

FAMILY REUNIFICATION

Many children on the move have been separated from all or some of their family members and are therefore in a vulnerable position. Regardless of whether the child is on the move within or outside of their country, it can be difficult to get in touch with family. In a war-torn country or in a refugee camp, social functions and infrastructure often have major shortcomings. However, all states that have ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child are obligated to try to find the child's parents for them to reunite.

To this end the convention states that, "States Parties shall provide, as they consider appropriate, co-operation in any efforts by the United Nations and other competent intergovernmental organizations or non-governmental organizations co-operating with the United Nations to protect and assist such a child and to trace the parents or other members of the family of any refugee child in order to obtain information necessary for reunification with his or her family."

Convention on the Rights of the Child, Article 22 (2).

Förenklat betyder det att varje stat som anslutit sig till barnkonventionen åtar sig att hjälpa till att hitta föräldrarna till barnet så att barnet kan återförenas med sin familj. Om det inte går att hitta föräldrarna ska barnet få samma skydd som alla andra barn i enlighet med konventionen. När det handlar om ett beslut som rör barn ska, enligt barnkonventionen artikel 3 (1), barnets bästa alltid komma i första rummet, vilket bland annat innebär familjeåterförening.

In simple terms, this means that every state that has joined the Convention on the Rights of the Child undertakes to help locate the child's parents so that the child can be reunited with their family. If the parents cannot be found, the child will receive the same protection as all other children in accordance with the convention. When it comes to a decision

involving a child, according to Article 3 (1) of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the best interests of the child must always come first, which among other things, includes family reunification. Children can be separated from their families for several reasons. Firstly, the child may unintentionally get separated from their family in the chaos that arises during flight. Sometimes, the family may deliberately send the child away with or without an accompanying adult in the hope that the child can have a better life somewhere else. Such a decision can be made, for example, if the conditions in the place are so bad that the child is unlikely to survive there.

Since children can be separated from their families in different ways, there are also different needs for reunification. This may include a child who is in a refugee camp and needs to find their family from there. It may also involve a child who is in a country seeking asylum or has been granted asylum and needs to have their relatives with them in their new home country. Regardless of the need, states must be able to assist in the effort to locate the child's parents.

Laws regarding family immigration may differ from country to country. Unfortunately, many children have not been able to be reunited with their parents as of now. In the role-play, your task is to discuss how this problem can be best solved so that more children can be reunited with their families.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER FOR RESOLUTION NEGOTIATIONS:

- How can we increase the possibility of children on the move being reunited with their families?
- Can we decide how all states should handle family reunification for children on the move, or is it something that should be decided nationally?