

ARTICLE 26

Children living under apartheid regimes and who are discriminated against must be protected.

ARTICLE 27

Sexual exploitation: Children should not be exploited or forced to engage in sex.

ARTICLE 28

Drug abuse: Children should be protected from drugs and other harmful substances like alcohol and cigarettes. Drugs and alcohol can interfere with their growth and education.

ARTICLE 29

Trafficking: Governments must ensure that children are protected from being recruited, sold, abducted or trafficked. Children are not to be used for begging purposes.

ARTICLE 30

Children of imprisoned mothers: Special treatment shall be provided for pregnant mothers and mothers of infants and young children who are imprisoned.

ARTICLE 31

Responsibility of the child: Children have a duty to their parents, family society and country. Children have a duty to respect their parents, family and other people and to provide assistance when required. Children have a duty to preserve and respect the African culture and to use the teachings of the African culture to make the society a better one.

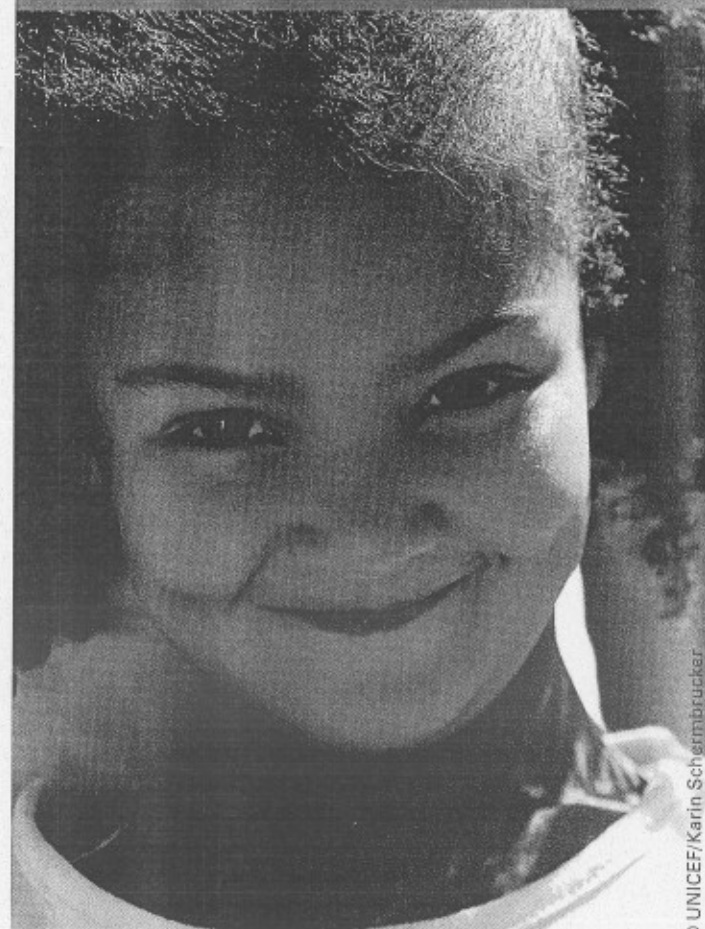
UNICEF SOUTH AFRICA
351 Schoeman Street
6th Floor Metro Park Building
P O Box 4884
0001 Pretoria
Tel +27 12 354 8201
Fax +27 12 354 8293
www.unicef.org/southafrica

**PARLIAMENTARIANS,
YOU CAN MAKE A
DIFFERENCE**

unite for
children

unicef 

**THE AFRICAN
CHARTER
ON THE
RIGHTS AND
WELFARE OF
THE CHILD**



CHAPTER ONE: The rights and welfare of the child

In July 1990, the Organisation of African Unity, now the African Union, accepted the African Charter of the Rights and Welfare of the Child. This Charter is an addition to the Convention on the Rights of the Child which is a universal declaration.

Source: African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child: www.africa-union.org; The African Child Policy Forum.

ARTICLE 1

Sets out the obligation of signatories to the Charter to ensure that steps are taken to implement the provisions of the Charter.

ARTICLE 2

Everyone under 18 years of age has all the rights in this Charter.

ARTICLE 3

Non-discrimination: All children have the same rights. There should be no discrimination against children because of their race, religion, colour, sex, disability, language or ethnic group.

ARTICLE 4

Any person or authority concerned with children should work towards what is best for each child.

ARTICLE 5

All children have the right to life which must be protected by law. Governments should ensure that children survive, are protected and develop healthily. Death sentences for children are prohibited.

ARTICLE 6

Name and identity: every child has a right to a name, to be registered after birth and a right to be a citizen of a country.

ARTICLE 7

Freedom of expression: Children have the right to think and express themselves in public.

ARTICLE 8

Freedom of association: Children have the right to associate freely, to join groups and organisations, as long as it is peaceful and within the law.

ARTICLE 9

Freedom of thought: Children have the right to think and believe what they want. Parents should guide their children on these matters.

ARTICLE 10

Protection of privacy: Children have a right to privacy. The law should protect them from attacks against their way of life, their good name, their families and home. Parents have the right to supervise the conduct of their children in these circumstances.

ARTICLE 11

Education: All children have the right to be educated. The government must ensure that all children are given the chance to go to school. Education must be free and must develop children's personalities and abilities to the fullest potential.

ARTICLE 12

All children have a right to relax and play, and to join freely in cultural and artistic activities.

ARTICLE 13

Children who are disabled have the same rights as all children and should have special care and support.

ARTICLE 14

Health: Every child should be healthy. All children have the right to be immunised, live in a clean home, eat good food and drink clean water. The government should provide health services for children.

ARTICLE 15

Child labour: Children should not be made to do very heavy, difficult and dangerous work which only adults should do.

ARTICLE 16

Child abuse and torture: Children have a right not to be abused or tortured.

ARTICLE 17

Children and the law: Every child who is accused or found guilty of committing a crime has the right to special treatment. A lawyer should represent the child and there should be a special court for children. Children should not

be imprisoned, tortured, treated badly or detained with adults.

ARTICLE 18

Protection of the family: Governments should support the family unit and ensure that the rights of children are protected when parents separate.

ARTICLE 19

Care and protection: Parents should care for their children and protect them from danger. Children are not to be separated from their parents against their will, unless it is in the best interest of the child.

ARTICLE 20

Parental responsibilities: Both parents share responsibility for rearing children and should always consider what is best for each child. Governments should help parents by providing material assistance and support programmes.

ARTICLE 21

Harmful social practices: Children have the right to be protected from cultural practices that interfere with their growth, physical and mental development, health and education. For example, child marriages shall not be allowed.

ARTICLE 22

Armed conflicts: Children should not be made to fight in wars. Children should be protected from the dangers of war.

ARTICLE 23

Refugee children: Children, who are forced to leave their countries and find themselves in different countries, have rights. They should be protected and helped.

ARTICLE 24

Adoption: The best interests of the child shall prevail during the adoption process. Governments must ensure that the adoption process is monitored and within the law.

ARTICLE 25

Separation from parents: Children should not be separated from their parents and families. Children who are separated from their parents have rights like all other children, and need special protection and help. They should be assisted to re-unite with their families or another family.