



Faith Marshall-Harris

BARBADOS

FOR RE-ELECTION TO THE
**United Nations Committee
on the Rights of the Child (CRC) 2023 - 2027**



Introductory Message from **Faith Marshall-Harris**



I am honoured to be presented by the Government of Barbados for re-election to the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC) for the term 2023 - 2027.

I am an ardent children's advocate and have dedicated more than three decades of my life to the uplifting of children as a child rights defender. As an Attorney-at-Law, I presided as a judicial officer over the Juvenile and Family Court in Barbados and pioneered the Circle of Care to deliver accessible child centred and child friendly justice, becoming an expert on restorative and rehabilitative justice.

In Barbados the focus of my work has been advocacy on behalf of the right of children to adequate standards of living, quality education and health care, personal development, and justice. Regionally, I have also gained a reputation as an expert in the area of family law and child law with particular emphasis on child rights.

In seeking re-election to the Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC), I signal my desire to continue to play a significant role in the global initiative to protect children from all harm and exploitation, from extreme poverty, from armed conflict, from diseases such as HIV/AIDS and to ensure they inherit a healthy earth.

Currently, as the only Committee Member from the Caribbean region, I bring a diverse perspective and knowledge of the challenges facing the children from Small Island Developing States (SIDS) in this time of economic hardship occasioned by the COVID-19 pandemic. This is particularly the case with respect to the rights of children to a standard of living adequate for their physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social development, as addressed in Article 27 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, regardless of colour, race, gender, ethnic origin, ability, creed or class.

If successfully re-elected to the Committee, it is my intention to continue to work to ensure that States Parties deliver child-centred, child-friendly justice in their adjudication of matters before the law courts. I will also advocate that child justice must include the right of children to be heard in their own cause.

As a Member of the Committee I also continue to be acutely aware that children need special care given their innate vulnerabilities. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development

Goals (SDGs) therefore hold particular importance for the rights of children, especially those relating to ending corporal punishment, ensuring access to education, healthcare, water and sanitation, ending child poverty, and the rights and empowerment of the girl child.

“In particular, recognizing that there have been severe setbacks to education as a result of the pandemic, I am committed to ensure by working with others that we ‘build back better’ with respect to children’s education - promoting free pre-primary and secondary education, thereby expanding the mandate of Articles 28 and 29 of the Convention.”

I have a clear vision of how I can continue to work tirelessly and meaningfully on behalf of all children by offering myself in service to the Committee and I thank the Government of Barbados for the opportunity to do so by nominating me for re-election.

AREAS OF CONTINUING FOCUS WITHIN THE UN COMMITTEE ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

- Administration of child justice – access and development of child friendly and child centred courts
- Access to education and online learning
- Migrant children; refugees, unaccompanied minors, asylum seekers
- Non-discrimination, especially with regard to ethnic minorities and indigenous groups
- Ending poverty in all its forms among children and young people
- Child marriage and teenage pregnancy
- Adolescent health and development, access to sexual and reproductive health education
- Abolition of corporal punishment, all forms of violence, sexual exploitation, and abuse
- Rights of children to be heard and to participate meaningfully
- Climate justice
- Comprehensive legislative reform with regard to the rights of children
- Promoting international cooperation to effect improvement in the lives of children, particularly through close collaboration with the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD), and the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR)

Background

Faith Marshall-Harris

Faith Marshall-Harris was educated at Queen's College, Barbados, is an English Honours graduate of the University of the West Indies, Mona, Jamaica, and pursued post graduate studies at the University of Geneva, Switzerland.

She had early careers as a journalist, as a secondary school teacher and as a Government Information Officer. She was then posted to the Barbados High Commission London, United Kingdom for eleven years where she was Counsellor and Director for the UK and Europe, heading the office of the Barbados Board of Tourism, as it then was.

She later returned to law school and was called to the Bar in Barbados in 1991. She initially worked in private practice and subsequently as Legal Counsel in the Ministry of Housing. Thereafter she joined the Attorney General's Chambers and served as Crown Counsel and Senior Crown Counsel.

From 1998-2000 she was seconded to the United Nations Drug Control Program (UNDCP), coordinating a drug interdiction project in eighteen countries of the Caribbean and South American region.

Upon her return from this assignment she served as Deputy Registrar, Supreme Court, was subsequently appointed Principal Crown Counsel and eventually Magistrate and Island-wide Coroner, a post she held for ten years. She also served as Magistrate for the Juvenile and Family Jurisdiction in a local district.

POSITIONS HELD

- 2006 – 2018: Member of the government appointed Family Law Council (Barbados)
- 2012 – UNICEF Champion for Children
- 2013 – 2021: Chairperson, Barbados National Committee on the Rights of the Child
- 2018 – founder and Chair of the FMH/SLCT Helpline which offers counselling and referrals to competent social agencies and seeks to meet basic needs of children requiring assistance; provides pro bono legal assistance
- 2018 – elected a member of the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC) for the term 2019 – 2023; currently serves as Vice Chair, Rapporteur, and Member of Working Group on Working Methods and Working Group on SDGs