

**IPHRC Message on ‘*Universal Children’s Day 2017*’ calls for intensification of international cooperation, advocacy and legislative reforms to eliminate violence against children and secure child rights in all situations**

**Jeddah 20<sup>th</sup> November 2017:** The OIC Independent Permanent Human Rights Commission (IPHRC) joins the international community in commemorating the ‘*Universal Children’s Day 2017*’ with an emphatic appeal for a concerted global action to eliminate all forms of violence against the children and secure their rights in a comprehensive manner, in compliance with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

The violation of child rights, including violence against children, not only has immediate life-threatening consequences for the affected children but also impacts on the resilience of communities. Therefore, it is the duty of every State to protect the interests of the children, including those in situations of armed conflict and other natural/manmade emergencies, from all forms of human rights violations including physical and psychological violence through effective legislative, administrative and judicial means including international cooperation.

The violence against children is neither justifiable nor condonable. The protracted humanitarian crises in Occupied Palestinian Territories, Yemen, Syria, Myanmar as well as other occupation and conflict situations have had a devastating impact on the well-being, physical security and future of girls and boys. The international community has to assume and fulfil its due obligations and responsibilities to rectify the situation of refugee children and those facing different emergencies, by providing them with immediate humanitarian assistance and in the long term a safe life to exercise their fundamental human rights especially in the areas of education and health.

The OIC Member States, cognizant of the importance of redeeming the future of children, have placed special emphasis on securing the child rights in its revised Charter and 2<sup>nd</sup> Ten Year Program of Action 2025. Recently, the OIC Council of Foreign Ministers decided to review the OIC ‘*Covenant on the Rights of the Child in Islam*’ with a view to bringing it in conformity with the international instruments concerning child rights to deal with the emerging challenges.

The protection and promotion of child rights is among the priority areas of the work of the Commission and regularly dwells on this theme in its work. During its 10<sup>th</sup> Regular Session, the IPHRC held a thematic debate on the theme of ‘*Protecting and Promoting Rights of Children during situations of conflict, emergencies and disasters*’ and in its outcome document urged the Member States to develop appropriate national child rights policies that ensure the elimination of all forms of violence against children, in particular the girl child, as a priority, in their respective national development plans. IPHRC further requests Member States to regularly include the progress made in this regard during their Universal Periodic Review in the Human Rights Council as well as national reviews of their implementation of Sustainable Development Goals.

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