Internal Briefing for Endorsers of the Key Recommendations

Purpose
This paper highlights some of the groundbreaking language adopted in the 2019 UNGA Resolution on the Rights of the Child and suggests key messages that you can copy and use for your own communication. **Please note: it is not intended to be circulated externally.** The full text of the resolution is available in the [Report of the Third Committee on Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Children](#) (on pp. 7-21). The resolution will be adopted as part of the process to adopt the Third Committee Report.

Background
Each year, the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) makes important decisions affecting the lives of people around the world. Its resolutions recommend a course of action for all United Nations Member States on a wide array of topics from human rights to education, development, climate, violence against children, and peace and security, among others. One of these resolutions addresses children's rights. **The 2019 UN General Assembly Resolution on the Rights of the Child focused on the theme of children without parental care**, offering an important opportunity to: place children without parental care on the global agenda, review progress made in preventing unnecessary family-child separation and providing appropriate alternative care, and recommend specific actions to strengthen care reforms globally.

Children's advocates mobilized at global, regional, and national levels to ensure that the 2019 UNGA Resolution on the Rights of the Child strategically addressed key challenges in ensuring the rights of, and protection for, children without parental care. They worked together to develop a set of **Key Recommendations, endorsed by a coalition of more than 250 organisations, networks and agencies,** which proposed language that underlined commitments made by UN Member States and suggested measures and actions needed to move the implementation forward.

The resolution will be formally adopted by the UN General Assembly on **December 18.** The **resolution includes many of the recommendations we made and represents a major step forward and a fantastic tool to strengthen care reforms globally**, with 193 member states clearly **reflecting a global commitment to strengthen children's care in their families, prevent unnecessary separation by addressing its root causes, put an end to child institutionalization by progressively replacing it with family and community based care and address some of the drivers supporting it, including orphanage volunteering**. It's a big achievement that could not have happened without the extraordinary engagement and support of the coalition members.

Although UNGA resolutions are political rather than legal documents, this resolution is an important demonstration of member states' commitments to supporting children without parental care. This was the first time that the General Assembly discussed the theme of children without parental care and the resolution text has been agreed by consensus by all Member States. There are a number of "groundbreaking" aspects of the resolution, meaning that for the first time there is consensus language from the UN General Assembly on these points. With this new consensus language, children's advocates can approach UN Member States to welcome the commitments they have made in this resolution and call on them to follow through with them. In order to support members of the coalition who have endorsed the Key Recommendations to **celebrate the achievements made with the adoption of the resolution**, this document highlights the "groundbreaking" aspects of the resolution, and offers proposed messaging to disseminate them widely. We have also highlighted some of the reinforcing language in the resolution, the selection is not exhaustive.

Messaging

The pages that follow provide suggested social media messages to be used to mark the adoption of the resolution on December 18. It begins with suggested general tweets/posts and then highlights specific issues raised in the resolution that are some of the most significant achievements. **Groundbreaking** means this is the first time there is language from the UN General Assembly (the UN representative body that includes all 193 member states) on these points. **Reinforcing** means the resolution reinforces existing language. It is important to note that **this suggested messaging focuses on the achievements in the language agreed by Member States in the resolution.**

Please use the hashtag **#FamiliesNotOrphanages** on all social posts to join our comms together. Where possible, please use #UNGA and tag @UN.

Social media messaging - suggested general tweets/posts

- Today, for the first time ever, all 193 member states of the United Nations have recognized the harm institutions cause children and have called for institutions to be progressively eliminated.
- Over 80% of children in institutions have families. The #UNGA today urges member States to invest in family strengthening to keep families together and eliminate institutional care.
- Today the UN General Assembly has adopted the 2019 Resolution on the Rights of the Child, and for the first time called on States to transition away from institutionalisation of children and redirect resources to family and community-based care.
- For too long the plight of children in institutions has been off the radar of the UN. With this year's #UNGA Resolution on the Rights of the Child, 193 member States have committed to end child institutionalization and support families.

Key issues with suggested social media posts

Key Issues/Topics to highlight	Why this language is significant (groundbreaking/ reinforcing)	Brief explanation of the issue and what it means to have the issue mentioned in the resolution/rationale	Short messages for social media posts Please use #FamiliesNotOrphanages on all social posts to join our comms together.
Deep concern on the potential harm of institutionalization and institutional care to children's growth and development OP 26	groundbreaking	Today, for the first time ever, all 193 member states of the United Nations have recognized the harm institutions cause children and have called for institutions to be progressively eliminated. The fact that all 193 UN Member States have for the first time ever recognized the harm of institutionalization demonstrates the consensus	- Today, for the first time ever, all 193 member states of the United Nations have recognized the harm of child institutionalisation and have called for institutions to be progressively eliminated. - Adopted today the 2019 UNGA Resolution on the Rights of the

		that institutions are not in children's best interest. Instead, children should be supported to remain with or be returned to their families, or where this is not possible, governments should commit to put in place systems that guarantee quality alternative care is provided to all children through family and community based care. This Resolution's call for institutions to be progressively eliminated gives an unprecedented political, human rights-based imperative for States to transform the way children are cared for and families are supported.	Child recognizes the harm institutions can cause children. ● Today the UN General Assembly adopted the 2019 Resolution on the Rights of the Child - recognizing how institutionalization harms children and calling on countries to transform their care systems to support family and community based care.
Commitment to invest in prevention Op 22 and 34	groundbreaking	Over 80% of children in institutions are not orphans, but have a living parent, and the UN General Assembly has recognised the critical need to invest to keep families together. The Resolution urges member states to adopt and enforce policies, services and programmes and direct budget towards supporting families and tackle the issues that cause them to be vulnerable in the first place.	● Over 80% of children in institutions have families. The #UNGA today urges member States to invest in family strengthening to keep families together
Take action to progressively replace institutionalization with quality alternative care, including by redirecting resources to family and community-based care services OP 35 (g)	groundbreaking	The UN General Assembly has explicitly, for the first time, called for States to transition away from institutionalisation of children and redirect resources to family and community-based care services. For those children in institutions who cannot live with their own family, or have no biological family, the Resolution calls on States to make available a range of high quality, accessible and disability-inclusive alternative care options, in line with the UN's own Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), the Convention on the Rights of	● Today, the UN General Assembly has explicitly, for the first time, called for States to transition away from institutionalisation of children and redirect resources to family and community-based care services. ● Adopted today the 2019 UNGA Resolution on the Rights of the Child recognizes the importance of family care and the responsibility of States to help strengthen families. ● For too long the plight of children in institutions have been off the radar

		Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and taking into account the UN Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children. This gives an unprecedented political and human rights imperative for States to transform care systems for children, including ending institutionalization, strengthening families, and ensuring that a range of quality care options is in place in order to meet the principles of necessity and suitability as stated in the Guidelines for Alternative Care of Children.	of the UN. With this year's #UNGA Resolution on the Rights of the Child, countries have committed to prevent child institutionalization and support families.
Urges states to adopt and enforce laws, policies, services and programmes, and budget allocations to address the root causes of unnecessary separation and ensure children are cared for effectively by their own families and communities OP 34 (b)	groundbreaking	All too often children are unnecessarily separated from their families. With this Resolution, the UN General Assembly has recognized that the lack of strong policies or funding for quality and accessible services as root causes of separation. States are urged to address gaps in policy, services and resources toward preventing separation so that families stay together.	● Adopted today, the 2019 UNGA Resolution on the Rights of the Child recognizes the importance of family care and the responsibility of States to help strengthen families
Prevent and combat the trafficking and exploitation of children in care facilities, and to take appropriate measures to prevent and address the harms related to orphanage volunteering, including in the context of tourism OP 35 (t)	groundbreaking	Orphanages harm the health and development of children, exposing them to a greater risk of violence, neglect, abuse and trafficking. Research shows that the regular turnover of visitors and volunteers without relevant training and experience can be harmful to children's development and emotional wellbeing. There is also a growing body of evidence to show that children may be trafficked into and out of orphanages, for various forms of exploitation, including 'orphanage trafficking' whereby children are trafficked to so-called orphanages for the	● #changevolunteering #volunteering #helpingnothelping #orphanagetrafficking #familiesnotorphanages ● Tourist visits and volunteering in orphanages supports an industry that exploits children and makes them vulnerable to trafficking and abuse. In a groundbreaking move the #UNGA urges States to take action

		financial gain of those running the institution. For the first time ever the UN General Assembly has recognized that volunteering in orphanages, including tourism, can lead to the trafficking and exploitation of children - by calling for action to prevent this activity, States have taken a strong step forward in tackling these rights violations and building global awareness of the drivers of institutionalisation and exploitation of children.	● The #UNGA recognises the link between #orphanage tourism and #orphanagetrafficking - sending a clear message that it's time to end orphanage volunteering https://rethinkorphanages.org ● In a groundbreaking move, the #UNGA recognises that children are being trafficking and exploited in #orphanages and calls on member States to take action.
Strengthen the regulatory system and put in place rigorous 'gatekeeping" procedures to ensure alternative care is only used when clearly necessary and in an appropriate manner OP 34 (l) and OP 35 (c)	groundbreaking	To prevent unnecessary placement, Governments must play a key role in creating systems that ensure children are separated from their families and placed in alternative care ONLY when it is necessary, and to ensure that care placements are appropriate and in the best interest of each individual child. Furthermore, according to OP 26, this alternative care should always be in family and community based settings and not in institutions. To ensure that alternative care for children is always used appropriately, States must strengthen the regulation of these services, including by ensuring registration, licensing and oversight mechanisms are in place and children's placements are regularly reviewed.	● #UNGA recognises critical role of gatekeeping to ensure children are not placed in alternative care unless it is clearly necessary and appropriate and in the best interests of each child. ● #UNGA calls on States to strengthen regulation of alternative care system with oversight mechanisms in place and periodic review of placements to ensure its quality and that it is appropriate
Reaffirms States' responsibility to protect the human rights of children in alternative care, including by protecting them against all forms of violence and abuse in all care settings. OP 35 (i)	groundbreaking	Children separated from families and those in alternative care are at higher risk of violence, abuse and exploitation than their peers, whilst many other children are separated from their families because of violence. Violence against children is also an important driver of child and family separation. The UN General Assembly reaffirms States' responsibility to protect all children from all forms of violence and abuse,	● Today the UN General Assembly reaffirmed the rights of all children in alternative care to protection from all forms of violence and abuse #endviolence ● #UNGA calls on States to protect the human rights of all children in alternative care and ensure swift accountability for human rights

		including children in alternative care.	- violations or abuses in all care settings #EndViolence - Moving children from abusive homes does not always mean an end to violence #UNGA has recognized the right of children in alternative care to protection from violence.
Importance of improving data collection, information management and reporting systems related to children without parental care in all settings and situations in order to close existing data gaps OP 35 (d)	groundbreaking	All children count, but not all children are counted. Children living outside families are often left out of national statistical data, which has real-life policy implications: if governments lack basic information about vulnerable groups (e.g. size, location, needs) they cannot develop responsive policies or services, nor appropriate resources to address any problems that they may have. For the first time, the UN General Assembly Resolution has recognized the large global data gap children without parental care, and has called on States to improve data collection, information management and reporting systems.	- The UN General Assembly has recognized that all children count, but not all children are counted and calls for improved data collection for children without parental care. - The UNGA has called on States to close existing data gaps for children without parental care, to ensure all children are counted.
Early and comprehensive information, services and support to children with disabilities and their families should be provided with a view to preventing concealment, abandonment, neglect, discrimination and segregation and to ensuring they have equal rights with respect to family life Op 34 (i)	reinforcing	Specific responses including services and information must be provided by governments to ensure children with disabilities enjoy equal rights to other children with respect to family life. Children with disabilities are too often placed in alternative care, particularly residential care, because of lack of investment and provision in services that can support their families to care for them. States must invest in responses that ensure children can be appropriately cared for by their families, including by addressing discrimination and social norms that lead to their abandonment or segregation.	- Children with disabilities are too often placed in institutions. The #UNGA has today urged States to invest to keep all children in #familiesnotorphanages. - Recognizing the increased risk for children with disabilities to be placed in institutions, today's UN Resolution on the Rights of the Child called for inclusive family and community based care for all children! #LeaveNoChildBehind

Ensure the availability of a comprehensive range of quality accessible and disability-inclusive alternative care options OP 35 (b)	reinforcing	The UN General Assembly recognized the need for a range of quality and accessible alternative care for all children - calling our particular attention to children with disabilities who are often disproportionately represented in institutions. A comprehensive range of quality and accessible alternative care options should be in place for all children, including children with disabilities, ensuring that where alternative care is necessary, family and community-based care should be promoted over placement in institutions.	● Recognizing the increased risk for children with disabilities to be placed in institutions, today's UN Resolution on the Rights of the Child called for inclusive family and community based care for all children! #LeaveNoChildBehind
Develop and strengthen inclusive and responsive family -oriented policies and programmes for poverty reduction OP 34 (f)	reinforcing	Addressing care for children means addressing the challenges families face when caring for their own children. The General Assembly Resolution calls for developing and/or strengthening different policies and services that help families to gain economic stability and to be resilient to the impacts of poverty.	● Over 80% of children in orphanages have families. The #UNGA today urges member States to invest in family strengthening to build resilience and keep families together
Strengthen child welfare and child protection systems and improve care reforms efforts, including increased multisectoral collaboration with health, education and justice sectors, and active coordination among all relevant authorities, improved cross-border systems and improved capacity building OP 31	reinforcing	Children's care and protection is not only about one aspect of the child - children (and their families) have health, education, justice and social needs. The systems that support children in families need to collaborate and work across these different aspects. To address children's care and services for strengthening families a strong workforce is needed. The UNGA Resolution encourages strengthening the capacity of the workers who support children and families.	● #UNGA calls on states to strengthen child welfare and child protection systems including through increased multisectoral collaboration with health, education and justice sectors, as part of care reform efforts ● Thousands of children are separated from families across borders - to ensure better care for children #UNGA calls for improved cross-border systems.
Urges States to promote the implementation of international frameworks,	reinforcing	In the Resolution on the Rights of the Child the UN General Assembly reminds us that there are international frameworks and guidelines on	● Lack of regulations for alternative care puts the most vulnerable children at risk of violence; the

and the Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children, including through training on those for care staff and others working with children, and strengthening national legislation, regulations and policies to protect the rights of children without parental care; OP 35 (a)		alternative care that should be promoted by States through training, legislation and policies to ensure full protection of the rights of children without parental care.	#UNGA has urged States to address this. ● States should promote international standards #AlternativeCareGuidelines and strengthen national laws and policies with training for all those working with these children says #UNGA