

## EUROPEAN EXTERNAL ACTION SERVICE



*The Deputy Secretary-General*

Brussels, 7<sup>th</sup> July 2016  
eeas.global.1(2016) 3699572

**Ms Tanya Cox**  
**Senior Policy and Advocacy Manager**  
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Dear Ms Cox,

Thank you for your letter dated 3 June on behalf of a group of children's rights organisations. The High Representative/Vice-President, Ms Federica Mogherini, has asked me to address, on her behalf, your concerns about the EU's external policy on the rights of the child.

In the HR/VP's first address to the European Parliament's Plenary in Strasbourg in November 2014, and on the occasion of the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, she reiterated the EU's commitment and treaty obligation to promote and protect the rights of the child. We stand by this commitment. On Friday, 1 July, the HR/VP presented the EU Global Strategy on foreign and security policy to EU leaders. In line with our multi-faceted approach to resilience, there is a firm commitment to focus on deepening our work on education, communication, culture and youth.

Today, we must act on the global momentum which is pushing the rights of the child to the top of the political agenda. We have the necessary tools and the political will to act with determination. Leaders around the world have made pledges to implement the 2030 global goals. In March, the United Nations Special Representative of the Secretary-General on violence against Children, Ms Marta Santos Pais, launched the UN Global Campaign, "High Time to end Violence against Children". In April, Save the Children published its new report Every Last Child to mark the launch of its global campaign to ensure no child is left behind.

The HR/VP fully agrees that we must ensure all EU staff has the necessary tools to ensure commitments made are efficiently implemented. The revision of the 2007 Guidelines on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of the Child is an important priority for this year. We acknowledge that a systems-strengthening approach and a rights-based approach with a focus on children are needed if we are to tackle the root causes of violations and provide long-term sustainable solutions.

The revision of these Guidelines is therefore a necessary step to ensure we implement this approach efficiently and subsequently, that we implement the actions on children in the EU Action Plan on Human Rights and Democracy (2015-2019).

I take this opportunity to express our gratitude for our excellent cooperation and to thank you for your dedication to defending and promoting the rights of the child. We appreciated your input to the EU Action Plan which also paved the way for the revision of the Guidelines. The EEAS continues to count on your expertise and support during this revision procedure.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of stylized, overlapping loops and a long horizontal stroke at the bottom.

Christian Leffler