

**Statement to the Panel on Constitutional and Mainland Affairs
of the Hong Kong Legislative Council**

by

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1. In the outline under discussion this afternoon, the Constitutional and Mainland Affairs Bureau states in its Second Report to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child that, with reference to Article 31 (which covers the child's right to rest, leisure, recreation and cultural and artistic activities), it will:

“report to the Committee that the facilities, measures and programmes are broadly elucidated in paragraphs 384 to 396 of the previous report. We will provide updated data where necessary”.

2. On reviewing this previous report and the existing outline for the next report, my organization, Playright Children's Play Association, first suggests—here with respect to Article 31—that summary information should additionally be included on:
 - (a) the number, type and patronage of indoor and outdoor playgrounds and other designated play facilities in the Hong Kong SAR;
 - (b) any and all leisure and recreation facilities, measures and programmes offered to children in i) public hospitals under the Hospital Authority and in ii) school settings.
3. In addition, Playright proposes the addition of the following topics, which fall variously under other Articles:
 - (a) A response to paragraphs 16 and 17 of the Concluding Observations, regarding the need to establish in the Hong Kong SAR an independent human rights institution with a specific mandate for child rights;
 - (b) A response to paragraph 78 (c) of the Concluding Observations, regarding the recommendation that in the Hong Kong SAR the quality of education system should be enhanced in a manner that seeks to reduce the competitiveness of the education system and promotes active learning capacities and the right of the child to play and leisure.
4. May I finally and very briefly outline Playright's long sustained concerns regarding the child's right to play in the Hong Kong SAR. Playright earnestly hopes that the upcoming report will take these views fully into account when reflecting the extent to which the Convention on the Rights of the Child is being implemented here.
 - (a) The right of all children to a safe, challenging and accessible play environment, to the design of which they themselves can valuably contribute;
 - (b) The rising level of professional and public anxiety over the rise in juvenile obesity and anti-social behaviour, to both of which the lack of opportunity to play contributes;
 - (c) Concern that advanced technology, traffic growth, loss of outdoor space and fears over safety are further depriving children of access to quality play and leisure opportunities;
 - (d) The inadequacy of play and leisure facilities, measures and programmes for sick children in public hospitals; and
 - (e) The lack of planning for toy library provision in new regional libraries.
5. I am most grateful for this opportunity to air Playright's views.

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