



## The Delegation of the Republic of Azerbaijan

10.09.2012

HRC, 21<sup>st</sup> session

**ID with SRSB on Children and Armed Conflict**

Madame/Mr. President,

The Delegation of Azerbaijan welcomes the Special Representative of the Secretary General for Children and Armed Conflict and notes with interest the annual report of the Special Representative presented in this session. Furthermore, using this opportunity we would like also to commend the global campaign on OP ratification "Zero Under 18" launched since 2010, which mobilized support for the signing and ratification of the Optional Protocol to the CRC on the involvement of children in armed conflict.

Armed conflict not only leads to violations of children's human rights, but also deprives them of their basic socioeconomic rights. And we do concur with the Special Representative that along with existing strong legislative and policy frameworks, ensuring children's access to education is itself a powerful means of protecting them from becoming involved with armed forces or groups in conflict-affected countries or fragile situations.

Referring to para 49 of the very report, we would like also to echo the distinct and specific problems associated with explosive weapons where children not only become a victim, but also sometimes a specific target. Having said that, we believe acknowledgement, systematic data collection, as well as analysis of such situations to be of paramount importance in this regard.

To conclude, we note that the review of the initial report of the Government of Azerbaijan on the OP to the CRC on the involvement of children in armed conflict has been undertaken by the CRC this year, the positive aspects as well as existing challenges of which has already been reflected in the concluding observations. We do attach great importance to the process of reporting to the CRC and remain committed to the promotion and protection of the rights of the child in every aspect.

Thank you, Madame/Mr. President.

