1. I am extremely thankful to Prof Resmiye Oral for inviting me over to be a part of the Provost Global Forum at this prestigious University of Iowa and it gives me great pride to be able to stand in front of this august gathering and present the difficulties faced by children in our part of the world.

2. I come from Pakistan, a US ally in the war of terror and, as a front line state, fighting its own neighbors, who have the same religion and share the same culture. Pakistan is seen by many as involved in the religious extremism and a terrorist state itself. Unfortunately Pakistan had to pay dearly with loss of about 50,000 lives directly due to combat, bomb blasts and sectarian killing and also millions of children suffer indirectly because of the country being in a state of war for more than a decade.

3. Pakistan is still hosting more than 1.6 million Afghan refugees for more than thirty years now, whereas 3.8 million have returned. The financial support it receives from IMF and the international lenders is believed by many Pakistanis as tied up with a lot of trade offs and by putting the integrity of our population at stake.

Pakistan is one of the world's fastest growing population and the proxy war on terrorism and its long standing animosity with neighboring India is badly affecting its economy and social structures. This coupled with our exploitative and corrupt rulers, have made the country one of the most unsafe places to live in.

4. We had gained independence 67 years ago to live in peace and harmony between all religions and sects and practice the religion of Islam in its true sense of equality, justice and tolerance. We wanted to be a welfare state and provide the best human rights and child rights as enshrined in our own Holy Prophet's last Hajj sermon.

5. Pakistan is a signatory to many international conventions and laws including the UNCRC and its optional protocols.

6. but unfortunately the promises have only been pieces of paper and no real work has been done by our legislators.

7. Most of the laws were made even before the birth of Pakistan.

8. The few laws that have been made including the JJSO and Punjab Destitute and Neglected children's Act have been made without involving any stake holder including the civil service organisation and they have either not been implemented or have actually harmed the children. e.g. There are as yet no child courts or reformatory schools except one for the whole country. The judiciary and the law enforcing agencies still do not get any training in the implementation of JJSO.

9. With National Budgetary spending of less than 2% on education and less than 1% on health, these are the figures that we expect to see as our national indices. We are among the lowest 26 in the world for health indices according to the UNICEF State of the World's Children report.

10. If the GOP is not concerned about survival and development of children of Pakistan, how could it care about the 'protection' of children. Just as an example, We the civil service organisations as a group WGCSA took 8 years to get a National Policy and Plan of Action on Children approved in 2006. Even after another 8 years the government has not been able to pass the child protection bill in order to enforce the recommendations of the NPA.

11. The INGOs and local NGOs then have to play their part. Unfortunately, however, even their role is unsatisfactory. INGOs try and implement the practices successful in other parts of the world, but do not adapt these to the local situation. As there is not much money in child protection projects, there are very few organisations working on these issues, and they also do not have a vision of their own. These are generally small organisations of some committed people but lack the capacity to bring about any change.

Research is virtually non existent, and whatever research is conducted is of a very basic nature, lacks reliability and usually in the shape of reports rather than research papers.
Even PAHCHAAN has not been able to publish any data because, its studies lack the design to be published in any international journal, whereas there is no journal being published on child rights or social change in Pakistan

2. Media is now bringing up cases of child abuse but it is still only providing sensational news, whereas indepth conceptual reporting is lacking

3. Many small registered and thousands of unregistered charities and individual philanthropists are supporting the poor and needy children for food, education and health but they are not sharing any of their work to the public to create a voice, or to create awareness among masses

4. Child Rights Movement has been formulated in Pakistan and all its provinces and although in its infancy, is nevertheless advocating the cause of child protection

12. PAHCHAAN is a small organization which was formed as volunteers of Child Rights Group of Pakistan Pediatric Association about 8 years ago. We are trying to work with the GOP to support its activities as well as a watchdog, We are also working with the other groups and coalitions on awareness and advocacy.

13. Awareness raising is one of PAHCHAAN's main program streams and we have engaged hundreds of youth in our internship and volunteer program. We sensitize these young boys and girls, and build their capacity, and then they go out and support the children through small projects. We also provide awareness to the teachers of different private and government schools on child protection as well as plan activities for the parents, and other duty bearers.

14. PAHCHAAN is trying to keep the data of almost all activities it carries out so as to tabulate and analyze it to get some assessment of the impact every action has created. We have read papers in many national and international conferences in this regard and are in the process of publishing a few research papers in local Pediatric Journal

15. PAHCHAAN has built the capacity of care givers through Child Right Conferences and sessions in Biennial Pediatric Conferences. We have also trained more than 2000 doctors nurses and other health care professionals, teachers and duty bearers in detection of child abuse cases. Two nursing schools have already incorporated child protection in the nursing curriculum. Questions on CAN are also now more frequently asked in the undergrad and pediatric post graduate examinations. More than a thousand street children have been empowered through psychosocial support and life skills based education along with basic literacy and numeracy

16. PAHCHAAN due to its very close collaboration with Pakistan Pediatric Association is in a unique position to advocate and lobby with members of national and provincial assemblies and other key opinion leaders including the clergy and the educationists. With the effort of organisations like PAHCHAAN, the taboo subject of Child Abuse, is now being openly discussed on the television channels and open public seminars

17. PAHCHAAN believes in creating innovative models on child protection. One such concept of making hospital based child protection committees was taken over by the Government Children Hospital as its Child Protection Unit, and now it is managing about 200 children of severe child abuse and neglect every year with PAHCHAAN support.

1. PAHCHAAN also created a very successful model of repatriating children who were forced to leave home, with sustained repatriation rate of about 95% as opposed to 20 percent in government Initiative. However this model was not internalized by the government because of the social welfare department and Child Protection Welfare bureau's internal conflicts and high headedness.

2. PAHCHAAN is also learning through its projects and is constantly endeavouring to improve its services.

18. Although there are innumerable challenges faced by CSOs in Pakistan, and with absolutely no safety or security of child rights worker, we have some achievements too, to satisfy us that
although we are slow, we are still on the right track. Working Group against Child Sexual Abuse was a group of 6 organisations nationally 10 years ago, now CRM has a membership of more than 30 organisations. The topic of child abuse is now even discussed in the schools and I receive requests from the schools to conduct seminars there. Most importantly because of international pressure of CRC implementation reports, the government has at least started some work on the issue

19. This is the beginning of our journey, We want that in Pakistan there should be zero tolerance to any act of abuse or neglect to the child, and every child should feel safe, secure, loved and cared for so that he grows with giggles