



Statement by

**His Excellency Cosmos Richardson
Permanent Representative of Saint Lucia to the United Nations**

On the occasion of

**The High-level Meeting on the occasion of the thirtieth anniversary
of the adoption of the Convention on the Rights of the Child**

United Nations

New York

November 21, 2019

Mr. President,

Saint Lucia welcomes the opportunity to participate in this commemorative event in celebration of our children.

My delegation aligns itself with the statement delivered by the distinguished Permanent Representative of Grenada on behalf of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and I wish to deliver the following remarks in my national capacity.

30 years ago, our global community took a fundamental step in making a historic commitment to ensure the protection and prosperity of our children. As we commemorate the 30th anniversary of the adoption of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the most widely ratified human rights treaty, it is a fitting moment to renew our commitment to our children, as we also celebrate World Children's Day.

Saint Lucia remains committed to the principles and objectives of the Convention, mindful that the best interest of the child must be the primary consideration in its implementation.

Saint Lucia gives priority to guaranteeing the right to education as enshrined in Article 28 of the Convention. We are fully committed to this objective and share the view that providing for a quality education is the foundation to achieving sustainable development; as outlined in goal 4 of the SDGs. If no one is to be left behind, we must ensure that our children have access to quality education that can enable them to be agents of change. Education is the vehicle that will unleash the potential of children to contribute to building a better future.

Mr. President,

Saint Lucia has made progress in its efforts to ensure the protection and well-being of its children. Among such progress are the following:

- Access to Universal secondary education;
- The enactment of legislation in 2018 guaranteeing the protection of children, namely; the Child (Care, Protection and Adoption) Act, as well as the Juvenile Justice Act;
- The provision of special assistance to children with disabilities;

- Continued improvements in the capability and capacity of the government agency responsible for the care and protection of children, particularly in the areas of Child Protection, Foster Care and Adoption.

The legislation referred to above form part of a wider Juvenile Justice Reform Project through which additional legislation including the Status of Children Bill, the Child Maintenance Bill and the Domestic Violence Bill are expected to be enacted during 2020.

Mr. President,

The provision of quality Health Care is another area, critical to the sustainable development of our children. We are currently engaged at the national level, in the formulation of a National Health Care Reform Programme whose aim is to ensure guaranteed health care for all including our children.

My delegation welcomes the recent adoption of the Political Declaration on Universal Health Coverage and regard its adoption as an impetus to accelerate our own efforts to provide the highest attainable standard of health care for our children, so that they may live healthy and prosperous lives.

Saint Lucia also salutes all the organizations working to ensure that children are not left behind. In particular we recognize and applaud the work of UNICEF and their continued commitment to our children.

Leaving no one behind implies a world free of poverty, hunger, disease, want and environmental degradation, where all life can thrive, a world with universal literacy and with equitable and universal access to quality education at all levels and to health care and social protection where physical, mental and social well-being are assured. Our children more than any other sector of our population depends on us and we must not fail them.

The Government of Saint Lucia will continue to ensure their protection and support the overall well-being of our treasured ones, so that they will help build a better Saint Lucia and a better world.

I thank you.