

Open-ended Inter-Governmental Working Group on transnational corporations
and other business enterprises with respect to human rights

Oral Statement

DKA AUSTRIA (Dreikönigsaktion – Hilfswerk der Katholischen Jungschar)

Statement concerning Article 15

Thank you Chair.

I'm speaking on behalf of DKA Austria, the development cooperation agency of the catholic children's movement, part of the CIDSE network and the Treaty Alliance Austria.

As a children-based organization, we welcome the fact that children are explicitly named in article 15.5. Nonetheless, a profound children's rights approach is not embedded in the zero draft itself.

Childhood is a unique period of physical, mental, emotional and spiritual development. Violations of children's rights, such as exposure to violence, child labor, unsafe products or environmental hazards may have lifelong, irreversible and transgenerational consequences. Children are often not allowed a political voice and lack access to relevant information. In general, it is challenging for children to obtain remedy in the courts or through other mechanisms, when their rights are infringed upon, even more so when their rights are violated by business enterprises. Given the broad range of children's rights that can be affected by business activities and operations, we ask you to include this perspective in the ongoing work on the binding treaty.

The zero draft's focus on the rights of people affected and access to remedy is key. It is necessary to understand and make visible the nature of business-related children's rights violations. The situation of children should be taken into account in all relevant articles of the treaty, for example children's access to justice and children's rights due diligence. It is another important focus for us that the committee's work ensure, that children are heard and their situation is taken into account.

Thank you Chair.