Preparatory regional meeting
World Congress on Justice for Children

“Towards a fairer system of justice for children in North America”

Merida, Yucatan - México

8th, 9th, 10th May 2019

North American Working group on Justice for children
A Preparatory regional meeting for the next World Congress on Justice for Children:

Objectives of the North American working group on justice for children.

As a follow up of the 2018 World Congress on Justice For children, an ad hoc working group of government officials, stakeholders, academics and experts from Canada, Mexico and USA has decided to join forces to develop joint initiatives to promote fairer justice for children in North America. The objective of this group is to foster regional cooperation among professionals from the three North American nations in order to develop coordinated actions, to exchange good practices, cooperate in scientific research, formulate specific recommendations, and to raise awareness on justice for children. In addition, this working group aims to foster the operational implementation of international laws and standards concerning the rights of children and young people in conflict with the law.

This North American Working Group on Justice for Children, composed of Juvenile Justice Initiative (USA), Colectivo Ave (Mexico), and Terre des hommes foundation, last met in the context of the World Congress of Justice for Children, which took place at the UNESCO house in Paris – France in May 2018. The World Congress on Justice for Children is a joint initiative of international non-profit organisation composed by Terre des hommes, Penal Reform International and The International Association of Youth and Family Judges and Magistrates in collaboration with other organisations such as Defense for Children International, and Child Right International Network. Similar regional meetings have been organised, in the past, in Washington DC – USA and Toronto – Canada, during which it has been agreed to work more precisely on restorative juvenile justice, solitary confinement, and alternative measures to deprivation of liberty. It is in this context that the working group decided to support the initiative of the United Nations General Secretary of conducting a Global Study on Children Deprived of Liberty. In 2018, members of the group co-hosted a regional consultation in New York with the UN Special Rapporteur Manfred Nowak. Furthermore, the group has been very active in promoting the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals which commits to promote peaceful, sustainable and inclusive society (SDG16). Achieving this ambitious vision, increasing access to justice for children remains at the forefront of international child rights agenda. In April 2018, Terre des Hommes and the United States institute of Peace
organized a joint conference in Washington DC, “Enhancing access to justice, peace and security for children and youth across the globe”, to spark a dialogue between a range of stakeholders, explore promising practices, and to actively engage participants discussing and formulating action-oriented recommendations on the emergence trends in access to justice for children.

During its last meeting in May 2018 in Paris, the North American Working Group on Justice for Children, which is composed of Juvenile Justice Initiative (USA), Colectivo Ave (Mexico) and Terre des hommes, agreed to meet next in Yucatan, Mexico, from the 8th to 11th of May 2019. On the 8th of May a pre-event will be organized for Mexican nationals, then on the 9th of May will take place a Regional Conference to facilitate the exchange of evidence-based promising community practices on justice for children in North America. The Conference will bring both a global overview of recent trends and evolutions of justice for children in North America as well as a special focus on alternatives measures to deprivation of liberty for specific groups such as children with mental health issues. Special attention will focus on restorative approaches in the context of diversionary measures. Finally, the conference will study the condition of detention of children in North America and how to prevent harmful practices such as solitary confinement.

On the 11th of May, during a closed policy-oriented event, the working group will define priorities as well as next steps for the group in a regional and global context, ahead of a next working group meeting in 2021, before the second edition of the World Congress on Justice for Children. Recommendations and proposals of topics, agenda and activities for the next World Congress will be formulated by the working group. Similar preparatory regional meetings are being organized in different parts of the globe in 2019 and 2020.
AGENDA Day I
8th of May 2019
Pre-event for Mexican participants

“Human rights and children’s rights in Mexico: Current trends and challenges”

- **8:00 – 09:30 am:** Registration
- **09:30 - 10:00 am:** Welcome addresses and agenda of the day
  Cedric Foussard y MTF Joaquín M. Torres Aburto.
  **Inauguration:**
  Abog. Ricardo de Jesus Avila Heredia – President of the Supreme Court of Justice of Yucatan (tbc)
- **10:00 - 11h00:** Keynote Speech and debate: Human rights and children’s rights in Mexico: challenges and solutions.
  Dr. Ricardo Bucio Mújica – Executive Secretary of the Sistema Nacional de Protección de los Niños, Niñas y Adolescentes en México (SIPINNA).
- **11h00- 11h30:** Coffee break
- **11h30 - 12h30:** Children in conflict with the law in Mexico: juvenile crime trends and law reform
  Lic. Juan Martin Pérez García – Executive Secretary of the Red por la Defensa de los Derechos de los Niños, Niñas y Adolescentes en México. (REDIM) y Executive Secretary of the Red Latinoamericana y caribeña por la Defensa de los Derechos de los Niños, Niñas y Adolescentes. (REDLAMYC).
- **12h30 - 14h0:** Lunch
- **14:00 - 15:30:** Defending the rights of children in conflict with the law: institutional responses in Mexico
  Dr. Rubén Vasconcelos Méndez – General Prosecutor of the State of Oaxaca
  MD. Santiago Altamirano Escalante – Magistrate of the Unitary Juvenile Justice Court of the State of Yucatán
- **15:30 - 16:30:** Coffee break
- **16:30 - 17:30:** Expert debate: Fostering access to justice and diversionary measures in North America: From “day-to-day justice” practices to community based programmes.
  MD. Santiago Altamirano Escalante – Magistrate of the Unitary Juvenile Justice Court of the State of Yucatán
  Dr. Jorge Hevia Orozco – Colectivo AVE Representative
- **17:30-18:00:** Concluding remarks
  Cedric Foussard y MTF Joaquín M. Torres Aburto.
AGENDA Day II
9th of May 2018

“Towards a fairer justice for children in North America”

- 8:00 - 9:00 am: Registration
- 9:00 - 9:30 am: Welcome addresses
  Cedric Foussard – Terre des hommes
  Elizabeth Clarke – Juvenile Justice Initiative - USA
  Joaquin Torres – Colectivo Ave - Mexico
- 9:30 - 10:00 am: Inauguration
  Lic. Mauricio Vila Dosal – Gobernador del Estado de Yucatan- Mexico

- 10h00 - 11h00: Keynote speech and debate: Trends and evolution of justice for children in North America and around the world
  Global expert: Diane Geraghty Loyola University of Chicago, USA
  Discussants: Dr. Ricardo Bucio Mújica – Executive Secretary of the Sistema Nacional de Protección de los Niños, Niñas y Adolescentes en México (SIPINNA).
  Lise Gagnon Judge for children, AIMJF, Canada

- 11h00 - 11h30: Coffee break
- 11h30 - 12h30: Deprivation of liberty for children and young offenders: ending harmful practices and condition of detention
  Expert: Haitham Shibli – Penal Reform International - Jordania
  Sarahi García - Justicia Juvenil México, AC
  Discussant: Elizabeth Clarke – Juvenile Justice Initiative, USA

- 12h30 - 14h00: Lunch
- 14h00 - 15h30: Expert debate: Alternatives measures to deprivation of liberty for vulnerable groups, including children with mental health issues
  Canada representative
  Dr. Jorge Carlos Hevía Orozco, Neurociencias de la Conducta. Escuela de Carácter AC

- 15h30 - 16h00: Coffee break
- 16:00 - 17:00: Keynote Speech: Innovative justice for children: How can we improve our systems to facilitate reintegration and social and professional inclusion?
  USA and Canada representative
  Mtro. Víctor Roa Muñoz- Colectivo AVE

- 17:00-17:30: Closing Ceremony
  Cedric Foussard – Terre des hommes
  Lise Gagnon Judge for children, AIMJF, Canada
  Haitham Shibli – Penal Reform International – Jordania
AGENDA Day III

10th of May 2019

North American Working group on Justice for children

Preparatory regional meeting for the World Congress on Justice for Children

- 9h00 - 9h30: Welcome Addresses and objectives of the day
- 9h30 - 10h30: Tour de table: participants’ priorities and activities
- 11h00 - 11h30: Coffee break
- 11h30 - 12h30: Defining North American working group needs
- 12h30 - 13h30: Lunch
- 13h30 - 15h00: Defining North American working group joint actions in the context of the preparation for the next World Congress on Justice for children
- 15h00 - 15h30: Coffee break
- 15h30 - 16h30: Global and Regional Advocacy Strategies
- 15h30 - 16h00: Conclusions
ORGANISERS

COLECTIVO AVE (Adolescentes con Vulnerabilidad Extrema)
Collective of Organized Civil Society in favor of Adolescents in Extreme Vulnerability.

Children in Mexico suffer a vast range of situations where their rights are not safeguarded, consequently they are facing difficulties within their personal, family, and social development. Many of these children are suffering extreme vulnerabilities and need to be heard as well as supported in search of their personal well-being. Colectivo Ave aims to

- Promote and defend Children Rights,
- Advocate for child friendly Public Policies,
- Develop programs for the prevention of addictive and violent behavior, as well as conflict with the law.
- Lead programs of Treatment, Social-Cultural-Professional Reintegration, and Restorative approaches.

Main contacts:
MTF Joaquín M. Torres Aburto. (Escuela de Caracter AC).
Mtra. María Jesús Ocaña Dorantes. (Casa Crisal AC Project).
Mtro. Víctor R. Roa Muñoz (Youth Integration Centers AC).

Juvenile Justice Initiative, USA.

The Juvenile Justice Initiative was launched in 2000 as a collaborative of the Woods Fund of Chicago along with the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, during the tenure of President Barack Obama on the Woods Fund Board. JJI is a non-profit, non-partisan, inclusive statewide advocacy organization that establishes broad-based collaborations to achieve concrete improvements and lasting changes for youth in the justice system, consistent with the JJI mission statement – to transform the juvenile justice system in Illinois by reducing reliance on confinement, enhancing fairness for all youth, and developing a comprehensive continuum of community-based resources throughout the state. JJI’s statewide approach to systemic reform for youth in the justice system begins with research and analysis, following a circular path linking policy development, policy education, network and coalition building, policy advocacy and policy evaluation and implementation assistance.

Main contact:
Elizabeth Clarke, President, Juvenile Justice Initiative
Fundación Terre des hommes – Ayuda a la infancia (Tdh)

Terre des hommes Foundation (Tdh) is the largest Swiss organization for child relief. With delegations in over 30 countries and its expertise in the domains of health and child protection, Tdh offers practical solutions and a better future for over one million children and their mothers each year. This engagement is financed by individual and institutional support, of which more than 85% flows directly into the programs. Tdh was founded in Lausanne in 1960.

Main contact:
Cedric Foussard, Advocacy and Global Learning Advisor.

Penal Reform International

Penal Reform International (PRI) is an independent non governmental organisation that develops and promotes fair, effective and proportionate responses to criminal justice problems worldwide. It promotes the rights of detainees to fair and humane treatment, and campaigns for the prevention of torture and the abolition of the death penalty, and works to ensure both just and appropriate responses for children and women who come into contact with the law.
Contact: Haitham Shibli

International Association of Family and Youth Judges and Magistrates

IAYFJM is a worldwide organisation, dating to before the first World War and formally established in Belgium in 1928. It is dedicated to the study and exchange of information on issues concerning children and young people in need of care and protection and/or in conflict with the law, and their families. It aims to identify, publicise and promote best practice in these fields. The languages of the Association are French, English and Spanish.
Contact: Lise Gagnon
CO-ORGANISERS

Contact: Magistrate Santiago Altamirano
LOGISTICS

Main contact: Cedric Foussard – cedricfoussard@tdh.ch

How to get to the conference room day 1 and day 2?

Supreme Court of Yucatan (Tribunal Superior del Estado de Yucatán).
Auditorio Víctor Cervera Pacheco.

How to get to the conference room day 3?

University of Mérida. “Sala de Usos Múltiples”
Conference logistics:

- Please note that the conference will enjoy interpretation in English and Spanish.
- On the 8th of May, the Yucatan government and the Merida Town hall will be happy to invite you to a welcome cocktail.
- The Supreme Court of Yucatan will be pleased to invite you for lunch on the 8th and 9th of May 2019.

Hotels

Special price has been negotiated with Hotel Wyndham Mérida.

How to go to the Hotel Wyndham Mérida: