**Note to President of India on the National Children’s Commission**

**About the National Movement of working children**

**Response for the proposed National Children’s Commission by the National Movement of working children**

**The International Movement of Working Children**

**How it began**

Twenty nine working child delegates from thirty two countries of Asia, Latin America and Africa met at the first International Meeting of Working Children held in India (From Nov 27-Dec 9, 1996). They identified the following ten points of consensus, which are now referred to as The Kundapur Declaration.

**Kundapur Declaration**

1. We want recognition of our problems, our initiatives, proposals and our process of organisation.
2. We are against the boycott of products made by children.
3. We want respect and security for ourselves and the work that we do.
4. We want an education system whose methodology and content are adapted to our reality.
5. We want professional training adapted to our reality and capabilities.
6. We want access to good health care for working children.
7. We want to be consulted in all decisions concerning us, at local, national or international level.
8. We want the root causes of our situation, primarily poverty, to be addressed and tackled.
9. We want more activities in rural areas and decentralisation in decision making, so that children will no longer be forced to migrate.
10. We are against exploitation at work but we are for work with dignity with hours adapted so that we have time for education and leisure.

Representatives of the Movements of Working Children and youth of Africa, Latin America and Asia met in Dakar (Senegal) in March 1998. They have presented the decisions taken by the International Movement of
Working Children in the Dakar Declaration:

Dakar Declaration

DEBATE ON THE NEW CONVENTION

- We will ask the ILO to give us a chance to speak during its coming Conference in Geneva so that we can express ourselves on the convention on the `intolerable forms' of child labour.
- We are against prostitution, slavery and drug trafficking by children. These are CRIMES and not WORK. The decision-makers should distinguish between work and crime.
- We are fighting every day against hazardous work and against exploitation of child work.
- We are also fighting for the improvement of life and working conditions of all children in the world.
- We want all the children in the world to have, one day, the right to make a choice between working and not working.
- Work should be in accordance with the capacity and development of each and every child and not depend on his/her age.

Initiatives and politics on child labour

- The Working Children and Youth Movements should always be consulted in decisions on child work. If a decision has to be taken, we should take it all together.
- We will not participate in the Global March Against Child Labour because it's organisers refused to involve us and because we cannot march against our own work.

Our movements

We have decided to create an International Co-ordination of Working Children Movements so as to

- reinforce our solidarity
- make known our ten points decided upon in Kundapur against poverty, to address the basic causes which force us to work and for the improvement of our life and working conditions.
- always make clear our point of view in debates on child work. We are sending this appeal to all Movements of Working Children so that they all can join us.

Activities

In 1995, Working Children's movements from Latin America, Asia and Africa met at Brazil and set up the International Organising Committee.

Since then they have:

- Conducted the meeting of the Organising Committee at Dakar, Senegal, in 1996
• Conducted the First International Meeting of Working Children in collaboration with NGOs who facilitate their Movements and the International Working Group on Child Labour in Kundapur, India in 1996

• Participated in a consultation with representatives of International and National Agencies, Trade Unions, NGOS and representatives of the Government. The consultation was organised by the International Working Group on Child Labour at Kundapur, India following the First International Movement of Working Children

• Participated as delegates at the Child Labour Conference, Amsterdam 1997. Their delegation participated in a Plenary Debate at the Conference. Two of their representatives were panelists at workshop 'International and Regional Cooperation in the Area of Eliminating Child Labour'. They had informal discussions with Mr. Loic Picard of the ILO regarding the proposed Convention.

• Representatives from Working Children's Movements from Africa, Asia and Latin America presented papers at the Urban Childhood Conference at Trondheim in 1997.

• Participated in the Mundalito (Young world) in Lima, Peru organised by the representatives of the Latin American Movement

• Participated in the Child Labour Conference at Oslo as official delegates.

• Participated in the Working Children's Forum organised by the International Save the Children Alliance. During this period, they had informal discussions with Ms. Carol Bellamy, UNICEF, Mr. Bequele, ILO, Mr. Pierre Schori, Minister for Development Corporation, Sweden, Mr. Melkert, Minister of Social Affairs and Employment, Netherland, Mr. Neil Kearney, General Secretary, ITGLWF, Belgium, Mr. Veerendra Kumar, Minister for Labour, India and Ms. Thurdin, International Save the Children Alliance

• Participated in the meeting between representatives of the International Movement at Senegal, Dakar.

An Appeal: Join us in our effort and contribute to our cause!
Send your responses to: response@workingchild.org