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Statement submitted by International Forum for Child Welfare, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 30 and 31 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

* E/2011/100 and Corr.1.

Statement*

The worldwide members of the International Forum for Child Welfare deal with all aspects of education, but our evidence focuses on one of our current priority issues: in keeping with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, the organization and its representatives to the United Nations will advocate for comprehensive humanitarian immigration reform for children and young people worldwide.

There are millions of uprooted people worldwide, of which approximately half are children. The issue of migration is universal and is a major barrier to achieving educational goals. With globalization and liberalization, migration between countries and to urban localities is on the increase, especially in the developing world where rural development is not as pronounced as urban development. The scale of the problem is difficult to measure and is increasing.

The issue for migrant children is compounded in countries where the general level of education is poor; in Indonesia, for example, 85 million, out of a population of 240 million, are children under 18. Education is compulsory for 9 years, but only 7.2 years are usually reached. There are also millions of children who remain in their country of origin, separated from their parents, who are forced to work elsewhere in direct contravention of the Convention.

In the European Union, despite simplified movement across borders, there are many children separated from their migrant parents and refugees. The recent political focus on the Roma people has been particularly stigmatizing. They fall under three major categories: undocumented, unaccompanied and government-assisted refugee status.

The United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child has regularly told States parties to the Convention that asylum-seeking children should not be detained but many Governments persist in ignoring these basic human rights. In Mexico and Central America, there are over 400,000 undocumented people, one third of whom are children and youth. Migration also occurs within borders and is frequently detrimental to education. For instance the population in New Delhi doubles in size every six years due to migration. Since the census is taken every 10 years, migrant children are effectively lost for 9 to 10 years in the official count and are virtually denied their "right to education" as the plans and schemes do not include them and no budget is provided for them.

Children on the move between countries are the most marginalized and vulnerable. They experience multiple disadvantages and are most likely to remain uneducated due to a variety of factors including:

- being trafficked/exploited/unreasonably detained
- interruptions in education (if they were educated) in their country of origin
- possible horrific experiences in their home countries and flight to a new country
- little or no ability in the language of the new country

* The present statement is being issued without formal editing.

- discrimination and stigma
 - losing parents
 - having parents who are emotionally absent
 - living with families who do not know their educational and social rights
 - encountering problems with education at the appropriate level
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