



11 November 2008

Dear President-Elect Obama,

On behalf of Defence for Children International (DCI), an international movement for the promotion and defence of children's rights that stood at the cradle of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, with a coordinating secretariat in Geneva and national sections in 40 countries, we wish to congratulate you with your election as the new President of the United States of America.

We believe your election is a victory for democracy, for human rights, and for an open society of global partnership. Under your Presidency, we look to America to regain its position as a leader in human rights. We think with emotion of Mrs Eleanor Roosevelt, who as the president of the drafting committee of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, acted as the driving force to bring the UDHR into existence. She personified the USA as a nation dedicated to peace and love for humanity. We urge you to follow in her footsteps and make the best use of that chance to further the rights of children to a full and healthy life in dignity.

One of the strongest legacies you could leave as a President would be to make a commitment to upholding the human rights of American children. We thus strongly urge you to seize this opportunity to ratify the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child – and cease to be one of only two countries in the world that have not fully agreed to deliver these fundamental rights to its children. The United States began to take a step in this direction under President Clinton, and we urge you to continue the process by ratifying the Convention and bringing national legislation in line with its provisions.

We trust that you will put ratification of the Convention on the Rights of the Child high on your agenda: America's children – and the world – are waiting.

In the name of the DCI movement we offer you our services towards the fulfilment of the rights of every child, and wish you a happy and successful mandate.

Yours respectfully,

Rifat Odeh Kassis
President

Laetitia van Haren
Executive Director