



Statement on behalf of the OIC group delivered by Amb. Bilal Ahmad
during annual full-day meeting on the rights of the child
HRC 55th Session
14 March 2024

(Theme: Rights of the child and inclusive social protection)

Mr. President,

The OIC group thanks the panelists for their contributions. We also thank the Office of the High Commissioner for convening this meeting.

The OIC member states attach high priority to the well-being of children as well as a safe and secure environment for their physical and mental growth. These are cherished traditions and values rooted in Islamic teachings and law.

The OIC reiterates the important role of family as the natural and fundamental unit of society in ensuring children's well-being and growth, free from violence or discrimination.

Islam enjoins families to raise children with love and compassion, and provide, shelter, food, health and education without any discrimination.

Unfortunately, Mr. President, these values, which are shared by all humanity, are glaringly absent from the present scene in the OPT, where all the rights envisaged under the CRC (UN Convention on the Rights of the Child) have been violated by the Israeli occupation authorities.

Attacks on Gaza population have already killed more than 30,000 Palestinians; nearly half of them children. Nearly 20,000 children are without a parent in an environment where traditional social protections have collapsed. Thousands more are wounded, orphaned or simply unaccounted for.

The fate of children in Gaza has always been precarious. But widespread destruction and use of starvation as a weapon of war have made a bad situation even worse. With the war in its sixth month, and with the cumulative damage of



56 years of occupation and 16 years of blockade, we are witnessing what amounts to the complete destruction of a generation of Palestinian children.

Madam Vice President,

We urge the relevant UN Specialised Agencies to develop adequate social protections for the children of Palestine, starting from their right to life and respect for the child's parents and cultural identity.

We reiterate our call for an immediate ceasefire and unhindered humanitarian access.

Thank you.