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**6th ASEAN Dialogue on the  
UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)  
on General Comment No. 17,  
17 December 2025, Makati, Philippines**

# **DOCUMENTATION REPORT**

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### Background

All ASEAN Member States (AMS) have ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UN CRC), the first international treaty to reach this milestone within ASEAN. The commitments of AMS to the UN CRC are reaffirmed in the ASEAN Human Rights Declaration (AHRD) which recognizes children as a vulnerable group whose rights are “inalienable, integral, and indivisible part of human rights and fundamental freedoms” (Article 4).

UN CRC Article 31 sets out the child’s right to rest, leisure, play, recreational activities, cultural life and the arts, which is in line with AHRD Article 32 declaring that every person has “the right, individually or in association with others, to freely take part in cultural life, to enjoy the arts and the benefits of scientific progress and its applications and to benefit from the protection of the moral and material interests resulting from any scientific, literary or appropriate artistic production of which one is the author.”

The Dialogue served as a platform for ASEAN Member States to discuss this right, using UN CRC General Comment No. 17 as the anchor for discussion. The Dialogue also served as a venue to improve the understanding of the realization of this right in different settings by sharing perspectives, good practices, and challenges.

The Dialogue focused on *General Comment No. 17 (2013) on the right of the child to rest, leisure, play, recreational activities, cultural life and the arts* which seeks to enhance the understanding of the importance of UN CRC Article 31, in harmony with AHRD Article 32 under Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

The event was chaired by the Philippines and attended by the Representatives of Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Singapore and Viet Nam, along with Alternate Representatives of Cambodia, Indonesia, Thailand and Timor-Leste. It was conducted in collaboration with the ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children (ACWC) Philippines, the UP Institute for Human Rights (UP IHR), and Child Rights Coalition Asia (CRC Asia).

The programme can be found in [Annex A](#), the list of participants in [Annex B](#), and the presentations and reference materials in [Annex C](#).

Key themes discussed throughout the dialogue are as follows:

#### 1. **Session I: Policy Documents on Children’s Rights and the Environment**

- a. Atty. Mikiko Otani, former UN CRC Committee Member, presented General Comment No. 17, emphasizing childhood as a uniquely vulnerable stage where the right to play is an inherent and fundamental right. She highlighted the importance of ensuring children’s access to, participation in, and contribution to cultural life as part of their holistic development. The presentation stressed the need for states and local governments to allocate sufficient resources to protect these rights amid challenges such as conflict, disasters, and digitalization.
- b. Atty. Mylen Esquivel from the Child’s Rights Advocacy Center of Miriam College underscored that children’s rights to rest, play, culture, and the arts under Article 31 are fundamental legal obligations rather than optional entitlements. She highlighted both progress and ongoing challenges in Southeast Asia and the Philippines, including academic pressure and the reduction of safe spaces for children.
- c. The open forum focused on implementing Article 31 and General Comment No. 17 across ASEAN, highlighting the right to rest and play as integral to child development. Emphasis was placed on the role of parents, state support through resources and shared practices from member states, and challenges such as poverty, nutrition, and technology use.

#### 2. **Session II: The physical environment and the right to rest, play, culture, and arts**

- a. Under Session II, UN OHCHR Special Rapporteur on climate change Elisa Morgera

emphasized that children's rights, including rest, play, culture, and education, are deeply affected by climate change and environmental degradation. She highlighted that UN General Comment No. 26 implicitly recognizes children's right to a healthy environment, which is essential to their life, health, and development. The discussion stressed the importance of incorporating children's voices in environmental decision making through age appropriate and art based approaches.

- b. The open forum examined children's rights, environmental crises, and digital technology in Southeast Asia, with the right to play as a central concern. Representatives stressed that climate change and environmental degradation undermine children's rights to health, education, and play, calling for state action and meaningful child participation. Discussions highlighted the impacts of digital environments and AI, advocating for Child Rights Impact Assessments, safe play spaces, and integrated policy frameworks that deliver tangible protection outcomes.

**3. Session III: Culture and the arts to improve the understanding on UN CRC GC 17 paragraphs 27 to 28, 44, and 56 to 59**

- a. During this session, H.E. Amb. Yong Chanthalangsy led a discussion on children's rights under the UN CRC, focusing on General Comment No. 17 and Article 31 on rest, play, and cultural life. The discussion highlighted state obligations to create inclusive environments and protect children from harm, including digital risks and third party violations such as those by the business sector. The role of families in child development was emphasized, and modern parenting challenges including overprotection and declining population growth were brought into light.
- b. The body collectively explored the complexity of modern parenting from legal, social, and disciplinary perspectives. H.E. Dato Paduka Dr. Haji Omar Bin Haji Khalid emphasized the philosophy that "it takes a village" to raise a child, highlighting the need for a collaborative network of family, teachers, and agencies for ethical development. H.E. Severo S. Catura discussed the risks of parental overprotection, noting that excessive leniency can lead to entitlement and reduced discipline, in contrast to a traditional and stricter upbringing.

**4. Session IV: The digital environment and the right to rest, play, culture, and arts**

- a. Ms. Julieanne Marie Tabilog of ECPAT International discussed that while gaming promotes digital skills, creativity, and social connectivity, it simultaneously exposes children to significant risks such as sexual grooming, harmful content, and sexual violence. To mitigate these dangers, she advocates for a multi-sector approach to encourage industry ownership and the co-creation of platform policies in consultation with child safety experts.
- b. Ms. Mica Olaño-Fernando of CRC Asia presented perspectives from children on online gaming and social media. She conveyed that children are advocating for online gaming environments that are safe by design and inclusive by default, emphasizing that play is a fundamental right rather than an optional activity. Through #GamerPOV, they urge adults and systems to work with them to ensure that protection and play are guaranteed together.
- c. Ms. Itsaraphorn Daoram of 5Rights International highlighted the good practices and challenges in using technology. She relayed that technology is not inherently harmful and can, when thoughtfully designed, offer meaningful solutions, as seen in AI-enhanced toolkits and VR technologies that enable inclusive play for children with disabilities and support children in crisis.
- d. The open forum provided multiple perspectives such as the linkages between the use of AI, alleviating academic pressures, and the balance of children's rest and play. Representatives also extensively discussed the extensive use of social media which may be unmonitored, leading to possible infringements of the child's right to a safe environment to play, recreate and participate in the culture and arts, and placing the responsibility of safeguarding digital spaces to state actors and private enterprises. Lastly, digital competencies of children were also considered, by providing parents and guardians with proper guidance in teaching children on the use of emerging technologies.

**5. Session V: The role of the business sector**

- a. The session explored children's rights and the business sector, including in the context of commercialization of play.
- b. Mr. Behzad Noubary of UNICEF Philippines emphasized the need to apply a "child lens" to digital platforms and marketing. He discussed the impact of aggressive digital marketing on children's well-being, which includes influencing household buying and contributing to rising rates of childhood obesity. He recommended greater regulation on digital environments and the creation of an ASEAN standard to treat children as a protected consumer group.
- c. A central theme from the open forum is the necessity of engaging the private sector and addressing the cross-cutting issue of technology-facilitated gender-based violence. The participants also highlighted challenges such as integrating digital literacy in education, educating parents who may be perpetrators of online abuse, and the need for children's centrality in policy-making.

**6. Session VI: Synthesis and ways forward**

- a. H.E. Catura emphasized that the right of the child to rest, leisure, play, recreational activities, cultural life and the arts are not merely optional but are essential foundations for healthy human development and the future of society. Key stakeholders - including parents, educators, the government, and private sector, must work in concert to protect these rights across all environments.
- b. Moving forward, the following actions were proposed:
  - Translating discussions into policy recommendations.
  - Establishing a regional auditing mechanism to monitor progress across the ASEAN region.
  - Maintaining regular regional consultations on children's rights in the digital age.



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**6TH ASEAN DIALOGUE ON THE  
UN CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD (UNCRC)  
ON GENERAL COMMENT NO. 17**

17 December 2025, Makati, Philippines (Hybrid)

**A. Opening Preliminaries**

1. H.E. Severo S. Catura (SCatura), Representative of the Philippines to AICHR, highlighted the importance of pursuing this dialogue as it reaffirms our commitments under the 4th Philippine Human Rights Plan for 2024 to 2028. The body was encouraged to continue its pursuit in protecting children's rights and global human rights.
2. H.E. Atty. Elizabeth H. Aguilin-Pangalangan (EAPangalangan), Children's Rights Representative of the Philippines to ACWC, reiterated the importance of our collective obligations under the Convention on the Rights of the Child. H.E. Atty. EAPangalangan also provided great emphasis on ensuring that children's rights are protected to ensure the development and enrichment of a child's life.
3. Before sessions I to V commenced, the delegates were invited for a photo session.

**B. Session I: Policy documents on children's right to rest, play, culture and arts, with focus on UN CRC General Comment No. 17**

*Introduction to Session*

4. Session I of the dialogue revolved around protecting and implementing Policy Documents on Children's Rights and the Environment. This session was moderated by H.E. Atty. EAPangalangan as ACWC-PH Children's Rights Representative and Professor, University of the Philippines College of Law and Director, University of the Philippines Institute of Human Rights.

*Key concepts of UN CRC General Comment No. 17 (paragraphs 14-15)*

5. Atty. Mikiko Otani (MOtani) presented slides on General Comment (GC) No. 17. She brought into light the lack of attention in promoting the right for children to acquire equal rights as adults. It was said that the stage of a child's life is at the most vulnerable time wherein the right to play is their inherent unique fundamental right. Atty. MOtani further humanized the "dry" legal paragraphs containing rights that were listed in paragraph 14 and the corresponding State obligations in paragraph 15, which included ensuring children's access, participation, and contribution to cultural life. It was also highlighted further that there are contemporary challenges to these rights, such as armed conflict, natural disasters, and the impact of digital technology, advocating for sufficient resource allocation by states and local governments.

*Perspectives from the field on the importance and challenges in realizing this right, after 12 years since the issuance of GC 17 (paragraphs 30-47)*

6. Atty. Mylen Esquivel (MEsquivel) provided professional insights on children's rights to rest, play, culture, and arts, emphasizing that this is a fundamental legal obligation,



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rather than an optional right. She highlighted the progress and persistent challenges across Southeast Asia and the Philippines regarding these rights, such as academic pressure and shrinking safe spaces. Ultimately, protecting Article 31 is essential for child protection, healing, and dignity, asserting that safeguarding childhood is a measure of society's humanity.

### *Open Forum*

7. Ms. Melissa Alahir (MAlahir), Human Rights Commission of Malaysia, presented the speakers with the following question: “which Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) indicators are tied to the articles and the GC for a specific timeline?”
8. Atty. MEsquivel answered by highlighting child protection and safeguarding, in particular. The recognition of Article 31 and GC No. 17 is closely linked with or tied to SDG Number 5 on gender equality, because there are specific targets there that look into or consider the protection of queer children, particularly against abuse and exploitation.
9. Atty. MOtani had not initially identified specific SDGs; children's right to play is closely linked to SDG 4, in addition to SDG 5. It was emphasized that play is a vital learning opportunity for children, extending education beyond formal schooling to the family and community. She advocated the body for a stronger sense of urgency because on paper it may be every 5 years but in reality, the gap was revealed to be much longer and more inconsistent.
10. H.E. Jacinto Amaral (JAmaral), Alternate Representative of AICHR to Timor-Leste, recognized that another challenge that may be of greater gravity than noting the interval is the role of regional institutions and national level in strengthening the commitment on CRC itself. Not limited to a legal perspective but rather the implementation of the said plan itself. He noted that underdeveloped and developing countries may face more barriers such as poverty and nutrition where the children's well being is the one sacrificed.
11. Atty. MOtani responded with her own insights and personal suggestions on the improvement of children's rights such as policy development and the concern for digital impact. Atty. MOtani emphasized the need to integrate the aspect of children's rights into initiatives on a national and regional level.
12. After Session I ended, the body was able to take a health break before moving on to Session II.

### **C. Session II: The physical environment and the right to rest, play, culture, and arts**

#### *Introduction to Session*

13. Session II of the dialogue highlighted the critical importance of children's human rights in the context of climate change and environmental protection. The discussion further highlighted the interconnectedness of various children's rights such as the right to play, culture, and education and how environmental degradation and climate change undermine these rights. This session was moderated by H.E. Dato Paduka Dr. Haji



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Omar Bin Haji Khalid (HKhalid), the ACWC Children's Representative of Brunei Darussalam.

#### *Links to climate change*

14. SR Elisa Morgera (EMorgera), the UN Special Rapporteur on climate change, delivered pre recorded video remarks asserting that states have a duty to take preventive and precautionary measures against foreseeable environmental harm, considering the long term, cumulative impacts on children's full life course.
15. SR EMorgera gave importance to UN CRC GC No. 26 that implicitly recognizes children's right to a healthy environment, which was said to be essential for their overall development, life, and health. There is an evident interconnectedness between various children's rights such as the right to play, culture, and education and how environmental degradation and climate change undermine these rights.
16. SR EMorgera stressed the need to meaningfully incorporate children's rights to be heard in environmental decision making, advocating for age appropriate, and art based, methodologies that can also benefit adults in complex decision making processes.

#### *Open Forum*

17. The open forum provided a platform for an interactive discussion on the comprehensive overview of the critical intersection between children's rights, environmental crises, and digital technology across Southeast Asia, often framing the right to play as a central concern.
18. H.E. SCatura focused on the resilience and adaptability of Filipino children in the face of increasingly common severe weather events, particularly heavy flooding caused by climate change. It was noted that despite children swimming and even playing diving games in heavily flooded areas, this perceived resilience should not become an accepted norm, indicating that the current situation is unacceptable.
19. H.E. Yanti Kusumawardhani (YKusumawardhani), Children's Rights Representative of Indonesia to ACWC, linked GC No. 17 which concerns the right to play with the difficult situations children face following natural disasters and climate change. These crises lead to violence against children, family separation, and limited access to essential services. It was emphasized that there is a critical need for psychosocial support and mental health services for affected children.
20. Ms. Hazelyn Joy Bitaña (HJBitaña) discussed the concern that the right to play is often undervalued or treated as "soft law," despite the gravity of its importance. It was further touched upon that there are challenges to traditional play such as the need for space, environmental issues like heat and dirty streets, and the cost of access to play areas.
21. Ms. Itsaraphorn Daoram (IDAoram) highlighted a major concern on how emerging technologies like Artificial Intelligence (AI) can negatively affect both the right to play and the environment due to resource consumption. It was then advocated that a mandatory "Child Rights Impact Assessment" (CRIA) should be integrated into all



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policy and legal frameworks, to ensure that child rights are not overlooked or compromised.

22. H.E. Amb. Nguyen Trung Thanh (NTrungThanh), Representative of Vietnam to AICHR, presented an overview of the complex challenges on children's safety and future in transitioning Southeast Asian societies. He draws a contrast between his own childhood during war, where he experienced physical safety and freedom to play despite the bombings, and the current reality of rapid urbanization and shrinking play spaces, which stressed the need for adult escorts for children due to increased risks.
23. H.E. Associate Professor Eugene Tan (ETanKhengBoon), Representative of Singapore to AICHR, suggested that the focus on children's rights should be less on asserting a "right" and more about achieving tangible outcomes through practical measures. He noted that concepts like the right to play was intrinsically recognized as important, even if it was not framed as a legal entitlement of children. He argued that emphasising rights without implementing effective policies and measures to realize them would leave those rights effectively unrealized.
24. H.E. YKusumawardhani discussed the critical issue of children requiring alternative care following family separations caused by disasters, humanitarian crises, or climate crisis events. There is a great importance in ensuring a safe continuum of care and upholding the rights of children to play and leisure activities within these alternative care environments. It was suggested that these alternative care considerations should be formally included in both the Regional Plan of Actions and existing plans, such as those addressing children in the context of migration.

#### **D. Session III: Culture and the arts**

##### *Introduction to Session*

25. Session III of the dialogue touched up on a wide array of issues including state obligations to facilitate children's rights, how to protect children from the digital landscape, the adverse effects of overprotection as a parenting style, and as well as the declining population growth. This session was moderated by H.E. Amb. Yong Chanthalangsy (YChanthalangsy), Representative of Lao PDR to AICHR.
26. The session expanded the range of discussion due to the absence of a speaker for Session III.
27. H.E. Amb. YChanthalangsy took the opportunity to expound on this topic in the absence of a speaker and recognized play as essential for physical, mental, social, and emotional development. Delving into state obligation, H.E. Amb. YChanthalangsy stated that the Government must create an inclusive environment such as a community center, to ensure safe spaces, provide adequate time for play, and integrate play and art into education.
28. H.E. Dr. HKhalid advocated for the well-known philosophy that "it takes a village" to raise a child, stressing that a broad collaborative infrastructure of family, teachers, and agencies are essential for a child's proper ethical development.
29. H.E. SCatura addressed the negative consequences of parental overprotection that



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equate to the excessive leniency that fosters entitlement and a lack of necessary discipline that a traditional and stricter method of upbringing provides.

30. After the conclusion of Session III, the meeting was halted to allow participants to have lunch.

## **E. Session IV: The digital environment and the right to rest, play, culture, and arts**

### *Introduction to Session*

31. Session IV of the dialogue is concerned with the digital environment and the right to rest, play, culture, and arts, to improve the understanding of UN CRC GC No. 17, Paragraphs 45 to 47, and 56 to 59 and their link with other CRC General Comments. This session was moderated by ETanKhengBoon, Representative of Singapore to AICHR.
32. H.E. ETanKhengBoon introduced the session by discussing the evolving landscape of children's rights. He emphasized that the right to play, rest, and cultural participation must be protected across social media platforms, gaming environments, and the use of artificial intelligence. He stressed that this required a rights-informed approach that balanced the inherent risks of the internet with the new opportunities it provided for learning, communication, and development. Ensuring these rights required addressing disparities in digital access and protecting the best interests of the child in every space they inhabit.

### *Online gaming (including Metaverse) opportunities and risks*

33. The first speaker for the session is Ms. Julieanne Marie Tabilog (JMTabilog), Gender and Online Gaming Associate at ECPAT International. Ms. JMTabilog is a digital communications specialist with nearly five years of experience in the gender and child rights sector. Currently, her work with ECPAT International focuses on the online gaming industry in the United States and Southeast Asia.
34. Ms. JMTabilog discussed the challenges and opportunities for child-safe, gender-inclusive play, particularly within the context of online gaming environments. She shared regional and global insights from ECPAT International's Global Voice Initiative program which is concerned with the issue of child sexual exploitation and abuse.
35. Ms. JMTabilog acknowledged that online gaming is a popular activity, especially among boys. She highlighted that gaming can foster digital skills, creativity, and social connections, while simultaneously posing risks concerning digital wellbeing, online safety, exposure to harmful content, grooming, and child sexual violence. She advocated for a multi-sector approach, to encourage industry ownership and the co-creation of platform policies in consultation with child safety experts. She also recommended practical changes, such as re-examining game content for gender stereotypes and introducing child-friendly safety tools and help-seeking channels within games.

### *Perspectives from children on online gaming and social media*



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36. The second speaker for the session is Ms. Mica Olaño-Fernando (MOlañoFernando), Communications Manager at CRC Asia. Apart from leading CRC Asia's strategic communication efforts, she is also in-charge of amplifying the organization's advocacy on pushing for children's rights in the digital environment.
37. Ms. MOlañoFernando shared what children in Asia had to say about online gaming and their right to rest, play, culture, and the arts. These insights were drawn from #GamerPOV at the Regional Children's Meeting 2025, a three-day regional consultation held in Bangkok in August, where 31 child delegates from 12 Asian countries participated. The meeting was organized by CRC Asia in partnership with the Childline Thailand Foundation.
38. Ms. MOlañoFernando noted that children see gaming as a form of play that supports skills such as creativity, teamwork, and stress relief, challenging the adult perception that it is merely a distraction. She also touched on how access and inequality shape children's ability to play and expressed concern over serious risks, including toxic chat, gender-based harassment, and predatory behavior built into many platforms.
39. Ms. MOlañoFernando also shared that the children called for the creation of safer, inclusive systems and provided concrete recommendations for tech companies, schools, parents, and governments to uphold their right to play and protection. Ultimately, she emphasized that children want an online gaming world that is safe by design, inclusive by default, and guided by adults who listen, learn and work not only for them, but with them.

*Good practices and challenges in using technology, such as Generative AI, for the realization of Article 31*

40. The third and last speaker for the session is Ms. IDaoram. She is the Regional Coordinator for East Asia (Southeast Asia and the Pacific) at the 5Rights Foundation. 5Rights focuses on driving systemic change to create a safer and more empowering online environment for children, and society as a whole.
41. Ms. IDaoram conducted a presentation on good practices and challenges in using technology for the realization of Article 31. The good practices she delved on are inclusive play for children with disabilities using AI-enhanced toolkit and virtual reality (VR) technology and, technology supported children's right to play during COVID-19, with emphasis on virtual social play.
42. However, Ms. IDaoram also put forward that the technology-digital world is risky by design, and persuasive digital features can lead to a disrupted childhood. She then advocated for Child Rights by Design to guide innovators of digital products and services used by children, where she discussed the Age-Appropriate Design Code to serve as a code of practice for online services, and the Children and AI Design Code to ensure that children's rights are at the forefront of AI development.

*Open Forum*

43. Ms. HJBitaña, Deputy Regional Executive Director of CRC Asia expounded on Ms. MOlañoFernando's presentation by discussing AI and academics, based on insights



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from the field in 2024. She noted that children are aware that they shouldn't be using AI for schoolwork but continue to do so due to academic pressure and not having enough time for rest, play, and leisure. She put forward that adults need to rethink why children are feeling this pressure.

44. Ms. HJBitaña also pointed out the negative reception of children from the ASEAN region on social media ban. The children noted that a ban would prevent them from knowing the culture, language, and music of other countries. She raised that these interlinkages need to be considered throughout the progression of the dialogue.
45. H.E. YKusumawardhani highlighted the complexities associated with protecting youth within the modern digital landscape. She addressed the dangers of technology addiction, noting its potential to alter brain chemistry and shrink cognitive capacity. She also explored how emerging technologies such as AI can exacerbate global issues, such as the climate crisis.
46. To address the reflections of the participants of the open forum, the speakers gave the following insights:
  - Ms. MOlañoFernando advocated for a collaborative model of digital safety to foster responsible digital citizenship. National governments must take an active role by enforcing stricter corporate accountability for technology firms towards safer online spaces. She also emphasized the necessity of education for parents and teachers to prepare children to navigate the internet with confidence and maturity.
  - Ms. IDaoram noted that protecting young people's freedom to play, access to safe digital spaces, and a healthy environment, requires interdisciplinary cooperation and more so on corporate and institutional accountability. Lastly, she advocated for a unified approach to ensure that those in power are held responsible for the well-being of the youth.
  - Ms. JMTabilog emphasized the ongoing need for video game developers to prioritize the well-being and daily habits of young players over mere business viability. While some companies have begun implementing healthy disruptions and mental health check-ins, the industry lacks a universal commitment to integrating these ethical safeguards into standard practice. Although trust and safety teams act as internal advocates for child rights, they often face resistance unless specific compliance regulations are established.
47. H.E. ETanKhengBoon closed the session emphasizing that the right to play was not a self-executing right. The full realization of this right required not just a whole-of-government approach, but also a whole of society approach, particularly in dealing with concerns on child safety, health, and well-being. Lastly, he thanked the speakers and the audience for their participation.

## **F. Session V: The role of the business sector**

### *Introduction to Session*



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48. Session V of the dialogue discussed the role of the business sector to improve the understanding of UN CRC GC No. 17 paragraph 58. The session was moderated by H.E. Edmund Bon Tai Soon (EBonTaiSoon), Representative of Malaysia to AICHR.
49. With the session delving into paragraph 58, and the challenge on business and human rights, H.E. EBonTaiSoon shared that a lot of the national action plans around the region have taken on a child lens on how it will engage and move forward on business and human rights. Given the nature of the session, he emphasized the need to look into how businesses approach child protection and safety in exercising the child's right to play and leisure.

#### *Children and digital marketing*

50. H.E. EBonTaiSoon introduced the sole speaker of the session, Mr. Behzad Noubary (BNoubary). Mr. BNoubary is the Deputy Representative Programme at UNICEF Philippines. He has previously served in Morocco and was assigned to New York, Congo, and Yemen.
51. Mr. BNoubary emphasized that formalizing children as a protected consumer is timely in advertising to ensure that their best interests come before innovation and monetization. He discussed the risks of digital marketing to children, which are privacy and data exploitation, exposure to harmful content, behavioral and developmental risks, economic exploitation, and compromised rights and well-being.
52. Mr. BNoubary urged digital marketing actors to share best practices, enforce responsible marketing standards, and work with regulators to create measurable frameworks that safeguard children across the digital value chain through human rights due diligence and Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG).

#### *Open Forum*

53. H.E. EBonTaiSoon encouraged the ACWC representatives to provide inputs on digital rights, especially online child protection as the issue of violence against women and children is under ACWC's purview.
54. H.E. YKusumawardhani outlined that there are Regional Plans of Action under the ACWC, designed to combat gender-based violence and technology-facilitated abuse. She placed emphasis on the essential participation of the private sector in maintaining safe digital environments for youth. To foster this cooperation, the ACWC utilizes an industry working group and annual ICT forums to align business practices with children's rights principles. Corporate accountability is a primary pillar in the regional strategy to eliminate online violence.
55. H.E. Dr. HKhalid shared that they are conducting consultations with children in the national discussion and are facilitating workshops for ACWC women's and children's representatives in member countries, where feedback is provided by consultants. Insights from these undertakings are reflected in country reports back to ACWC focal points. This interface will be reflected in the second generation Regional Plan of Action.



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56. H.E. Atty. EAPangalangan, expounded on H.E. Dr. HKhalid's points and added the urgent need to protect youth by incorporating digital literacy in educational systems. Training is essential for guardians to provide technical expertise to recognize and respond to online exploitation. She also mentioned the troubling reality of some parents being the primary perpetrators of digital abuse, thus necessitating a shift in how families perceive the real-world harm of virtual victimization.
57. H.E. Atty. EAPangalangan also advocated for active youth participation in the drafting of safety policies. By including the perspectives of children, authorities can better understand the unique risks found in modern online environments and to bridge the generational knowledge gap to ensure a safer digital future.
58. Mr. BNoubary then advocated for the formal recognition of children as a protected consumer group within the digital marketplace. Regulatory measures should be tailored to different age groups and implemented through a unified ASEAN-wide approach for greater regional impact and easier enforcement. While stricter rules might initially appear to hinder private sector revenue, he emphasized that protecting children fosters long-term human capital, which is essential for a nation's future economic prosperity.
59. In closing, H.E. EBonTaiSoon emphasized that the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights apply across the broader business and human rights agenda. He encouraged collaboration between the ACWC and AICHR to develop a regionally contextualized set of industry guidelines concerning children and the business sector.
60. The participants underwent a health break after the open forum.

## **G. Session VI: Synthesis and ways forward**

### *Discussions on ways moving forward*

61. H.E. SCatura noted all of the sessions on the realization of children's right to rest, leisure, play, recreational activities, cultural life, and the arts under Article 31. Article 31 of the UN CRC, as elaborated by GC No. 17, affirms that these rights are essential to children's physical and mental health, identity, creativity, resilience, and participation in society. H.E. SCatura suggested that Article 31 affirms that "Play is not optional. It is a right."
62. Despite the growing recognition of Article 31, H.E. SCatura noted that its realization remains uneven due to children's dignity being shaped through an adult lens rather than their lived realities, particularly in digital environments. While this issue persists, the Dialogue also served as a reminder that digital and commercial spaces can be reimaged to uphold children's rights.
63. To move forward, H.E. SCatura proposed the following:
  - Translating discussions into policy recommendations.
  - Establishing a regional auditing mechanism to monitor progress across the ASEAN region.
  - Maintaining regular regional consultations on children's rights in the digital age.



In closing, H.E. SCatura affirmed that GC No. 17 calls on us to see Article 31 not as an isolated provision, but as a measure of the society we choose to build. It requires a collective commitment to upholding children's dignity across every environment where childhood unfolds.

#### **H. Closing Ceremonies**

64. The meeting concluded with a reminder for participants to fill up the feedback form so AICHR Philippines, PHRCs, and CRC Asia can improve in its future events.
65. A dinner for the AICHR and ACWC Representatives, as well as the Speakers, was hosted by AICHR Philippines.

## ANNEXES

## ANNEX A. PROGRAMME

**6TH ASEAN DIALOGUE ON THE  
UN CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD (UNCRC)  
ON GENERAL COMMENT NO. 17**

17 December 2025, Makati, Philippines (Hybrid)

## PROGRAMME

Time (GMT +8)	Session/Objectives	
8:30 am	<b>Registration</b>	
9:00 am	<b>Opening Preliminaries</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Opening and Welcome Remarks</li> </ul>	<b>H.E. SEVERO S. CATURA</b> AICHR Representative, Philippines
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Photo Session</li> </ul>	
9:15 am	<b>Session I: Policy documents on children's right to rest, play, culture and arts, with focus on UN CRC General Comment No. 17</b> <i>To set foundational documents, to present the salient features of the UN CRC General Comment No.17 and share the importance of and challenges in implementing Article 31 in the current context</i>	
	Introduction to Session	<b>MODERATOR: H.E. PROF. ATTY. ELIZABETH AGUILING-PANGALANGAN</b> ACWC Children's Representative, Philippines Professor, UP College of Law/UP Institute of Human Rights
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Key concepts of UN CRC General Comment No. 17 (paragraphs 14-15)</li> </ul>	<b>ATTY. MIKIKO OTANI</b> Former UN CRC Committee Member <i>Online</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Perspectives from the field on the importance and challenges in realizing this right, after 12 years since the issuance of GC 17 (paragraphs 30-47)</li> </ul>	<b>ATTY. MYLEN B. GONZALES-ESQUIVEL</b> Executive Director, Child's Right Advocacy Center of Miriam College
	<b>Open Forum</b>	
10:15 am	<b>Health Break</b>	

10:30 am	<b>Session II: The physical environment and the right to rest, play, culture, and arts</b> <i>To improve the understanding on UN CRC GC 17 paragraphs 34 to 40, 51, 53, and 56 to 59 and their link with other CRC General Comments</i>	
	Introduction to Session	<b>MODERATOR: H.E. DATO PADUKA DR. HAJI OMAR BIN HAJI KHALID</b> ACWC Children's Representative, Brunei Darussalam
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Links to climate change</li> </ul>	<b>SR ELISA MORGERA</b> UN Special Rapporteur on climate change <i>Video Remarks</i>
	<b>Open Forum</b>	
11:15 am	<b>Session III: Culture and the arts</b> <i>To improve the understanding on UN CRC GC 17 paragraphs 27 to 28, 44, and 56 to 59</i>	
	Introduction to Session	<b>MODERATOR: H.E. AMB. YONG CHANTHALANGSY</b> AICHR Representative, Lao PDR
	<b>Open Forum</b>	
12:00 pm	<b>Lunch</b>	
1:15 pm	<b>Session IV: The digital environment and the right to rest, play, culture, and arts</b> <i>To improve the understanding on UN CRC GC 17 paragraphs 45 to 47 and 56 to 59, and their link with other CRC General Comments</i>	
	Introduction to Session	<b>MODERATOR: H.E. EUGENE TAN KHENG BOON</b> AICHR Representative, Singapore
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Online gaming (including Metaverse) opportunities and risks</li> </ul>	<b>JULIEANNE MARIE TABILOG</b> Gender and Online Gaming Associate ECPAT International
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Perspectives from children on online gaming and social media</li> </ul>	<b>MS. MICA OLAÑO-FERNANDO</b> Communications Manager CRC Asia
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Good practices and challenges in using technology, such as Generative AI, for the realization of Article 31</li> </ul>	<b>MS. ITSARAPHORN DAORAM</b> Regional Coordinator for (South) East Asia & the Pacific 5Rights Foundation
	<b>Open Forum</b>	
2:30 pm	<b>Session V: The role of the business sector</b> <i>To improve the understanding on UN CRC GC 17 paragraph 58</i>	

	Introduction to Session	<b>H.E. EDMUND BON TAI SOON</b> AICHR Representative, Malaysia
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">Children and digital marketing</a></li> </ul>	<b>MR. BEHZAD NOUBARY</b> Deputy Representative for Programme UNICEF Philippines
	<b>Open Forum</b>	
3:30 pm	<b>Health Break</b>	
3:45 pm	<b>Session VI: Synthesis and ways forward</b>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discussions on ways moving forward</li> </ul>	<b>H.E. SEVERO S. CATURA</b> AICHR Representative, Philippines
4:00 pm	<b>Closing Ceremonies and Evaluation</b>	
6:30 pm	<b>Dinner</b>	For Speakers and Representatives

## ANNEX B. LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

### 6TH ASEAN DIALOGUE ON THE UN CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD (UNCRC) ON GENERAL COMMENT NO. 17

17 December 2025, Makati, Philippines (Hybrid)

#### LIST OF PARTICIPANTS



#### ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR) Representatives

##### Cambodia

1. **Mr. Chin Angkearith** (Director of Department, AICHR Cambodia Alternate Representative)
2. **Mr. Yoeung Nan** (Deputy Director, AICHR Cambodia Assistant)

##### Indonesia

3. **Ms. Tabita Mauliate Ulibasa** (AICHR Indonesia Alternate Representative)
4. **Ms. Fenny Ferranita Maharani** (Deputy Director for ASEAN Political Security Cooperation, AICHR Indonesia Assistant)
5. **Ms. Gezia Cristiela Logahan** (Third Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Indonesia)
6. **Mr. Naufal Muhammad Firdaus** (AICHR Indonesia Assistant)

##### Lao PDR

7. **H.E. Amb. Yong Chanthalangsy** (AICHR Lao PDR Representative)

8. **Ms. Vathida Phonekeo** (AICHR Lao PDR Assistant)

**Malaysia**

9. **H.E. Edmund Bon Tai Soon** (AICHR Malaysia Representative)  
 10. **Ms. Umavathni Vathanaganthan** (AICHR Malaysia Assistant)

**Myanmar**

11. **H.E. U Nyunt Swe** (AICHR Myanmar Representative)  
 12. **Ms. Myat Su Su Nyein** (AICHR Myanmar Assistant)

**Philippines**

13. **H.E. Severo S. Catura** (AICHR Philippines Representative)  
 14. **Mr. Bolivar L. Bao** (AICHR Philippines Alternate Representative)  
 15. **Atty. Gerald Bitonio** (AICHR Philippines Assistant)  
 16. **Ms. Jamin Tristan Lianko** (AICHR Philippines Assistant)  
 17. **Ms. Ma. Leoloura Fernandez** (AICHR Philippines Assistant)  
 18. **Ms. Jenieveve B. Omamos** (AICHR Philippines Assistant)

**Singapore**

19. **H.E. Eugene Tan Kheng Boon** (AICHR Singapore Representative)

**Thailand**

20. **Mr. Napong Kongsakul** (AICHR Thailand Assistant)

**Timor-Leste**

21. **Mr. Jacinto Amaral** (AICHR Timor-Leste, Advisor)  
 22. **Mr. Francisco Xavier Vasco Soares** (AICHR Timor-Leste, Deputy Director for Legal Training Center)

**Viet Nam**

23. **H.E. Amb. Nguyen Trung Thanh** (AICHR Viet Nam Representative)

**ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and Protection  
of the Rights of Women and Children  
Representatives on Children**

**Brunei Darussalam**

24. **H.E. Dato Paduka Dr. Haji Omar bin Haji Khalid** (ACWC Children's Representative Brunei)

**Indonesia**

25. **H.E. Yanti Kusumawardhani** (ACWC Children's Representative Indonesia)

**Myanmar**

26. Ms. Fancy Kone (Alternate ACWC) – ONLINE

### **Philippines**

27. H.E. Atty. Elizabeth H. Aguilong-Pangalangan (ACWC Children's Representative Philippines)

### **Singapore**

28. H.E. Poon Kin Loong Kenneth (ACWC Children's Representative Singapore)

29. Diyanah Sanwari (ACWC Singapore, Manager)

30. Ming Wee Lian (ACWC Singapore, Senior Director)

31. Chelsia Chua Shi Ying (ACWC Singapore, Senior Manager)

### **Thailand**

32. H.E. Asst. Prof. Dr. Prapaporn Tivayanond Mongkhonvanit (ACWC Children's Representative Thailand) – ONLINE

### **ASEAN Secretariat**

33. Annisa Laksmintari (Officer, Human Rights Division) – ONLINE

34. Hilda Ekawati Suherman (Senior Officer, Human Rights Division)

### **Resource Speakers**

35. **Atty. Mikiko Otani** (Former UN CRC Committee Member) – ONLINE

36. **Atty. Mylen B. Gonzales-Esquivel** (Executive Director of the Child's Right Advocacy Center, Miriam College)

37. **SR Dr. Elisa Morgera** (UN Special Rapporteur on Climate Change) - ONLINE

38. **Ms. Julieanne Marie Tabilog**, Gender in Online Gaming - Advocacy Communications, ECPAT International

39. **Ms. Karmela Mica Olaño Fernando**, Communications Manager, Child Rights Coalition Asia - ONLINE

40. **Ms. Itsaraporn Daoram**, Regional Coordinator for (South) East Asia and the Pacific, 5Rights Foundation

41. **Mr. Behzad Noubary**, Deputy Representative for Programme, UNICEF Philippines

### **Participants**

42. **Dr. Carolyn Uy Ronquillo** (Professorial Lecturer, University of the Philippines- College of Education and Trinity University of Asia) - ONLINE

43. **Ms. Marily Verian-Pulga**, Technical Advisor for Philippines, ASMAE Association Soeur Emmanuelle- ONLINE

44. **Gillian Elizabeth Reyes**, Program Assistant from Education and Child Protection Division, ChildFund Philippines- ONLINE

45. **Dhian Ningrum**, Policy Analyst, Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection Republic of Indonesia- ONLINE
46. **Ms. Catherine Scerri**, Executive Director, Bahay Tuluyan - ONLINE
47. **Ms. Hazelyn Joy Bitaña**, Deputy Regional Executive Director, Child Rights Coalition Asia
48. **Ms. Janice Tapil**, Program Officer-Child Participation Focal, Child Rights Coalition Asia - ONLINE
49. **Ms. Luz Indah Abayan**, Senior Program Officer, Child Rights Coalition Asia- ONLINE
50. **Ms. Hannah Morillo**, Executive Director, MLAC Institute for Psychosocial Services
51. **Ms. Kathrine Rose Yee**, Advocacy Director, World Vision International - ONLINE
52. **Mr. James Gregory A. Villasis**, University Researcher, University of the Philippines Institute of Human Rights
53. **Mr. Thanupon Yindee**, Makhampom Foundation - ONLINE
54. **Ms. Queenie Diane Malabanan**, Senior Advisor - Policy and Advocacy, World Vision East Asia
55. **Dr. Daniel Lising**, Officer-in-Charge, UP Institute of Human Rights
56. **Mr. Samuel Pinaroc**, Development Management Officer III (DMO III), National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP)
57. **Mr. Ernesto Nonoy Casiple**, Child Rights and Business Officer, UNICEF
58. **Ms. Ma. Cristina Vinas**, Planning Officer III, Council for the Welfare of Children
59. **Ms. Melissa Alahir** (Human Rights Commission of Malaysia (SUHAKAM) Commissioner)

#### **AICHR Philippines Secretariat**

60. **Mr. Michael James Cabreros** (AICHR Philippines Assistant)
61. **Ms. Sebastienne Q. Claveria** (AICHR Philippines Assistant)
62. **Mr. John Paul C. Perez** (AICHR Philippines Assistant)
63. **Ms. Nicole Remluz B. Forschler** (AICHR Philippines Assistant)
64. **Ms. Hannah M. Lucidos** (AICHR Philippines Assistant)
65. **Ms. Patricia Kemrie I. Barcenas** (AICHR Philippines Assistant)
66. **Ms. Bernadette Dimaano** (Department of Foreign Affairs-ASEAN Property Officer)
67. **Ms. Maribeth Ferrer** (Department of Foreign Affairs-ASEAN Special Disbursing Officer)
68. **Ms. Anna Liza Arzadon** (Department of Foreign Affairs-ASEAN Assistant)
69. **Mr. Mark Anthony Arcega** (Department of Foreign Affairs-ASEAN Administrative Assistant)
70. **Mr. Jeffrey Gonzales** (Department of Foreign Affairs Office of Asset Management and Support Services-ICTD)
71. **Mr. Clark Joseph Galang** (Department of Foreign Affairs Office of Public Diplomacy)

## ANNEX C. PRESENTATION SLIDES AND REFERENCE MATERIALS

### 6TH ASEAN DIALOGUE ON THE UN CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD (UNCRC) ON GENERAL COMMENT NO. 17

17 December 2025, Makati, Philippines (Hybrid)

#### PRESENTATION SLIDES AND REFERENCE MATERIALS

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##### Session I: Policy documents on children's right to rest, play, culture and arts, with focus on UN CRC General Comment No. 17

- |    |   |   |
|----|---|---|
| #1 | Key concepts of UN CRC General Comment No. 17 (paragraphs 14-15)  | (Online) Atty. Mikiko Otani<br>Former UN CRC Committee Member   |
| #2 | Perspectives from the field on the importance and challenges in realizing this right, after 12 years since the issuance of GC 17 (paragraphs 30-47) | Atty. Mylen B. Gonzales-Esquivel<br>Executive Director, Child's Right Advocacy Center of Miriam College |

##### Session II: The physical environment and the right to rest, play, culture, and arts

- |    |                         |   |
|----|-------------------------|---|
| #3 | Links to Climate Change | (Video) SR Elisa Morgera<br>UN Special Rapporteur on Climate Change |
|----|-------------------------|---|

##### Session III: Culture and the Arts

- |     |                |                |
|-----|----------------|----------------|
| # 4 | Not Applicable | Not Applicable |
|-----|----------------|----------------|

##### Session IV: The digital environment and the right to rest, play, culture, and arts

- |    |   |  |
|----|---|--|
| #5 | Online gaming (including Metaverse) opportunities and risks   | Julianne Marie Tabilog<br>Gender and Online Gaming Associate,<br>ECPAT International                   |
| #6 | Perspectives from children on online gaming and social media  | Ms. Mica Olaño-Fernando<br>Communications Manager, CRC Asia  |
| #7 | Good practices and challenges in using technology, such as Generative AI, for the realization of Article 31 | Ms. Itsaraphorn Daoram<br>Regional Coordinator for (South) East Asia & the Pacific, 5Rights Foundation |

##### Session V: The role of the business sector

- |    |                                |  |
|----|--------------------------------|--|
| #8 | Children and digital marketing | Mr. Behzad Noubary<br>Deputy Representative for Programme,<br>UNICEF Philippines |
|----|--------------------------------|--|