

*The Permanent Mission
of the Kingdom of Morocco
to the United Nations
New York*



البعثة الدائمة للمملكة المغربية
 لدى الأمم المتحدة
 نيويورك

STATEMENT OF THE KINGDOM OF MOROCCO

**AT THE ARRIA MEETING ON:
THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON CAAC**

MAY 7, 2021

Mr. President,

At the outset, I would to thank Estonia for organizing this highly important meeting, dedicated to the impact of COVID-19 on children in armed conflict, and which will, undoubtedly, allow for a continuous international mobilization to protect children, prevent them from being attacked, enrolled or sent into combat. I thank all the briefers for their presentations.

The Kingdom of Morocco would like to highlight the following elements:

- * Although the full effects of COVID-19 are not yet entirely known, the pandemic has had disproportionate and profound, and most likely long-lasting, consequences on the health, well-being and education of children, in particular children in situations of armed conflicts.

- * The fundamental rights of children, particularly those living in situations of armed conflict, must be respected, protected, affirmed, recognized and considered as a priority in every response to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and in post recovery efforts.

- * We would like to stress once more the importance of the Secretary-General's Appeals aimed at saving lives, protecting societies and better recovering, inviting Member States to give priority to education, food, health and safety of vulnerable people, including children in situations of armed conflict, amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

- * In the midst of this global health crisis, the International Community needs to reaffirm once again the political commitment and the will to guarantee the rights of all children, in all circumstances, and to protect them from violence, sexual exploitation and abuse, early and forced child marriage and other harmful practices, as well as guarantee their rights to education, mental and physical health and well-being and ensure their full potential and development.

- * The most vulnerable children who need specific protection are particularly those living in conflict situations, in refugee camps, in detention, in slums or on the streets, as well as the homeless, the migrants, the internally displaced children, the minorities, the poorest and those living with a disability.

- * If the impact of COVID-19 on children, especially those impacted by armed conflict, is not addressed immediately, the global efforts and the positive results made so far to protect and improve the lives of millions of children around the world would be at stake.

- * Also, it is important to ensure that children in situations of armed conflict benefit from the COVID-19 vaccination. They cannot be left behind.

- * In addition, Member States and civil society actors, including NGOs, and National Human Rights Institutions should work together and draw lessons from the experiences of COVID-19 crisis, in order to develop plans that guarantee the continuity of essential protective services in potential future crises and ensure monitoring, reporting and responding to serious violations against children.

- * As a State Party to the Convention on the Rights of the Child and its three optional protocols, as well as the Paris Principles, the Safe Schools Declaration and the Vancouver Principles, the Kingdom of Morocco is, and will remain, fully committed to the protection and promotion of all children's rights, and will use every opportunity to reaffirm this unwavering commitment.

- * Finally, we thank the Special Representative of the Secretary General for Children and Armed Conflict, UNICEF as well as all UN governmental and non-governmental entities that endeavor in difficult situations to promote and protect the right of children in armed conflict.

I thank you for your attention.