# Towards an EU strategy on the rights of the child

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The Council adopted a series of conclusions regarding the Commission’s Strategy on the Rights of the Child which can be summarised as follows:

- the Council welcomes and adopts the EU Guidelines on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of the Child (including the implementation strategy). The Guidelines will be an integral part of the process of further strengthening the European Union's human rights policy in external relations;

- it notes that, together with the 2003 Guidelines on Children and Armed Conflict which will continue to guide EU actions in that specific area, the new set of Guidelines will enhance the European Union's activities in the promotion and protection of the Rights of the Child by promoting a comprehensive and strategic approach;

- by adopting these EU Guidelines for the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of the Child, the EU commits itself unreservedly to promoting and protecting all rights of the child as contained in key international and European legal human rights instruments, norms and standards as well as political commitments relevant to the promotion and protection of the rights of the child, in particular the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Declaration of the Rights of the Child, the International Covenants on Human Rights, the Convention on the rights of the Child and its two Optional Protocols, the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, the Statute of the International Criminal Court as well as the Millennium Development Declaration and Millennium Development Goals, the Declaration and Plan of Action "A World fit for Children" of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGASS) 2002;

- to allow for focused action, the EU has chosen "All Forms of Violence Against Children" as its first Priority Area and has adopted, together with the Guidelines, an Implementation Strategy for specific measures to be taken in that area;

- lastly, the Council reaffirms the EU's determination to observe as a matter of priority in its external human rights policy the promotion and protection of all rights of the child, i.e. persons below the age of 18 years, taking into account the best interests of the child and its right to protection from discrimination and participation in decision-making processes, founded on the principles of democracy, equality, non-discrimination, peace and social justice and the universality, indivisibility, interdependence and interrelatedness of all human rights.