



**STATEMENT
OF THE
KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA**

**Before
the Third Committee
67th Session of
The United Nations General Assembly**

Item (66)

“PROMOTION AND PROTECTION AND THE RIGHTS OF CHILDREN”

Delivered By

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New York, 18th October/2012

Unofficial Translation

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Mr. Chairman,

The Government of my country would like to convey its appreciation to His Excellency Mr. Henry Macdonald, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Suriname for assuming the Chairmanship of the Committee during the Session.

Mr. Chairman,

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has, and still does, pay special attention to the protection and rights of children in accordance with the provisions of the Islamic Sharia and the basic laws of governance which stipulate that "the state insures the strengthening of the family and preserves its Arab and Islamic values and the welfare of all its members, as well as creating the right environment to develop their potentials." The laws of the Kingdom guarantee the rights of children and exert all efforts to give every child all possible opportunities to enjoy his/her rights. The establishment of the National Committee for Children in 1979 is proof of the government's concern for children; this Committee coordinates all the efforts in the fields of education, medical care, social welfare and recreation, It also coordinates a national strategy for children which helps concerned authorities to enhance the potential of children. For this objective, King Abdulaziz Institute was established to take care of talented children at an early age where special curricula were written to develop their talents.

Mr. Chairman,

On the national level, the Government of my country pays special attention to the rights of children and makes available the required means for development, socially and educationally, through free schools, starting with kindergarten to higher education. It also has established cultural centers, sport clubs, child institutions, libraries and media public programmes to develop their skills and creative abilities; it allocated budgets needed to achieve that.

Since the family is the core of society and the nurturer of its children, the regulations in the Kingdom dictate that parents are responsible for the welfare of their children, and protecting them from physical and mental harm, they are also responsible for respecting their feelings, and protecting their dignity, loving and caring for them, without exploitation, in accordance with the provisions of the Islamic Sharia.

The Kingdom insures the protection of children with disabilities and those with chronic diseases and has established rehabilitation centers for such children and assisted their families with special stipends to make sure that they are well cared for.

Special care centers were established for orphaned children and many charitable organizations around the Kingdom care for children and supervise charity work these organizations exceed 500 centers and agencies.

The concerned agencies in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia established plans and strategies in the field of child health care which aims to reduce child mortality below five years of age and for infants, the authorities insure that all children are vaccinated to guarantee protection against polio, help children with psychological problems, and the availability of health and rehabilitation services for them. The Government supports school clinics and health screening before marriage. The government also helps those who are deaf, hard of hearing and blind.

Mr. Chairman,

Government regulations in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia prohibit and criminalize violence against children, and the regulations provide the mechanisms to protect children from physical, sexual and psychological abuse. They deal with all emotional, medical and educational neglect. The Government educates the public about the rights of children. In October 2009, a national electronic register was established with coordination among the government and non-governmental agencies to monitor abuse and neglect cases. The register also documented and aimed to resolve them.

Government children's hospitals were empowered to document all suspect cases of violence against children and electronically coordinate with the concerned authorities to follow-up with the necessary steps.

A telephone hotline was established to report all incidents of family violence, its aim is protecting women and children from any violence and help families and educate them on protecting their members.

Mr. Chairman,

On the international level, the concern of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is evident in its ratifications of conventions and treaties related to the rights of children. The Kingdom ratified the 1996 Convention on the Rights of Children and its two Optional Protocols concerning children in armed conflicts and trafficking in children and child prostitution. The Kingdom ratified the 2001 convention regarding child labor and took special measures to eliminate such abuse. In 2009, a new law prohibited trafficking in persons which punishes child labor and their exploitation in begging. In addition, the Kingdom ratified the Convention on the Rights of Children in Islam, which was approved by the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, and the Kingdom approved the ten-year plan that was adopted by the Islamic Summit in its Third Extraordinary Session, was held in Mecca in 2005, and included provisions regarding children.

Mr. Chairman,

What the Member States offers to children should not make us forget the suffering of children in the occupied Palestinian territories, including the killing, torture, and the violations of the simplest rights by the Israeli occupying forces. We call upon the international community to interfere in safeguarding the rights of children in all areas of conflict in the Middle East, by adhering to all related international treaties.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.