



**MISSION PERMANENTE  
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**IMPACT OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC ON VIOLATIONS AGAINST CHILDREN  
IN SITUATIONS OF ARMED CONFLICT  
STATEMENT BY MR. NICOLAS DE RIVIERE,  
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF FRANCE TO THE UNITED NATIONS  
SECURITY COUNCIL  
ARRIA FORMULA MEETING**

New York, 07 MAY 2021

Mr Chair,

Like colleagues before me, I wish to thank Estonia and our briefers. I also want to thank SRSR Gamba and her teams for her report and its valuable recommendations.

We share the concerns regarding the impact of the Covid pandemic on children.

First, Covid-related restrictions have limited our capacity to monitor and respond to grave violations. The only thing worse than violations against children, are violations occurring in silence and impunity. We express our deep gratitude to all child protection actors that have ensured the continuation of the monitoring and reporting mechanism. We also pay tribute to the important role of civil society.

Second, socio-economic consequences of the pandemic and school closures put children further at risk of domestic violence, rape and other forms of sexual violence, hunger and either not enrolling or dropping out of school. School closures can increase the risk of recruitment and use as well as child labor. Girls also have specific vulnerabilities, in particular to early and forced marriage. Inequalities between children increase in every part of the world. In this regard, we look forward to the Coalition to support school feeding worldwide, spearheaded by the World Food Program.

We are also concerned by growing impunity. Violators must be held accountable and we welcome in this regard the role of the International Criminal Court.

The pandemic reminds us we must do more to implement the framework created by Resolution 1612. MRM actors must receive political and financial support to operate safely and securely. We must also continue to make the best use of our tools. I am mainly referring to:

- the adoption of Action plans and their swift implementation by parties ;
- the importance of the "list of shame", whose integrity we must defend;

- the adoption of conclusions by the working group, that must be robust and up to date. In this regard, we pay tribute to Sweden and Belgium as previous chairs and to the work of Norway since January.

For its part, France will continue to play an active role:

- Promoting the universal endorsement of the Paris Principles and Commitments ;
- And on the ground, supporting projects that ensure access to education in emergency situations, including the Education Cannot Wait Fund. For example, through the Global Partnership for Education, France is financing an 11 million dollar project in Niger to mitigate the impact of the epidemic on the education system.

This Council must remain mobilized, not only through its working group but also in all its actions. Finally, I commend the efforts of the Secretary-General, his Special Envoys and SRSG Gamba to ensure that the issue of child protection continues to be addressed with parties to conflict.

Thank you