

## **74<sup>th</sup> Session of the United Nations General Assembly**

### **Agenda Item 66: HLM on the occasion of 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child**

#### **INDIA STATEMENT**

By

Ms. Paulomi Tripathi, First Secretary

**21 November 2019**

Mr. President,

Thirty years ago we made a promise to the children of the world.

The Convention on the Rights of the Child was a landmark development in many ways.

For the first time, it was recognized that the children have the same human rights as adults, as well as specific rights that give them special status as dependents.

Childhood is a special time. Children must be nurtured so that they flourish with dignity.

The Convention recognizes a child's right to education, health and nutrition, to clean water and sanitation, and right to safety in their homes and outside.

The near universal ratification of the Convention has created an unprecedented momentum. The guiding principles of the Convention such as non-discrimination, the right to protection, and acting in the best interest of the child have been incorporated in laws and policies in many countries.

We are encouraged by the significant gains in the area of rights of the child, experienced over the last three decades. The global rate for under-five mortality and the proportion of undernourished children have reduced significantly. More children are now going to schools and have access to healthcare, medicines and vaccines.

However, significant challenges remain.

More than half of the world's poorest persons are children. Devastating impacts of climate change threaten their future prospects.

Children are disproportionately affected by terrorism and armed conflicts. The number of child victims of human trafficking has doubled over a decade. They are trafficked for sexual exploitation, forced labour or for recruitment as child soldiers.

Rights can be proclaimed and policies can be formulated. However, unless the living condition of the child is improved along with the family and community he or she belongs to, our efforts are meaningless.

Full and effective implementation of the 2030 Agenda has a critical role in realizing every child's right to a safe and dignified life promised by the Convention.

Going ahead, one of the challenges to the implementation of the Convention comes in the context of child rights in the cyberspace.

Exposure to the digital environment is reshaping childhood by creating both opportunities and unprecedented risks. Exposure to cyberspace is impacting cognition, behavior as well as physical and mental health of children.

We need to protect children from exposure to inappropriate contents and bullying, and preserve their privacy in cyberspace.

We need measures such as strengthening digital literacy, including enhancing understanding of the digital environment by children, parents and caregivers, and stronger frameworks to moderate contents.

Consulting with children and taking into account their unique experiences are important to develop effective measures in this context.

Rapidly evolving, transnational nature of these socio-technological challenges also call for galvanized international cooperation.

The norms and standards set by CRC remain the foundation for deliberations and actions in this context.

Mr. President,

India is an early signatory to the Convention, and two of its Optional Protocols.

As we celebrate 30 years of the adoption of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, as the home to nearly 472 million children, India remains committed to every child's right to live life of dignity, safety and care, the right to protection against discrimination and exploitation, as well as moral and material abandonment, and to enjoy equal opportunity to build a future that every child deserves.

I thank you.