



Geneva, 13 March 2025

58th HRC Session

Item 3 – ID with Special Rapporteur on the sale, exploitation, and abuse of children

Speaker: Melanie Beatriz Montoya

Oral statement submitted by

IIMA – Istituto Internazionale Maria Ausiliatrice delle Salesiane di Don Bosco

And co-signed by

**VIDES International – International Volunteerism Organization for
Women, Education and Development**

IIMA and VIDES appreciate the Special Representative's report on the sexual abuse of children in peacekeeping and humanitarian contexts.

The Convention on the Rights of the Child unequivocally affirms that children must enjoy protection from all forms of sexual abuse. Humanitarian workers – both from NGOs and United Nations agencies hold a great responsibility in providing assistance to communities, and among them children, who are already experiencing situations of extreme vulnerability.

The gravity of the sexual exploitation and abuse of children is even more serious because these crimes are perpetrated by the very people deployed to support and protect at-risk individuals and communities.

We fully support the emphasis made by the Special Representative on:

- 1. The absolute obligation that falls on the United Nations, regardless of the category of the perpetrators, to protect victims, investigate incidents, report and follow up on human rights violations and take measures to hold perpetrators accountable.¹**
- 2. The urgent need to integrate a child rights-based approach into all strategies to prevent and respond to child sexual abuse.²**
- 3. The establishment of an independent special court mechanism to investigate and prosecute child sexual abuse offenses committed by UN civilian and affiliated personnel and by military personnel where their countries are unable or unwilling to do so.³**

Thank you.

¹ United Nations Special Representative of the Secretary-General on the sale, sexual exploitation and sexual abuse of children, (24 February– 4 April 2025), A/HRC/58/52, § 67, p. 18.

² *Ibidem*, § 69, p. 18.

³ *Ibidem*, § 71, p. 19.