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## High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development 2015

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Your Excellency's, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my honour to make this statement on behalf of Child Helpline International, the global network of child helplines with 192 member organisations in 145 countries. Child Helpline International recognises, and is thankful for the work done so far on the post-2015 development agenda and has positively welcomed the [Open Working Group proposal for the Sustainable Development Goals](#). Specifically, we welcome the tremendous step forward of Goal 16.2, aimed at **ending all forms of violence against children**.

Child Helpline International highly appreciates the UN Secretary General's efforts in analysing and synthesising all aspects of the post-2015 agenda, and for the identification of the six essential elements that frame and reinforce the agenda. Specifically, we strongly welcome the recognition of children and young people as the "torch-bearers" of the next sustainable development agenda through to 2030, with a wide focus on child poverty, access to education, and child empowerment.

However, we remain very concerned about the lack of focus on violence against children in the UN Secretary General's Synthesis report, "The Road to Dignity by 2030: Ending Poverty, Transforming All Lives, and Protecting the Planet". From listening to children all around the world, it is clear that despite the above mentioned efforts, violence and abuse sadly remain very much part of the lives of our children today.

Child Helpline International has consolidated data provided by child helplines to identify worldwide trends and highlight gaps in systems designed to protect children. Between 2002 and 2013, 277 million children tried to reach out to child helplines globally and members of our network have managed to answer almost 150 million of these contacts. **Abuse and violence** represent **17%** of all reasons for contact and is identified as **the most prominent issue that children talk about** when they contact child helplines.

On the basis of the global data collected during the last twelve years, Child Helpline International strongly believes that the topic of violence against children deserves a stand-alone goal in the Sustainable Development Goals. We consider freedom from violence to be indispensable to a sustainable future; a world in which children can grow-up healthy, well-nourished, resilient, well-educated, culturally sensitive and effectively protected from violence, abuse and neglect.

Protecting children from violence will not only end an unacceptable abuse of children's rights, but will also have long-term and substantial benefits for society, including higher education rates, better health outcomes, stronger communities, increased economic development, and more peaceful societies. To achieve the world we want, Child Helpline International urges the International community to capitalise its efforts to end all forms of violence against children, and to support a specific Sustainable Development Goal which addresses ending all violence against children. We owe our children – the most vulnerable citizens in any society – a life free of violence and fear.