

**Statement by Ambassador of Pakistan on Behalf of OIC during the
Interactive Dialogue with the Special Representatives of Secretary
General on Violence against Children and Children and Armed
Conflict**
(31 Session of HRC)
8 March 2016

Mr. President,

I am making this statement on behalf of the OIC.

We take note of the reports by the Special Representatives of the Secretary General on Children and Armed Conflict and on Violence Against Children.

We commend the progress made since the previous report of the Special Representative of the Secretary General on Children and Armed Conflict with regard to the launch of the "Children, Not Soldiers" campaign aimed at ending recruitment of child soldiers by 2016.

OIC strongly supports the promotion and protection of children and their rights. We are enjoined by Islam through a complete code of ethics to protect the rights of children by *inter alia* through establishing a safe and secure environment and fulfilling all their needs. This has also been underscored in the Cairo Declaration.

OIC shares the concerns raised in the report on two essential elements:

1. The rising incidents of child abduction for recruitment with growing surge of extreme violence, and
2. The loss of precious lives of children.

Both elements require urgent attention. The Declaration on the Rights of the Child, explicitly calls for "special safeguards and care, including appropriate legal protection, before as well as after birth". We must honour our commitments.

Mr. President,

The situation of children and violence against them in occupied territories, including torture, killing, and causing life-long disabilities should be condemned and addressed. OIC calls upon the international community to ensure the protection of children in armed conflicts in accordance with International Human Rights and Humanitarian Laws.

We share the concerns of the SRSG on the "child left behind" especially in conflict areas. This tragedy needs to be averted by addressing the root causes of conflicts, and respecting the rights of the child by all parties to conflicts.

OIC agrees that ICTs present both opportunities and challenges. However creating a safe, inclusive and empowering online environment for child remains a challenge. This requires a serious examination of the problem and a concerted, unified global response in the form of a strategy, while taking into account cultural and religious values.

In conclusion, we reaffirm our commitment to combat violence against children, not neglecting the victims, and helping them in their recovery and reintegration into the society.

We request both the Special Representatives to share their views on practical measures to be taken by international community to protect children in occupied territories.

I thank you.