



**PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF KENYA
UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL
2021-2022**

**ARRIA FORMULA MEETING ON THE "IMPACT OF COVID-19 PANDEMIC ON
VIOLATIONS AGAINST CHILDREN IN SITUATIONS OF ARMED CONFLICT"**

FRIDAY, 7TH MAY 2021 (02:00 PM)

STATEMENT BY AMB. MARTIN KIMANI, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE

1. Thank you, Sven, for giving me the floor. I commend you and your team for organising this Arria Formula meeting.
2. I also thank the briefers for their perspectives.
3. The negative impact of the pandemic on children in armed conflict has been well articulated by the briefers, and further highlighted in the study prepared by the office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Children and Armed Conflict.
4. The pandemic and its attendant counter measures have increased violations and deprivations against children in many ways including:
 - a. The disruption of essential services such as child protection;
 - b. The closure of schools has increased the exposure of children to abusers;
 - c. The interruption in the prevention plans and services intended to prevent violations against children.
5. We also note with great concern the continuing acts of terrorism in different regions.
6. Terrorist groups such as the Al-Shabaab and Islamic State Central African Province (ISCAP) are killing and maiming civilians. They continue to launch

attacks that do not discriminate against targeting children, and sometimes are directed against schools, hospitals and other infrastructure critical to children.

7. They continue to radicalise and recruit children and youth, which I consider to endanger their victim's mental health and long-term safety and security.
8. In order to ensure that children's rights in conflict situations, especially in the context of COVID-19 pandemic, are secured, let me lay out six imperatives:
 - i. Ceasefire and peace negotiations must be seized as opportunities to strengthen mechanisms to protect children. Parties to conflict are called upon to adhere to the Secretary-General's appeal for a global ceasefire. The Security Council should seek to increase the costs to parties who do not heed the calls for a ceasefire.
 - ii. The multilateral system should do more to ensure universal access to COVID-19 vaccines. Lacking this, the countries that are in situations of conflict may be overwhelmed by the pandemic and its impact on the economy and public health systems. This will further deteriorate the safety of children.
 - iii. Child protection officers and organisations should be considered essential personnel and prioritised for vaccine access.
 - iv. More tools to protect student safety and security should be designed while schools are in recess, and teachers trained so that they are deployed once there is reopening. In conflict situations, the scope of humanitarian assistance should partner with technology companies to deliver affordable and accessible digital solutions for schools and families.
 - v. Member States should incorporate child protection concerns when designing and enforcing measures to contain the pandemic. And they should ensure that child protection services can continue safely and unimpeded.
 - vi. To address the increased threat from online abusers, recruiters and radicalisers, states should deploy digital reporting platforms and increase training of children and families in digital safety and security.
9. Let me conclude by reaffirming Kenya's commitment to the protection of children in conflict situations.

I thank you.