

the 1990s, the number of people in the world who are under 15 years of age has increased by 1.2 billion, from 1.1 billion in 1980 to 2.3 billion in 1999 (United Nations 2000).

There is a growing awareness of the need to address the needs of children in the 21st century. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) has been signed by 112 countries, and the United Nations Millennium Declaration (2000) has set out a series of goals for the world to achieve by the year 2015. The first goal is to 'eradicate poverty and hunger', and the second goal is to 'achieve universal primary education'.

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) is a landmark document in the history of children's rights. It is the first legally binding international instrument to define the rights of children. The convention has been signed by 112 countries, and it is now the most widely ratified human rights treaty in the world.

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