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الوفد الدائم لدولة الكويت

لدى الأمم المتحدة

جنيف

**Opening Statement
by H.E. Mr. Mansour AL-OTAIBI
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**Head of the Delegation of the State of Kuwait
to the 47th Session of the
Committee on the Rights of the Child**

**for examining
the reports of the State of Kuwait concerning the
Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights
of the Child on the Sale of Children, Child
Prostitution and Child Pornography,
and the Optional Protocol to the Convention on
the Rights of the Child on the Involvement of
Children in Armed Conflicts**

**Thursday 24/01/2008
Palais Wilson, Geneva**

Statement of the Head of the Kuwaiti Delegation to the 47th Session of the Committee on the Rights of the Child

First I would like to express the gratitude and appreciation of my delegation to the President of the Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC) Mrs. Yanghee Lee, for hosting us in order to present and discuss the reports of the State of Kuwait concerning the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflicts and the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography.

We hope that our presence today will contribute in meeting all the Committee's requests for clarifications and inquiries and for providing additional information about the laws and regulations that the State of Kuwait has adopted in order to bring into effect and implement both Protocols. This occasion gives us also an important opportunity to be informed of any other observation of this honourable Committee in the interest of our common objectives in implementing the rights of the child, guaranteeing measures of prevention and protection and standing up to our responsibilities.

The participation of Kuwait through the present delegation which represents the different interested institutions and sectors inside the country, reflects its attachment and concern to bring into action the provisions and objectives stipulated in both Protocols, and embodies its commitment and endeavours to adopt the adequate legislations and measures.

Furthermore, it is my pleasure to introduce the members of my delegation:

The State of Kuwait has ensured a constitutional protection by including a number of provisions in its Constitution, setting solid guarantees and basis for the adoption of measures concerning the protection of the child and providing the main foundations for the Kuwaiti society built on the principles of justice, freedom, equality, cooperation and compassion. Article (9) stipulates that family is the foundation of society under the wing of which mother and child are protected. Article (10) states that youth is under the protection of the State which commits to safeguard it from exploitation and moral, physical and spiritual negligence.

With regards to the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography, the State of Kuwait has ratified a number of conventions emanating from the International Labour Organization, such as the Convention no. 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour and Convention no. 138 on the Minimum Age; it has adopted as well, a number of legislations and measures and enclosed them in its criminal law which contains legal texts and provides harsh sanctions against perpetrators of violations of the rights of the child. The State of Kuwait has undertaken, in this regard, practical measures in order to unveil cases of child prostitution and child pornography.

The Kuwaiti legislator has inserted the notion of sale within the crime of trade in human beings as slavery, as well as he incriminated those who practiced trade in children by selling, buying, offering to sell or donating, as acts of slavery.

As for the Protocol on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflicts, the national legislations reflect the concern of the State of Kuwait in guaranteeing the non-

involvement of children in armed conflicts in conformity with the Protocol's objectives.

The importance of the issue of the involvement of children in armed conflicts requires a special approach and attention as it implies defining the guarantee for the protection of children and the correct response to their particular needs, as well as putting an end to the mobilization of children, support education in situations of conflict, assist the displaced internally, all through the implementation of the present Protocol and the development of a strong cooperation with the various institutions of the civil society, as well as by reinforcing the build-up of national capacities between the international organizations and the non-governmental organizations.

The State of Kuwait believes in the importance of preparing the child and educating him by virtue of the basic principles of rejecting violence, intolerance and hatred and promoting peace, dignity, tolerance, freedom and equality without discrimination of any kind.

My country is perfectly conscious of the considerable negative effects that could result from the hindrance or non observation of the conventions related to the rights of the child especially in the aftermath of the brutal Iraqi invasion in August 1990 by the former regime in Iraq.

Despite all of that and even after that abhorrent invasion, the State of Kuwait did not condescend on its principles and did not recourse in any way to children mobilization, at a time where that offensive occupation has engendered psychological, physical and social sequels, which encouraged the state to create a number of specialized institutions to that effect, namely the Social Development Bureau. In this context,

Kuwait supports all international endeavours aiming at eradicating the mobilization of children and their involvement in armed conflicts.

Madam President, honourable members of this Committee,

There is no doubt that providing education and combating poverty are two essential elements in promoting the rights of the child. With a view of attaining the pursued objective, my country believes in the importance of a cooperation on the international, regional and national levels for implementing the conventions, programs and activities related to the child, either through collaboration with the concerned international organizations (UNICEF, UNESCO, WHO) or through bilateral cooperation and non-governmental organizations (the Kuwaiti Association for the Development of the Arab Child), and the regional programs and centres (the Centre for Mother and Child of the State of Kuwait). Consequently, the State of Kuwait has always sought to make contributions to support child programs, especially those which have social interactions and positive effects on the various development programs, and also those which strengthen national capacities as well as executive and technical cooperation.

My delegation considers spending on child programs as investment not consumption and that investing in fields related to the child is the most effective solution to break the circle of poverty.

My delegation would like to stress the importance of the role of the civil society institutions in promoting the rights of the child, as well as their efforts in combating child oppression, which are considered as an educational challenge.

The State of Kuwait has started implementing cultural and educational programs as well as training programs related to the rights of the child, and promoting education in

the human rights field on a scholar level. In this regard, it included in its secondary school educational programs a course intitled "Constitution and Human Rights" that studies the historical development of human rights, the concept of democracy, United Nations and human rigts and human rights in the Kuwaiti constitution.

In this context, a Memorandum has been signed between the High Judicial Institute in the State of Kuwait and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) to organize common roundtables for prosecuting attorneys and judges aiming at informing and educating on issues related to the humanitarian international law and human rights.

Despite the great efforts the State of Kuwait deploys on all levels and through the state institutions, there is still a need to establish additional measures for the protection of the child and to include them in judicial and legislative measures in order to guarantee the elimination of all obstacles that might impede the promotion of freedoms related to the child and the setup of priorities and objectives for the future.

In conclusion, we would like to reiterate our gratitude and appreciation to the Committee for its valuable efforts and we reaffirm our commitment and complete readiness to cooperate sparing no effort in achieving the goals and objectives of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and its Optional Protocols.

Thank you.