

Children's Defense Fund

Children's Rights

<https://www.childrensdefense.org/blog/30-years-later-the-us-has-yet-to-commit-to-protecting-childrens-human-rights/>

Public Facing Advocacy Writing

If America wants to be a truly great nation on the world stage, its time to redefine the measures of our success. The litmus test I propose is that of the great German Protestant theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer, executed for opposing Hitler's holocaust, who said the test of the morality of a society is what it does for its children. [Marian Wright Edelman](#)

On this day in 1989, the UN General Assembly adopted the Convention on the Rights of the Child, spelling out basic rights children should have everywhere. This Convention centers on the best interests of the child and governments obligation to ensure the survival and development of the child to the maximum extent possible. The Convention establishes in international law that governments should ensure all children grow up in an environment of happiness and understanding and have certain rights including access to services like health care and education and protection from abuse, neglect, exploitation, torture, and capital punishment.

This Convention plays an essential role in improving the lives of children around the world and is the most widely ratified human rights treaty in history. Yet, the US remains the only UN member who has not ratified it. At a time when the United States shamefully stands alone in allowing [life-without-parole sentences for juveniles](#), openly participates in the detention of immigrant children and the [separation of families](#), and funnels children especially children of color and children with disabilities from [schools to prisons](#), it is critical that we join the modern world in ratifying the Convention on the Rights of the Child and confront the ways in which we regularly fail to protect children's human rights.

Learn more about the UN Convention on the Rights of Child [here](#).

A gift today helps children get the help they need

The Children's Defense Fund is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Our Federal Tax ID number is 52-0895622.

Let us know how you're using this resource



Count me in!

Be a champion for every child. Sign up for updates about our work to fight for children and ways you can help.

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