

Somalia to join child rights pact: UN

Geneva, November 21: Somalia has announced it plans to ratify a global treaty aimed at protecting children, leaving the United States as the only country outside the pact, UNICEF said on Friday.

Somalia and the United States have long been the last hold-outs to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly exactly 20 years ago. The most widely ratified international human rights treaty, it declares that those under 18 years old must be protected from violence, exploitation, discrimination and neglect.

"Adherence to and application of the Convention will be of crucial importance for the children of Somalia, who are gravely affected by the ongoing conflict, recurrent natural disasters and chronic poverty," the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) said in a statement welcoming the move.

In 2002, Somalia's previous transitional government signed the Convention, which the United States also signed under President Bill Clinton in 1995, but neither has ratified it. UNICEF said Somalia's transitional government had told it the "Somali cabinet of ministers has agreed in principle to ratify the Convention on the rights of the Child".

UNICEF spokeswoman Veronique Taveau told a news briefing in Geneva: "The United States has indicated that a very important review process is going on at the moment in order to arrive as quickly as possible at a ratification".

Mark Kornblau, a spokesman for the US mission to the United Nations in New York, said on Thursday the administration of President Barack Obama was "committed to undertaking a thorough and thoughtful review of the Convention of the Rights of the Child".

--Agencies--

[World](#)

Source URL: <http://www.siasat.com/english/news/somalia-join-child-rights-pact-un>