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وزارة الأسرة والتضامن  
والمساواة والتنمية الاجتماعية  
ROYAUME DU MAROC-MINISTÈRE DE LA FAMILLE, DE LA SOLIDARITÉ, DE L'ÉGALITÉ ET DU DÉVELOPPEMENT SOCIAL



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**Under the high patronage of His Majesty King Mohammed VI, May Allah preserve him,**

**The Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ISESCO),**

in cooperation with

**the Ministry of Family, Solidarity, Equality and Social Development  
of the Kingdom of Morocco,**

and coordination with

**the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC),**

holds

## **the Fifth Islamic Conference of MINISTERS IN CHARGE OF CHILDHOOD**

«Towards a Safe Childhood»



**Rabat Declaration  
"Towards protecting the Muslim world children  
from violence"**



## **Rabat Declaration**

### **“Towards protecting the Muslim world children from violence”**

**We**, the heads of Member States’ delegations taking part in the Fifth Islamic Conference of Ministers in Charge of Childhood held, **under the high patronage of His Majesty King Mohammed VI of Morocco**, under the theme **“Towards a Safe Childhood”**, at the headquarters of the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ISESCO) in Rabat, Kingdom of Morocco, on 21-22 February 2018,

**Guided by** the teachings of Islam, which advocate that children should receive due care and be granted their full rights; and that all children, girls and boys alike, do have the right to live in dignity and thrive to reach their full potential;

**Reaffirming** the main provisions of the Covenant on the Rights of the Child in Islam, the Declaration on the Rights and Care of the Child in Islam, the International Convention on the Rights of the Child and its Optional Protocols, the United Nations Declaration on Sustainable Development Goals, the goals of “A World Fit for Children” document, the recommendations of the United Nations Secretary General Study on Violence against Children; and the resolutions of the United Nations and other international organizations on safeguarding and protecting child rights, and the necessary promotion of their full ratification and enforcement, in a bid to achieve maximum protection for children;

**Recalling** the commitments contained in the **“Rabat Declaration”**, issued by the First Islamic Conference of Ministers in Charge of Childhood, held in Rabat, Kingdom of Morocco, in November 2005; the **“Khartoum Declaration”**, issued by the Second Islamic Conference of Ministers in Charge of Childhood, held in Khartoum, Republic of the Sudan, in February 2009; the **“Tripoli Declaration”** issued by the Third Islamic Conference of Ministers in Charge of Childhood, held in Tripoli, Libya, on February 2011; and the **“Baku Declaration”**, adopted by the Fourth Islamic Conference of Ministers in Charge of Childhood, held in Baku, Republic of Azerbaijan, in November 2013;

**Guided by** the General Framework for Protecting Muslim World Children from Violence and its General Guidelines, issued by the Fifth Islamic Conference of Ministers in Charge of Childhood;

**Affirming that** child rights are inherent and unalienable and that the main principles of the child’s best interests, non-discrimination and the right for life, survival, growth and



inclusion must be upheld in all child-related issues and priority be accorded to most violence-prone categories ;

**Lauding** the efforts of civil society organizations in supporting Member States' governmental institutions in drafting and implementing childhood promotion policies and programmes in all aspects of social life, and the organizations' role as a **key partner** in promoting child issues and safeguarding their rights and needs for survival, growth and protection against all forms of violence;

**Condemning** the violations of the basic and human rights of Palestinian children under the Israeli occupation, and underscoring the necessity to implement the United Nations resolutions and international legitimacy to end this occupation, and enforce the provisions of the Geneva Convention Relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, particularly children;

**Denouncing** the forced displacement of the Rohingya children as well as the psychological and physical violence against them and the deprivation of their basic rights and health, educational and social services, amid the aggressive and inhuman practices of the authorities in Myanmar; and call upon the international community and its bodies and specialized institutions to extend protection to these children and secure their return with their families to their country and enable them to enjoy their rights as citizens receiving proper treatment based on justice, equality and human dignity.

**Recognizing** the primordial role of families, including the extended ones, in caring for children and protecting them against violence, and the subsequent measures necessary for upholding and supporting the family institution as a child-care provider.

**Acknowledging** the paramount importance of the multifaceted comprehensive approach which focuses on the **protection** of children against all forms of violence by providing public health, education and other social services, and its role in the prevention of violent practices against children and **direct intervention** to redress the damage through defined mechanisms, treatment, **and rehabilitation**, especially in cases of violence in public service institutions, including schools, care centers, residential homes and judicial and security institutions;

**Appreciating** the efforts exerted by all Member States, since their accession to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, to improve children's situation and secure their best interest and rights for survival, growth and protection against different forms of violence, embodied particularly in their commitment to take a number of measures and develop mechanisms and programmes likely to improve the situation of children;

**Expressing our commitment** to extend **full protection to all child groups** against all forms of violence, exploitation and neglect at many levels, namely in the family, school and other education institutions, care institutions, correctional centers, detention and apprehension facilities, workplaces, streets, the media and society at large;



## **Declare our determination to:**

### **I. Invigorate international commitments through:**

Ratification, if not done yet, of the Covenant on the Rights of the Child in Islam, the Optional Protocols to the Convention of the Rights of the Child, and all the relevant international and regional human rights instruments that provide protection to children, namely the United Nations Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Punishment or Treatment and its optimal protocol; the respective Conventions of the International Labor Organization (ILO) No. 138 on the Minimum Working Age, and No. 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labor; the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC) and its supplementing Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children.

### **II. Enhance national measures related to child protection through:**

- 1. Developing** national strategies and action plans focused on countering all forms of violence against children, in line with the relevant legislations and laws, and guided by the General Framework for Protection of Islamic World Children against Violence and its General Guidelines, and the relevant international and regional instruments,
- 2. Addressing** the underlying causes of violence against children; allocating adequate resources to deal with risk factors, and protect from and prevent violence; and taking these causes into account when drafting socioeconomic policies that tackle poverty, inequality, social disparities, urban overcrowding and other factors undermining social stability and cohesion, while addressing the immediate risk factors, such as the lack of parent-child attachment and family breakdown, etc.
- 3. Striving** to ban all forms of violence against children, including corporal punishment; harmful traditional practices; and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment and punishment in all settings, be it in the family, the educational, care, judicial or correctional institutions, workplaces or local communities.
- 4. Taking into account** gender issues when devising and implementing anti-violence policies and programmes to address the dangers of indiscriminate violence facing boys and girls.
- 5. Raising** awareness of child rights and non-violence culture through the development of curricula and educational programmes, organization of public information campaigns to sensitize the public, including children themselves, about the harmful effects of violence on children; encouraging the media, new ICTs, and civil society organizations to spread child rights culture and promote non-violence values and culture to redress conduct and transform attitudes that condone and normalize violence against children, including stereotypical gender roles, discrimination, and acceptance of physical punishment and harmful traditional practices.



- 6. Ensuring** the wide participation of and for children by respecting their views in all issues pertaining to their rights, to protecting them from and preventing violence against them, as well as to countering and monitoring this social ill; supporting and encouraging children's organizations and child-led initiatives to address violence against them; promoting partnership with families, educational institutions, civil society organizations, private sector and relevant international and regional organizations; and striving to foster shared solidarity responsibility and set up community networks and partnerships to monitor all forms of violence and protect children therefrom.
- 7. Providing** social rehabilitation and integration services by extending accessible, child-sensitive and comprehensive social and health services, including pre-hospital and emergency care and legal assistance to children and, where appropriate, their families when violence is detected or disclosed; and designing health, criminal justice, and social services in a way that meets children's specific needs,
- 8. Consolidating** and building the capacities of all those working with and for children or families and providing them with initial and in-service training which imparts knowledge and respect for children's rights, especially in kindergartens and primary schools, in order to prevent, detect and respond to violence against children; and formulating and implementing clear codes of conduct, and standards of practices that cover the prohibition and rejection of all forms of violence,
- 9. Establishing** adequate practical systems and services for reporting violence against children, including safe, efficient and accessible mechanisms through which children and their representatives can report violence against children; ensuring that all children, including those in care and justice institutions, are aware of the existence of such mechanisms, through which children can report abuse, talk in confidence and seek support and advice; considering the creation of new methods of violence reporting using modern technologies; striving to establish the systems of the ombudsman, child rights commissioner or child protection officer, pursuant to the Principles relating to the Status of National Institutions (the Paris Principles); and coordinating closely with other agencies dealing with public health and child protection issues, making sure that the institution concerned has a clear mandate to monitor child rights at the national and local levels and, where appropriate, has the competence to receive and investigate complaints of violations of children's rights.
- 10. Developing** and implementing a methodical system for national data collection, preparing research on violence against children, analyzing them using national indicators based on internationally-agreed standards, and disseminating them to monitor the progress made; and creating and maintaining, if not currently in place, birth, death and marriage data registries with full national coverage, as well as data on children without parental care and children in the criminal justice system and other cases of violence against children.



### **III. Implement, coordinate and follow up by:**

- 1. Entrusting ISESCO** with sustaining action in the field of childhood, in coordination with the OIC General Secretariat; and invite it to follow-up to the implementation of this Declaration with the competent parties in Member States,
- 2. Inviting ISESCO** to enhance its cooperation with UNICEF and other competent institutions for monitoring, protecting and improving the situation of children victims of violence, in coordination with the Member States and the relevant international, Islamic and regional partners,
- 3. Acclaiming** the valuable efforts of ISESCO in service of childhood issues in the Islamic world; lauding the programmes and activities the Organization conducted for the benefit of children in Member States; and **inviting** it to sustain such efforts under its action plans and relevant specialized strategies, in accordance with the resolutions, recommendations, and reference documents adopted by the sessions of the Islamic Conference of Ministers in Charge of Childhood held so far,
- 4. Commending** the humanitarian activities and programmes undertaken by the OIC General Secretariat (Department of Humanitarian, Cultural and Social Affairs) towards the advancement of children, particularly those affected by natural disasters, abuse and conflicts, and orphans, by providing food, shelter, education and other necessary services,
- 5. Inviting** the OIC General Secretariat and ISESCO General Directorate to submit this Declaration along with the Conference's resolutions to the OIC Council of Foreign Ministers and to the Islamic Summit Conference, and disseminate them to the relevant Arab, Islamic and international organizations,
- 6. Thanking** the Kingdom of Morocco, as represented by the Ministry of Family, Solidarity, Equality and Social Development, for providing the necessary means and facilitations to hold the Fifth Islamic Conference of Ministers in Charge of Childhood in the best of conditions; and expressing the participants' gratitude for His Majesty, King Mohammed VI, for his patronage to the Conference and the kind hospitality accorded to them.