Children *have* the right to a safe, educated and healthy childhood.

As Nobel Laureates and world leaders, this is our individual and collective *will for children*.

- We *will* use our voices to protect and amplify the voices of millions of girls, boys and young people- as equal citizens of today and decision makers of tomorrow. We reaffirm our unshakable belief that the power of change lies in the infinite and untapped capacities of children and young people for activism, to be instrumental in any change in their own environment, community and society.
- We *will* take actions and experiences towards concrete efforts to ending child labour in all its forms, including trafficking of children, and abolishing modern day slavery; we *will* use our voices to increase awareness in society, and encourage processes that will help monitor and uplift the progresses made through relevant and robust metrics.

- We *will* work towards the goal of high quality inclusive and universal education, with an immediate emphasis on getting children out of child labour and into schools.
- We *will* support efforts to prevent and end both violence against children, and their exploitation in acts of violence and terror and in situations of conflict, as a matter of urgency.
- We *will* support and encourage governments, inter-governmental organisations and private sector to prioritise the empowerment; free, quality, public education; inclusive, affordable and equitable healthcare; protection, safety and well-being of all children, in their policies, business practices (especially supply chain behaviour) and financing.

We note that all 193 of the world's governments in the United Nations have adopted the 17 Sustainable Development Goals for the year 2030, which include among them the commitments to universal access to health care (SDG 3), universal access to education for all children (SDG 4), decent jobs for all (SDG 8), an end to forced labour, modern slavery, human trafficking and child labour (SDG 8), and violence against children (SDG 16). In view of this global political agreement, we call on all nations to implement the SDGs with urgency and with the necessary domestic and international financing.

We express our deepest gratitude to the President of India H.E. Pranab Mukherjee for hosting this inaugural Summit in New Delhi.

We welcome the generous offer to host the next summit in United Arab Emirates in 2017.

Adopted at the inaugural Laureates and Leaders Summit for Children

New Delhi, India

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