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Message of Archbishop Makarios on World Day Against Child Labour



On the occasion of today’s World Day Against Child Labour, our thoughts and attention turn to an extremely worrying and sad phenomenon that, unfortunately, continues to plague humanity even in the 21st century.

Tens of millions of girls and boys throughout the world, almost 10% of all children, according to the latest estimates of the International Labour Organization, instead of enjoying their innocence and tender age; instead of playing, smiling and dreaming; instead of learning at school and progressing, they are forced to waste their childhood at work, in often dangerous conditions for their health, safety, and their moral development.



Despite the significant steps taken in recent years to curb this phenomenon, the road for its complete elimination remains long and uphill.

There is no room for compromise and complacency when there are still children's faces without innocent smiles; when there are traumatised children deprived of the right to dream.



As Orthodox Christians, we ought to be inspired and directed by the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, "Assuredly, I say to you, unless you are converted and become as little children, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 18:3), whereby childhood innocence is presented as a condition for the salvation of

humanity. We must seek this childlike innocence so that we fill our own hearts, while at the same time defending, each from their own position and with all their strength, this sacred privilege that children already possess.