



Brussels, 9 September 2014

**OPEN LETTER TO THE NEW EUROPEAN COMMISSION PRESIDENT:
REALISING THE RIGHTS OF EVERY CHILD EVERYWHERE**

Dear Mr Juncker,

The Child Rights Action Group (CRAG) congratulates you on your election as President of the European Commission.

CRAG brings together 15 International and European organisations promoting children's rights both in the EU and in its external action. We are united in the vision that the EU's internal and external policies must respect, promote, protect and fulfil the rights of the child.

The EU has made significant progress to promote the rights of the child in the past decade. Most importantly, Article 3 of the Lisbon Treaty includes the promotion of children's rights as a specific objective of the European Union, alongside the aims to promote peace, the Union's values and the well-being of its peoples.

The EU Charter of Fundamental Rights supports key principles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), namely the respect for the best interests of the child and the right of children to participate in all decisions affecting them (Article 24).

The European Commission plays a crucial role in guaranteeing these principles in EU legislation and policies. Several Communications support the protection of children's rights: *Towards an EU Strategy on the Rights of the Child* (2006), the *EU Guidelines for the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of the Child* (2007), *A Special Place for Children in EU External Action* (2008), and *An EU Agenda for the Rights of the Child* (2011).

During your Presidency campaign you stated that you believe in a Europe that invests in its people. We urge you to live up to this commitment by steering the EU in a direction that prioritises investment in children inside the EU and globally. EU policies, legislation and funding must promote a positive, immediate and lasting impact on the rights and well-being of all children within the EU and the world.

The UNCRC will celebrate its 25th anniversary on 20th November this year, soon after you take the helm of the European Commission. We trust you will reaffirm the EU's role as a global champion of children's rights and that you will guide the Commission to set a clear path for the mainstreaming of children's rights in all its work throughout your five-year mandate.

We would welcome the opportunity to meet you to discuss these issues in more detail and wish you every success in your mandate.

Children of Prisoners Europe – Eurochild – European Federation for Street Children – European Youth Forum International Falcon Movement – International Juvenile Justice Observatory – Quality of Childhood - Missing Children Europe – Plan EU Office – Platform for International Cooperation on Undocumented Migrants – Save the Children – SOS Children's Villages – Terre des Hommes International Federation – World Organization of the Scout Movement – World Vision