



DATES



UNIVERSAL CHILDREN'S DAY

20 NOVEMBER

20 November 2008 is celebrated as the international day for children. The United Nations General Assembly recommended in 1954 (resolution 836 (IX)) that all countries institute a Universal Children's Day, to be observed as a day of understanding between children and of activity promoting the welfare of the world's children. The date of 20 November marks the day on which the Assembly adopted the Declaration of the Rights of the Child, in 1959, and the Convention on the Rights of the Child, in 1989.

2008 is the 19th anniversary of Universal Children's Day. The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) is the most widely ratified human rights treaty in the world. Today, 193 states have ratified the CRC. In fact, only two countries in the world — Somalia and the United States — have not yet given the CRC legal force, although both have signed it.

COUNCIL OF EUROPE NEWS



Universal Children's Day

Declaration by Maud de Boer-Buquicchio, Deputy Secretary General of the Council of Europe

Strasbourg, 20 November 2008

The Universal Children's Day is an occasion to recall that children are smaller than adults, but their human rights are not. If anything, they are entitled to more not less protection. This may seem obvious, but in reality, it is not always so.

There is still much we need to do to protect children from violence. A new Council of Europe Convention on the protection of children against sexual exploitation and sexual abuse, was opened for signature last year and I hope that it will soon reach the threshold of ratification required for its entry into force.

It will bring new opportunities to step up the prevention of abuse, the protection of the victims and the prosecution of sexual offenders. It is a very welcome development, but legal instruments, as important as they are, need to be accompanied by comprehensive strategies aimed at protecting children in all environments and from all forms of violence.

Committee of Ministers adopted new Resolution on youth policy

The Council of Europe's youth policy priorities for the coming years are at the heart of the Resolution just adopted by the organisation's decision-making body - the Committee of Ministers.

The resolution spells out what the organisation needs to do in the field of youth work in three priority areas: human rights and democracy, cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue, and social inclusion of young people. It also outlines concrete approaches and methods to be used regarding youth policy and co-operation, youth research and knowledge of youth as well as the development of youth mobility, youth work, education and training.

UNITED NEWS

International Day Against Fascism and Antisemitism

9 November 2008 - 70 years after 'Kristallnacht' pogrom

Antisemitism tries to claim back the streets in Europe. The numbers of victims of fascist attacks has been growing dramatically in the recent years.

Smashed windows, antisemitic graffiti, radical attacks on synagogues and hate crimes in form of street violence are the most seen faces of fascism and antisemitism on our streets. Also the defilement of Jewish cemeteries and Holocaust memorial places are day-by-day indicators of nowadays antisemitism.

A recent example of antisemitic vandalism was given during the general elections in Austria 1 month ago, where 90 graves on a Jewish cemetery were destroyed - the offenders are still not known... Not only in Austria, but also in many other European states, there is an enormous lack of information and education concerning this sensitive topic. The local governments give not even rudimentary reports about antisemitic or fascist motivated delicts. This ignorance forces thousands of potential victims to live in constant fear... a life long!

The European wide campaign on 9th November, the International Day against Fascism and Antisemitism, aims to counteract the worrying developments related to antisemitism, fascism and racism all over the continent.

In this way non-governmental organisations in 41 European countries will get active around 9th November 2008 to commemorate the 'Kristallnacht' pogrom in 1938. The 'Kristallnacht' pogrom is often seen as the symbolic beginning of the Holocaust. Hundreds of activities, coordinated by the UNITED secretariat, will take place all over Europe during the annual action week. In diverse manners the NGOs draw also attention to contemporary faces of fascism, antisemitism, racism and discrimination; they prepare for example torchlight processions, lectures, exhibitions, demonstrations, poster and awareness-raising actions etc.

Additional Information.

UNITED for Intercultural Action is a network of 560 supporting organisations all over Europe working against racism, fascism, nationalism and in support of migrants and refugees. Activities at local level are carried out by organisations in 41 European countries within the framework of the 9 November campaign. The campaign is coordinated by the international UNITED secretariat based in Amsterdam.

A full list of activities is available on

www.unitedagainstracism.org