

Latvia (1998); Croatia (1999); Germany (2000); Bulgaria (2000), Iceland (2003); Romania (2004); Ukraine (2004), Hungary (2004), Greece (2006); Netherlands (2007). In addition, a Supreme Court judgment in Italy (1996) declared all corporal punishment to be unlawful, but this has not yet been confirmed in legislation. At least six more states have committed themselves to full law reform in the near future: Lithuania, Luxembourg, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain.

The pace of reform is gathering momentum in light of the UN Secretary General's Study on Violence against Children, which recommended in its final report prohibition in law of all corporal punishment of children by 2009. Many more governments across the world have committed themselves to full prohibition, including at least a further six in Europe.

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NEW ZEALAND: Anti-smacking bill becomes law. May 16, 2007

[16 May 2007] - A controversial law effectively banning parents from smacking their children has been passed by New Zealand's parliament. The *Crimes (Substituted Section 59) Amendment Bill* was passed overwhelmingly by a vote of 113 to seven.

The legislation amends the New Zealand's Crimes Act, to remove the provision that allowed parents to use "reasonable force" to discipline their child. But the changes - first proposed in 2005 - stirred huge concern from conservative groups worried that it would make criminals of parents. To allay fears, a clause was added giving police the power "not to prosecute complaints.. where the offence is considered so inconsequential there is no public interest in proceeding with a prosecution." The amendment brokered by Prime Minister Helen Clark and National's leader John Key that ended the battle over the bill to amend the law on smacking was passed by Parliament on May 3 on a vote of 117-3.

The bill's promoter, Green MP Sue Bradford, said she could happily back Mr Dunne's amendment as it did not define the nature and level of force people could legitimately use against their children. Parliament also accepted, by 116 votes to four, an amendment that commits the Government to reviewing the law two years after it comes into force. Smacking is banned in some European countries, but is not in most parts of the world. New Zealand is the first English-speaking common law country to ban physical punishment.

Defence for Children International Annual Report 2006

Executive Summary

The year 2006 marks an important period of growth and consolidation within the Defence for Children International (DCI) movement. Earlier in the year, DCI welcomed three new DCI sections, DCI Italy, DCI Niger, and DCI Mauritius (formerly an associated member) to the movement. DCI's 46 national sections and associated members continued to be active at the national and regional level, in the areas of child labour, juvenile justice, education in children's rights, street children, and violence against children, among others. At the International Secretariat (IS), this period has been characterised, most specifically, by the launch of a Strategic Plan of Action for the coming three years with a special focus on juvenile justice.

DCI was able to develop and implement a significant part of its Strategic Plan of Action (2006-2008). This included for example: preparing and disseminating reports on the 42nd and 43rd Sessions of the Committee on the Rights of the Child, focussing on juvenile justice related issues; providing input to and planning the follow-up of the Committee's General Comment No.10 on Children's Rights in Juvenile Justice; participating actively in key networks including the Inter-Agency Panel on Juvenile Justice and the NGO Advisory Panel to the UN Study on Violence Against Children, and producing a bi-monthly newsletter on juvenile justice.

One of the most significant events of year was DCI's Regional Consultation on Juvenile Justice in Africa which took place October 30 – November 3 2006, in Nairobi, Kenya. Key outcomes of the meeting included the training of African DCI sections on advocacy and lobby strategies, on international juvenile justice standards, and on the preparation of alternative reports to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child. DCI also developed a Regional Action Plan on juvenile justice, as well as the mechanisms for intra-regional cooperation and communication.

DCI ends the year with a more united movement, particularly at regional level, led by a stronger and more stable Secretariat. Whilst challenges remain, particularly in the areas of fundraising and visibility of the movement, DCI faces 2007 with several interesting opportunities for further growth and development