

PRESS RELEASE

Chairpersons of the Committee on the Rights of the Child visit Cambodia to advocate for the well-being of the most vulnerable children

PHNOM PENH, 8 November 2023 – Chairpersons from the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) concluded a two-day visit to Cambodia to advocate for the implementation of recommendations made in 2022 to enhance the well-being of children and young people in the country.

During the visit, Chairperson, Ann Skelton, and Vice Chairperson, Sopio Kiladze, participated in discussions with officials and representatives from relevant Government ministries and institutions, United Nations agencies, development partners, as well as with child rights civil society and non-governmental organizations, including adolescent and youth networks and the Cambodia Human Rights Committee.

The UNCRC monitors the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), which is based on the key principles of the right to life, survival and development, non-discrimination, the best interest of the child, and the right to be heard. In 2022, the Committee issued its observations and recommendations on the progress Cambodia has made towards meeting the legally binding CRC.

In their discussions, the two experts recognized the achievements made by the Royal Government of Cambodia between 2011 and 2023 in protecting and realizing child rights, while also highlighting areas of concern.

“On behalf of the Committee, I thank the Royal Government of Cambodia and all stakeholders for their hospitality and the fruitful exchanges we have had during our visit,” said Chairperson, Ann Skelton. “Cambodia has made significant progress in implementing the Convention of the Rights of the Child. We hope that the Government will ensure the passing of the child protection law and its implementation. We also encourage the Government to complete its child rights commitment by ratifying Optional Protocol 3 to the CRC, which establishes a national mechanism to allow children to seek redress for the violation of their rights when their own legal system is unable to offer a solution.”

The two experts also underlined the importance of prohibiting corporal punishment in all settings and continuing to combat violence and sexual exploitation.

“With this visit, the Committee members have brought their knowledge and rights-based perspectives to the Government’s efforts to uphold child rights in Cambodia,” said Dr. Will Parks, UNICEF Representative in Cambodia. “National authorities are on the right track to address most of the recommendations made by the Committee in 2022. UNICEF remains committed to support the Royal Government of Cambodia at the national and subnational level to realize children's rights and to create a future where all children can grow, learn, play, develop, and thrive with dignity in their families and community environment.”

Guided by the CRC, UNICEF is the United Nations organization mandated to safeguard the rights of every child and works with partners, including the Royal Government of Cambodia, to act on the UNCRC recommendations.

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UNICEF works in some of the world's toughest places, to reach the world's most disadvantaged children. Across more than 190 countries and territories, we work for every child, everywhere, to build a better world for everyone.

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