

Biographical Note

Marta Santos Pais

United Nations Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children

Marta Santos Pais is Portuguese. She is a lawyer and researcher and has over 30 years' experience in the field of human rights and intergovernmental processes. She is the author of a large number of publications on human rights and children's rights.

Marta Santos Pais joined UNICEF in 1997 as Director of Evaluation, Policy and Planning. Previously she was the Rapporteur of the Committee on the Rights of the Child and Vice-Chair of the Coordinating Committee on Childhood Policies of the Council of Europe. She was a member of the UN Drafting Group of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and of its Protocols.

Before her appointment, she was the Director of the UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre, a position she held as from 2001. She was also a member of the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child. In May 2009, the Secretary General announced the appointment of Marta Santos Pais as his Special Representative on Violence against Children and she took up her position on 1 September 2009.

As a high-level, independent global advocate, she promotes the prevention and elimination of all forms of violence against children in judicial settings, schools, workplaces and communities. She carries out significant work as a bridge builder among different stakeholders in all regions and across sectors and settings where violence against children may occur.