

**Remarks by H.E. Mr. Kairat Umarov,
Permanent Representative of the Republic of Kazakhstan
at the UN GA Informal Meeting on Children and Armed Conflict
(February 8, 2017, New York)**

Mr. President,

My delegation thanks you, SRSB Leila Zerrougui, H.E. Ambassador Olof Skoog and all the panellists for highlighting the need for strengthening the protection of children in armed conflict and commend SRSB Office, UNICEF, and the Security Council's Working Group for the coordinated work, which led to a notable progress in reducing the brutalities and suffering inflicted on children, as well as, in their recruitment as child soldiers.

However, the alarming number of abducted or victimized children and those rendered as refugees and destitute, compels us to act speedily to prevent grave violations and seek measures to rehabilitate them with lost opportunities.

The security and safety of children are primary requisites for Agenda 2030 and must be overarching considerations in all the 17 SDGs.

Kazakhstan therefore suggests some salient steps for consideration.

Firstly, our efforts on protection of children in armed conflict need to be better coordinated with government authorities, UN Country Teams on the ground and regional structures, including AU, EU, OSCE, OAS, OIC, Arab League. We must also continue to harness the support of the NGO community, like the Watch List on Children and Armed Conflict, Save the Children International and Human Rights Watch.

Secondly, the grave situation of children calls for rigorously enforcing the Action Plans that end not only all forms of violence, but most of all bring an end to impunity of the perpetrators.

Thirdly, it is important to include child protection criteria in the renewal or establishment of relevant UN SC Sanctions Committees, as well as, in peace

and negotiating processes, especially with non-State armed groups. Children also should be a part of the UN Global Counter Terrorism Strategy, giving attention to the girl child.

Fourthly, every effort should be made to protect schools from attacks to ensure safe access for children to education. Thus, all conflicting parties should uphold the Guidelines of the Safe Schools Declaration, and the same holds good for hospitals, emergency and medical evacuation services.

Fifthly, we need to invest more in education and employment of children. Funding gaps must be addressed in long-term rehabilitation and reintegration needs, with adequate monitoring and reporting.

Investments in development and poverty reducing, providing better conditions of living and meeting socio-economic needs are a way to stabilize and advance societies and build the rule of law, through South-South and Trilateral Cooperation.

Kazakhstan stands ready to join the international community to protect children - the most vulnerable in times of armed conflict.

Thank you!