

## Glossary

**A Right** is a power or liberty to which one is justly entitled, or a thing to which one has a just claim

**Accede/Accession:** 'Accession' is an act by which a State signifies its agreement to be legally bound by the terms of a particular treaty.

**Adoption:** 'Adoption' is the formal act by which the form and content of a proposed treaty text are established.

**Alternative Reports** These are reports produced by NGO's and children's organisations, which are submitted to the Committee alongside the main Government report.

**Articles** An article is a division in a legal document, so is just a different way of saying parts.

**Charter:** The term 'charter' is used for particularly formal and solemn instruments, such as the treaty founding an international organization like the United Nations ('The Charter of the United Nations').

**Committee on the Rights of the Child or the Committee.** A group of 18 experts on children's rights nominated by state parties to examine reports on children on behalf of United Nations.

**Concluding Observations** When the Committee has heard all the evidence from a country they then produce their own report which contains recommendations on how Governments can improve their record on children's rights.

**Convention:** A 'convention' is a formal agreement between States. The generic term 'convention' is thus synonymous with the generic term 'treaty'.

**Declaration:** The term 'declaration' is used for various international instruments, which are not necessarily legally binding.

**Deposit:** After a treaty has been concluded, the written instruments which provide formal evidence of a State's consent to be bound are placed in the custody of a depository. The depository must accept all notifications and documents related to the treaty, examine whether all formal requirements are met, deposit them, register the treaty and notify all relevant acts to the parties concerned.

**Entry into Force:** The time when a Treaty comes into force after being adopted, often at a specified time following its ratification or accession by a fixed number of states.

**Government** A body that can make and enforce laws within a country.

**NGO's** (Non Governmental Organisations) Organisations that are not part of Government. Examples could be Oxfam, Amnesty International or Greenpeace.

**Optional Protocol:** The term 'protocol' is used for an additional legal instrument that complements and add to a treaty. A protocol is 'optional' because it is not automatically binding on States that have already ratified the original treaty; States must independently ratify or accede to a protocol.

**Participation** - Participation means the right to be involved in decisions made about yourself.

**Ratify/Ratification:** 'Ratification' is an act by which a State signifies an agreement to be legally bound by the terms of a particular treaty.

**Rights Holder** A person who is entitled to claim rights.

**Signature:** 'Signature' of a treaty is an act by which a State provides a preliminary endorsement of the instrument.

**State Party** Another word for Government.

**Substantive Articles** - Articles 1 to 41 of the convention. These articles contain all the rights applicable to children.

**Treaty:** A 'treaty' is a formally concluded and ratified agreement between States. The term is used generically to refer to instruments binding at international law, concluded between international entities (States or organizations). Under the Vienna Conventions on the Law of Treaties, a treaty must be (1) a binding instrument, which means that the contracting parties intended to create legal rights and duties; (2) concluded by states or international organizations with treaty-making power; (3) governed by international law and (4) in writing.

**UNCRC** United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

*These definitions are adapted from the UNICEF Introduction to The Convention on Rights of the Child definitions and the Glossary in Funky Dragon's 2007 Report: 'Our Rights, Our Story.'*