

UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

The UIA Built Environment Education Network supports the principles of the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child*, which holds that a child should be fully prepared to live an individual life in society and brought up in the spirit of the ideals proclaimed in the Charter of the United Nations and in particular in the spirit of peace, dignity, tolerance, freedom, equality and solidarity . . . Taking due account of the importance of the traditions and cultural values of each people for the protection and harmonious development of the child.

The *UN Convention on the Rights of the Child* (<http://www.unhcr.ch/html/menu3/b/k2crc.htm>), which was adopted by General Assembly resolution 44/25 of 20 November 1989, entered into force on 2 September 1990. It has been ratified by 192 countries.

The *Convention* defines a child as "every human being below the age of eighteen years unless under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier".

Articles 2.1, 17 and 29 of the *Convention* have particular relevance to the aims of the UIA Built Environment Education Network, in that they require States to respect and ensure for every child:

- The rights set out in the *Convention* without discrimination of any kind, irrespective of the child's or his or her parent's or legal guardian's race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or other status (Article 2.1).

- That the child has access to information and material from a diversity of national and international sources, especially those aimed at the promotion of his or her social, spiritual and moral well-being and physical and mental health. (Article 17) To this end, States Parties shall:
 - (a) Encourage the mass media to disseminate information and material of social and cultural benefit to the child and in accordance with the spirit of article 29;
 - (b) Encourage international co-operation in the production, exchange and dissemination of such information and material from a diversity of cultural, national and international sources;
 - (c) Encourage the production and dissemination of children's books;
 - (d) Encourage the mass media to have particular regard to the linguistic needs of the child who belongs to a minority group or who is indigenous;
 - (e) Encourage the development of appropriate guidelines for the protection of the child from information and material injurious to his or her well-being, bearing in mind the provisions of articles 13 and 18.

- That the education of the child shall be directed (Article 29) to:
 - (a) The development of the child's personality, talents and mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential;

 - (b) The development of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and for the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations;

 - (c) The development of respect for the child's parents, his or her own cultural identity, language and values, for the national values of the country in which the child is living, the country from which he or she may originate, and for civilizations different from his or her own;

 - (d) The preparation of the child for responsible life in a free society, in the spirit of understanding, peace, tolerance, equality of sexes, and friendship among all peoples, ethnic, national and religious groups and persons of indigenous origin;

 - (e) The development of respect for the natural environment.