



The Permanent Mission of the Republic of  
Kenya to the United Nations – New York  
Security Council - 2021-2022

HIGH-LEVEL EVENT ON STRENGTHENING MONITORING, REPORTING  
AND RESPONSE TO THE ABDUCTION OF CHILDREN

MONDAY, 18 JULY 2022 (10AM)

STATEMENT BY AMB. MARTIN KIMANI, PERMANENT  
REPRESENTATIVE

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**Mr. President,**

I thank the Permanent Mission of Italy for convening this important event which Kenya is pleased to co-sponsor alongside Italy, Brazil, Canada, Malaysia and Qatar.

I also thank the SRSG Ms. Gamba, and the Deputy Director of UNICEF Mr. Abdi for their remarks, as well as Ms. M’Jid, Ms. Mullaly, Mr. Swan, Ms. Triggs and Ms. Ward for their insightful interventions.

Kenya is concerned by the increasing number of cases of abduction of children in recent years. The estimate of 3,202 UN verified violations against children last year probably understates the extent of this problem.

Nevertheless, it should serve as an important wakeup call on the need for intensified efforts by the international community as well as national and regional mechanisms to protect children.

Allow me to underline three points to strengthen the protection of children from abductions.

**First:** The increasing cases of abductions is largely attributed to terrorist groups. As Mr. Swan indicated, Al-Shabaab, an Al-Qaeda affiliate based in Somalia continues to abduct, radicalize, exploit and abuse children and youth.

Children are the preferred targets not just because of their vulnerability but also they are more easily indoctrinated and trained to carry out much worse atrocities against their communities in the Horn of Africa and other regions.

It is critical to design counter-terrorism and countering violent extremism programmes that prioritise the protection of children from falling into the hands of terrorists.

**Second:** Considering the persistent resource gaps, particularly for conflict and post-conflict reconstruction situations, we encourage the provision of support through sustainable financial and technical assistance. Special partnerships should be forged between countries that have a special commitment to the well-being of children and those countries where children are most threatened.

We should have in theatres affected by terrorism, better design of deradicalisation and disengagement programmes that are able to identify children under threat of recruitment and abduction early for immediate response.

The terrorist and militant groups like Al-Shabaab and Boko Haram should be held accountable. It should be made clear to terrorists that abduction of children will be responded to using security tools and will have political consequences. To that end, the UN Security Council has a duty to use the tools under its control more effectively in situation where children are being abducted, particularly in terrorist situations.

**Third:** it is important to support national authorities particularly those in fragile settings to develop and establish national strategies for the protection of children in situations of armed conflict or terrorism. A regional approach, with the involvement of the international community, should be emphasized.

**In conclusion,** I reaffirm the importance Kenya places on the rights of the child, and we do so by placing children at the centre of our social development and security agenda.

**I thank you.**