*Draft only*

*17 February 2011*

**UN Human Rights Council**

**16th Session, Annual full-day meeting on the rights of the child**

**Children living and/or working on the street**

**9 March 2011**

**Children on the move living and/or working on the street**

Mr. President,

Save the Children, Terre des Hommes International Federation (TDHIF) and (to be completed) welcome the Human Rights Council’s decision to hold today’s Annual full-day meeting on the rights of the child on the theme of children living and/or working on the street.

We would like to draw your attention to the fact that many children living and/or working on the street are children on the move. Children may move voluntarily and involuntarily, within or between countries, in search of work, an education, to escape poverty, conflict, a humanitarian crisis or abuse at home. Their number is likely to grow dramatically as a consequence of global trends such as migration flows, urbanization and climate change.

Children on the move may be vulnerable to the worst forms of child labour, sexual exploitation and abuse. They may also face discrimination and, because of their status, additional barriers when trying to seek assistance, protection and access to services. Their experience of movement is not age and gender neutral, affecting boys and girls of different ages in different ways.

However, a child’s independent and informed movement can also be an opportunity: if it is not forced; if children receive appropriate information, assistance, support and protection before, during and after their movement; if their best interest is the primary consideration and they are helped in maintaining regular links with their parents and carers. Not all children’s movement is trafficking in children.

All children on the move – including those living and/or working on the street - should have their rights as children respected and promoted, including their right to be heard and to take part in decision-making, to be protected and to receive assistance as children.

We therefore call on Governments to develop effective and appropriate child protection systems as integrated, coordinated and comprehensive responses for all children, including children on the move. Preventing children from moving might not always be the best intervention as it can bring further harm to the child, so policies which facilitate the access to services for children on the move prior to their departure, during the trajectory and upon reaching transit and destination place should also be put in place. A durable solution for each child should be constructed together with the child and based on the principle of the best interests.

We also encourage the Human Rights Council to request OHCHR to conduct a study on challenges and best practices on child rights based approaches to children living and/or working on the street, in collaboration with NGOs and children, that includes examples of child rights based programmes and responses for children on the move.

Thank you.