Statement
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The Mission of Egypt

Agenda Item 65: "Promotion and protection of rights of the child"

Third Committee

New York, October 18, 2013

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Mr. Chairman,

I would like to express my appreciation for the valuable presentations and statements delivered under this agenda item.

During the past two decades, real progress has been made around the world for the promotion and protection of the rights of the child, in areas of education, nutrition, and healthcare. However, with less than 800 days to the due date for the fulfillment of the MDGs in 2015, major challenges such as under-five child High mortality, gender gap in education, immunization and vaccination, violence against children, trafficking in children, disability, and child labour pose a serious threat to the welfare of children worldwide. In this regard, I would like to make the following remarks:

First: Egypt stresses the importance of putting the status of children at the core of the Post-2015 Development Agenda to address the unfinished agenda for children.

Second: Education is both an international obligation and a fundamental right that must be realized for all children. Last week, the United Nations marked the second International Day of the Girl Child by calling for innovation to get more girls in schools and improve the quality of learning for all children. This innovative approach should include mentorship programmes to help children acquire critical work and leadership skills and facilitate their transition from school to adulthood, including deploying mobile education technology to reach children in remote areas in developing countries.

Third: There is a need for strengthening strategic partnerships among governments, regional organizations and institutions, and the UN special procedures mandate-holders in order to consolidate national actions for children.

Fourth: Violence against children, in particular in situations of armed conflicts remains widespread and alarming. Egypt commends the recent initiative launched by the UNICEF to end violence against children and calls for the inclusion of children with disabilities who are more vulnerable and exposed to a higher risk of violence.

Egypt strongly condemns the involvement of children in armed conflicts either as combatants or exploited victims. We stress that criminalizing all violations against children in armed conflicts, and ending the impunity of the perpetrators is an important deterrence against the re-occurrence of such crimes. Egypt is concerned about the issue of landmines in armed conflicts or explosive remnants of war as a major factor behind disability among children. The challenges facing children with disabilities and their families are rarely acknowledged in armed conflict situations.
Mr. Chairman,

Despite of the challenges Egypt faces, we are on track to reach the Millennium Development Goals. Egypt is likely to achieve MDG 2 on universal primary education and on track to reach MDGs 4 & 5 on reducing child mortality and improving maternal health.

The Executive Board of the UNICEF approved in June 2013 a new Country Program Document for Egypt (2013-2017). It reflects an existing, strong and successful partnership between Egypt and UNICEF for decades. It builds on the achievements made during the previous programs. It also identifies results-oriented actions, with the aim to ensure the effective response to Egypt’s development priorities and needs. Egypt counts on its strong partnership with UNICEF to contribute to the national efforts aiming at promoting and protecting the rights of the child.

Violence against children cannot be justified nor tolerated. The Egyptian laws prohibit all forms of violence against children. Many national programs are fully dedicated to ending all forms of violence against children, particularly trafficking in children, child marriage and female genital mutilation, in accordance with Egypt’s international obligations. The adoption of resolution 67/146 on intensifying global efforts for eliminating the female genital mutilation, submitted by the African Group last year, reflects the strong African commitment towards the elimination of all harmful practices that affect girls' health. Egypt commends the role played by the joint UNICEF-UNFPA program to eradicate FGM in this regard.

Egypt pays a special attention to homeless children. An initiative entitled “children without shelter” has been launched recently to address the grassroots of the problem of “Street Children”, in full collaboration with the private sector and civil society.

Mr. Chairman,

I conclude by renewing Egypt’s strong commitment towards the promotion and protection of children’s rights.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman