SPECIAL PROCEDURES
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Statement by the UN Special Rapporteur
on the sale, sexual exploitation and sexual abuse of children

World Day for the Prevention of and Healing from Child Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Violence (18 November 2025)

Ms. Mama Fatima Singhateh

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Special Rapporteur: Urgent need for evidence-based policymaking to protect children in the entertainment industry

GENEVA (14 November 2025) – – In observance of the World Day for the Prevention of and Healing from Child Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Violence today, Mama Fatima Singhateh, Special Rapporteur on the sale, sexual exploitation and sexual abuse of children, emphasized on the urgent need to strengthen protections for children in the entertainment industry through evidence-based policymaking and announced her new Youth Advisor.

"This year, I wish to draw urgent attention to the vulnerabilities faced by children in the entertainment industry. From film, modelling, music, social media influencing and gaming, to sports, tourism, hospitality and live performances, children are increasingly visible in public spaces—but visibility must not come at the cost of safety," Singhateh said.

The Special Rapporteur presented in 2024 a report to the Human Rights Council (A/HRC/55/55), which identifies serious risks of sexual abuse and exploitation of children involved in the entertainment industry. Children face vulnerabilities due to power imbalances, opaque contracts, weak safeguards, and the misuse of technology. These risks are compounded by the normalization of hypersexualized content and the lack of child-specific protections.

"Children working in entertainment are often celebrated for their talent, yet behind the scenes, many face pressure, isolation, and even sexual exploitation and abuse. To address these challenges, we must strengthen protections through evidence-based policymaking. We must move beyond reactive measures and anecdotal responses," the expert highlighted.

Evidence-based policymaking requires robust and disaggregated data collection to identify patterns of abuse, assess the effectiveness of existing safeguards, and design targeted interventions. Data must be gathered not only from institutions and service providers, but also directly from children themselves.

"Child participation is essential and not optional. Learning from children's experiences and listening to their opinions is one of the most effective ways to gather meaningful data that can shape policy and practice. Their perspective reveals the realities of

exploitation and abuse, while their ideas help design solutions that are relevant, respectful, and rights-based," Singhateh emphasized.

In this regard, and building upon the findings of her report, the Special Rapporteur launched the 2nd Youth Human Rights Challenge under the theme *Rewriting the script: Youth voices against child sexual exploitation and abuse in the entertainment industry* whereby she invited young people to propose innovative solutions.

"I am proud to announce **Ms. Felicity Feleke Fanta** from Ethiopia as the winner of the 2nd Youth Human Rights Challenge. Felicity's proposal combines creativity, research, and advocacy, and exemplifies the leadership of young people in advancing children's rights. She reminds us that youth are not only survivors or observers—they are leaders, advocates, and changemakers." the Special Rapporteur announced.

"The new Youth Advisor has an instrumental role in amplifying the voices of young people, particularly those with lived experiences or expertise in addressing sexual exploitation and abuse in the entertainment industry. The Youth Advisor will also help ensure that our work remains grounded in the realities children face, and that their perspectives inform the development of policies, advocacy strategies, and outreach efforts," Singhateh added.

On this day, the Special Rapporteur calls on governments, industry leaders, civil society, and international organizations to prioritize child protection in entertainment to ensure children's health, safety, privacy and well-being.

"As we move forward, we must remember that protecting children begins with listening to them. Their voices contribute to the data we rely on, and their lived experiences are the evidence that must shape our policies," the expert concluded.

ENDS

Mama Fatima Singhateh is the Special Rapporteur on the sale, sexual exploitation and sexual abuse of children (www.ohchr.org/en/special-procedures/sr-sale-of-children).

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