

Statement by

**the Republic of Slovenia**

at the

**49th Session of the United Nations Human Rights Council**

**Interactive dialogue with Special Representative of the**

**UN Secretary-General on violence against children**

Geneva, 15 March 2022

Excellencies,

We would like to thank the Special Representative for her report and presentation today. Slovenia aligns itself with the EU statement and would like to make some additional remarks in its national capacity.

Madame Special Representative,

we are deeply concerned by the findings of your recent report. It highlights how violence against children has increased, while becoming less visible, during the coronavirus disease pandemic.

As you mention in your report, normal prevention and response mechanisms – from schools to child protection services – have been disrupted by lockdowns and closures. Support networks are of crucial importance for children, especially in times of crisis as violence leads to lifelong and intergenerational effects on children and their families.

Madame Special Representative,

children’s life free of violence is one of the four key principles of Slovenia’s Programme for Children 2020-2025. In line with that, Slovenia recently established a children's house in accordance with the Barnahus model. The main goal will be to coordinate parallel criminal investigations and child protection proceedings, so as to prevent re-traumatisation during an investigation and court proceedings. A children's house is a place where children can feel safe and are provided them with support and psychosocial assistance.

The pandemic has been devastating, but has also highlighted the need for investment and strengthening of integrated services for children. Could you present some examples of good practices developed during the pandemic taking into account a survivor-centred approach?

Thank you.