

Royaume du Maroc
Ministère des Affaires Etrangères
et de la Coopération



Direction des Nations Unies
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المملكة المغربية
وزارة الشؤون الخارجية والتعاون
مديرية الأمم المتحدة والمنظمات الدولية
قسم الأمم المتحدة

Statement of Mr. Redouane Houssaini Delegation of Morocco

At

The Oslo Global Conference

on

“Reclaiming the protection of civilians under
International Humanitarian Law”

Oslo, 23-24 May 2013

Mr. Chairman
Excellencies
Ladies and gentlemen

At the outset, the Moroccan delegation wishes to thank Norway for holding this important conference and for having championing this process on the protection of civilians in armed conflict.

The four regional seminars held in the framework of this process, have led to a broad consensus that the compelling need to protect civilians in armed conflict, when pursued objectively and without politicization, produces positive results on the ground.

Mr. Chairman

Increasing numbers of civilians continue to suffer in armed conflicts around the globe. That is particularly true for Africa and the Arab world, the regions to which Morocco belongs.

The situation of civilians takes on more serious dimensions in the context of recent conflicts, which are spreading in an extremely dangerous manner, as well as in situations involving terrorism, separatism and transnational organized crime.

Conflicts produce thousands of refugees and displaced persons, who are sometimes exposed to inhumane practices on the part of the armed groups that control refugee camps.

Mr. Chairman

We are encouraged by the fact that protection of civilians in armed conflict has occupied a central position on the agenda of the Security Council, since the adoption of resolution 1265 (1999). Numerous resolutions, presidential statements and other measures adopted by the Council intended to overcome the major challenges to protecting civilians. The track record of the past 14 years is encouraging, given the significant normative framework that has been developed.

Peacekeeping operations with a mandate to protect civilians continue to be an important tool at the UN disposal. Their effectiveness depends upon sustained support from the international community in providing the necessary resources to prevent attacks on civilians and to strengthen the capacity of the country concerned to meet its responsibility to protect civilians.

Morocco, as one of the active troop contributors, has worked in many missions in various parts of the world to ensure the protection of civilians. Our peacekeepers are doing so right now in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Côte d'Ivoire.

Mr. Chairman

Allow me to share some ideas relevant to this fruitful debate:

- States bear the primary responsibility to protect civilians, and must act strictly in accordance with their legal obligations and their moral duties. Enhancing the capacity of national Governments to sustain longer-term efforts to protect civilians should always be the key objective of international action.

- Violence against civilians is also abetted by the free flow of weapons. In this regard, we are convinced that the arms trade treaty has the potential of contributing to the improvement of living and security conditions of hundreds of thousands of people around the world — mainly civilians, women and children in particular
- UN Peace keeping Missions provide physical protection and assist host countries in creating protective environments. However they cannot provide protection to all civilians all the time. That is why it is essential to bolster national capacities with regard to defense and security forces
- We need to identify not only the positive developments to date but the challenges ahead. To reach that objective, international assistance requires a spirit of cooperation based on mutual acknowledgement and national ownership.
- The support of the international community should be based on the recognition that security and development are closely interlinked, mutually reinforcing and that Conflict prevention and the peaceful settlement of disputes are also key to the protection of civilians.

Thank you