

## **52<sup>nd</sup> Session of the Human Rights Council**

### **Joint Statement on Child Human Rights Defenders**

#### **Item 3: Interactive Dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders**

I am pleased to deliver the following statement on behalf of XX countries.

Dear Madame Special Rapporteur,

We thank you for your report and welcome that it recognises the critical contributions from child human rights defenders and recommends States to take several actions to advance respect for their human rights. We encourage continued action and guidance by your mandate, other Special Procedures, Treaty Bodies and States to raise the profile of child human rights defenders and their work.

We welcome your recommendation explicitly to recognise children working peacefully for others' rights as human rights defenders. We commend their work as they stand up for human rights. However, there continues to be a lack of recognition that the Declaration on Human Rights Defenders also applies to children. Children have rights in their individual capacity, including civil and political rights.

Child human rights defenders face specific barriers, risks and reprisals due to their status in society, including age-based and gender-based discrimination, paternalistic attitudes towards children as passive objects of protection, stigmatisation, undue restrictions on their exercise of civil and political rights, lack of access to child-friendly information and to complaint mechanisms and effective remedies. States should increase efforts to ensure the protection and effective empowerment of child human rights defenders.

Ms. Lawlor, how can we support the international human rights system to pay more attention to the situation of child human rights defenders and ensure their protection and effective empowerment?

Thank you.