



Violations of Children's Rights in African Sahel

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Introduction:

Children in the Sahel region are subjected to many violations, some of which are due to the proliferation of terrorist groups, in addition to drought and desertification related to climate change, and there is no doubt that the violations that occur against children in Sahel countries are the result of violence and terrorism in the region. It is one of the most dangerous causes of death, starvation, homelessness, and ignorance resulting from the absence of education and regular study.

According to a recent UNICEF statement, nearly 5 million children in The African Coast (Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger) have been exposed to Violent acts during 2020 including attacks against children, abduction and forced recruitment of children to Join armed groups. Children are killed, maimed and sexually assaulted where attacks against children in the region by armed groups, rebel movements and militants fighting over race have not stopped. They compete for resources, and according to the statistics, issued by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) Attacks during 2019 have increased and escalated in the African Sahel where 571 cases of serious violations against children were recorded, compared with 544 in 2018 and 386 in 2017.

Most of the attacks by armed terrorist groups affiliated with al-Qaeda and ISIL focused on seizing trade routes and controlling mines in order to expand illegal activities in countries Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger, located in Western Africa. In light of these mass murders, we find Children who managed to survive face Unknown fates due to losing their families because of the violence.



The increased level of violence doubles malnutrition which is already high and increases food levels, increasing the burden on vulnerable families in communities.

As a result of the increase in the number of violent acts in the region, the rates of internal displacement in the Sahel region have increased, resulting in the displacement of more than 330,000 people internally, in addition to the flight of 100,000 to neighboring countries all over the region.

Countries on the Coast of Africa are suffering from armed conflict and terrorism that have caused violations of children's rights, and it is estimated that 700 children died during their migration journey, according to UNICEF in 2018.

However, 13.5 million people, including 7.2 million children in Sahel countries, have been robbed of their rights due to climate change, poverty and conflict, and reports revealed that a quarter of migrants in Africa are children.

More than half of these children have been exposed to different types of abuse in 2019.

More than 1 million children were also malnourished, other than the abductions and sexual assaults of girls during their abduction, most recent of which in 2021, when more than 300 students were abducted. Some survivors revealed that they were forced to learn to fight and marriage teachings in order to prepare them for forced marriage to the leaders of these terrorist groups.

In 2015, Nigeria police arrested a number of women who traded children, as sex slaves for procreation and to sell, and the numbers have swelled over the following years, with natural



disasters, the Covid-19 pandemic the situation has deteriorated, increasing threefold over the past three years, and children are in a bad situation.

Studies and analyses have shown that there are several violations against children, with the presence of terrorist groups in the state and the outbreak of fighting, and the deterioration of the situation of the country, all of which led to the displacement of children, some of them remained alone without a father or mother, and others were stripped of their rights as children, and found themselves in a state of blood and fighting.

Routine vaccinations, maternity care and other sexual and reproductive health care services that prevent children from dying from diseases such as malaria, diarrhea or pneumonia have also been suspended, as has the epidemic leading to an increase in the crisis of food shortages and malnutrition, with malnutrition levels in the region among the highest in Africa.

Those crises and the Corona pandemic have also led to loss of revenues and rising commodity prices due to the restriction of the global movement of imports and exports, in which children face higher health risks, girls suffer from increased genital mutilation, child marriage and domestic violence, and children face severe poverty.

As a result of the intensification of the conflict, in The Cabo Delgado region of Mozambique, 191,000 children have been displaced, and in Sudan 5.4 million children are suffering from successive crises there, as well as the spread of wild polio, Covid-19 and cholera.

Ninety-nine States have also closed their borders to migrant children, other than those received by the peoples of other countries, with discrimination and hatred.



Henrietta Faure, executive director of UNICEF, said Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger are in a state of instability, armed violence, extreme poverty, hunger and now Covid-19, putting the future of an entire generation of children and young people at risk.

More than 1 million children were forced to flee their homes, 2.9 million were at risk of wasting, 20% more than at the beginning of 2020, more than 20 million out of school (more than double what they had been since the beginning of the pandemic), and 2.3 million children needed support as girls were increasingly exposed to sexual exploitation, early marriage and pregnancy.

The report, issued by the African Studies Unit of the Forum for Development and Human Rights Dialogue, discusses violations of children's rights in Sahel countries and begins with the history of child rights abuses, the situation of children in Sahel countries, the violations they are subjected to and the efforts of organizations and governments to preserve their rights.

First: The history of the rights of the child (the child between protection and threats)

In the second half of the 20th century, there was a development in the field of forming agreements and mechanisms to protect the rights of Human beings and the rights of vulnerable groups, including children who need care from various social, educational and health aspects, and the international community has directed its attention to this category of most of the protection of their rights on the international, regional and state levels.



Many international and regional conventions have been launched to protect the rights of the child, and an international child welfare organization known as UNICEF has been established to monitor children's rights and realities and the extent to which States are committed to implementing the child protection agreements to which they have joined, and the United Nations" general assembly has issued important resolutions and recommendations on the protection of children's rights.

The African System for the Protection of Children's Rights

Most of the countries of Africa have joined the international conventions and agencies to protect the rights of the child. Most of these African countries joined the International Convention on the Protection of children's rights, for their part concluded a regional convention to protect the rights of the child called the Charter of the Protection of the Rights and Well-being of the Child, which recognized the right of African children to enjoy their full and undiminished rights like the rest of the world, without discrimination on the basis of race, color, sex, or religion.

Most countries on the African continent have ratified the optional protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child regarding the sale of children and child exploitation in prostitution and pornography, and the majority of African countries have joined the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Participation of Children in Armed Conflict.

A committee has also been formed to protect the rights and well-being of children on the continent in order to assess the situation of children on the continent and to determine the extent to which Member States are committed to protecting the rights of children contained in the African Charter of Children's Rights.



As part of their internal legal system for the protection of children's rights with the international and regional legal system for the protection of children's rights, African states have passed a series of new laws on the protection of children's rights, amended some and abolished others.

The protection of children's rights has been taken care of on the theoretical rather than the practical level, as children in most African countries continue to suffer from a serious lack of enjoyment and access to their rights, choices and potential. For example, a child born in Niger is expected to live a life about 26 years less than a child born in Denmark, and the goods available to him to consume during his life are about 53 times lower than that of a Danish child.

Threats to the rights of the child

The general situation of children in most countries in Africa is tragic, despite the agreements and legal provisions that have been put in place, and despite the efforts of governments in this regard, as a result of the widespread security risks and threats that prevented children from enjoying their rights. The reasons for this include foreign interventions that have plunged the continent into conflicts, the spread of poverty, hunger, poor economic conditions, environmental degradation and climate change, and these threats come as follows:



1. Civil wars:

The Sahel region has been plagued for decades by civil wars and instability, which threaten the rights of human beings, especially children, who are inherently vulnerable and become victims of those wars, with statistics showing that more than 2 million children have died since 1990, an average of 500 deaths per day.

As a result of indiscriminate killings in wars and because of the spread of diseases and famines resulting from these conflicts committed by the conflict, many children lose their dependents.

The children in conflict zones may find themselves forced to engage in these conflicts, and the phenomenon of child soldiers is common, where about (60%) of the children involved in conflict in the Sahel countries were estimated to be 14 years old, for example in Uganda the average age of combatants involved in conflict and war is 12.9 years.

2. Environmental degradation.

The deterioration State of the environment existing in these countries as a result of droughts, floods, storms and desertification threaten the rights of the child, where droughts and floods bring with them serious health problems such as skin problems and diseases associated with sanitation and water. Those environmental threats lead to the rapid spread



of Diseases and Epidemics such as cholera and diarrhea affecting children as a result of their vulnerability. In 2008, African states have registered the highest proportion of child deaths due diarrhea. (70%) of the 1.3 million deaths of children were those under the age of five. What increases that suffering for children is the poverty of many of these countries and their inability to provide medicine and vaccines needed to vaccinate children against common diseases, not to mention the poor health structures of hospitals and medical kits. Climate shocks and threats result in serious impacts on food in general and on children in particular, and as a result of these impacts on these resources of the Sahel countries, children from countries such as Ethiopia are forced to leave school early to work on farms and streets to help support their families.

3. Violence

Most children from African countries suffer from all forms of violence such as physical violence, such as torture, corporal punishment, cruel and degrading treatment, and sexual violence.

The child may face violence from a parent, relative or neighbor, and when the child moves to school he falls again under the weight of violence by the educational and administrative staff and from the schools, and the child can face violence in the street from perverts and kidnapping gangs for ransom and even by promoters and consumers of drugs.

As a result of the state of underdevelopment that exists in many communities, girls have fewer opportunities to enjoy their rights to education, health and food, and their suffering increases by bearing the burden of bringing water, fruit, etc. and sometimes they are forced to work on farms and as domestic servants, which increases the risk of violating their rights and exploiting them as pressure cards in conflicts by rival gangs and terrorist groups.



For example, the 1994 Africa Rights Report classified sexual violence in the form of sexual abuse of girls in schools as a serious problem in a number of African countries such as the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Nigeria, South Africa, Sudan and Zambia; 10 years later, in 2005, the report again recorded little progress to address the threat of sexual violence against girls in the school environment by the African states concerned.

4. Human trafficking

The phenomenon of human trade poses a threat to human rights, particularly children of both sexes, and local human trade networks have often become linked to international migrant smuggling networks, for prostitution and organ trafficking. In Burkina Faso, for example Girls are traded for domestic work as maids or for sexual exploitation and prostitution; in Mozambique, some sources have indicated that by about (1000) Girls are traded annually to be transferred to prostitution in South Africa. Several studies in Malawi have addressed the phenomenon of child trafficking in the country for employment and sexual exploitation, with between (500) into (1500) Women and children traded only in Malawi, and the proportion of children trafficked between the ages of 14 and 15 by (30%) of trading deals, as the same study indicated that about (400) women and children are traded outside the country.



Second: An overview of the situation of children in the Sahel countries

- Kidnappings rank first in the Sahel countries, where terrorist groups have focused their attention on kidnappings in recent times, and this interest has not been without price, as they blackmail the people for money and release the abductees.
- The most frequently abducted groups are children of both sexes. Thus, depriving them of their childhood as they are either forced into marriage or to become child soldiers.
- Nearly a quarter of migrants in Africa are children, and there are (6.8) million child refugees in Africa. It also came in a statement issued by UNICEF
 - In Burkina Faso, insecurity has displaced more than 838,000 people, 61% of whom are children, and there has been a more than 10-fold increase in the number of children in need of protection assistance by (35) thousand and (800) children in 2019, to (368) thousand children in 2020.
 - In Mali in 2019, the UN said there were 745 serious abuses against children, more than a million children faced lack of security twice as many as last year, and by 2020 there had been a sharp increase in forced displacement, with more than 137,000 children currently displaced in Mali.
 - In Nigeria, about 76 percent of girls marry before the age of 18, according to a UNICEF report.
 - In Niger, specifically in Niamey, the stronghold of the epidemic, there are 7,015 children in need of aid, and more than 867,000 children in Niger need protection in 2020, an increase of 200,000 more than in 2019.



(a) Escalating violence in the Sahel against children

Children in the Sahel are being killed, maimed and sexually abused, and hundreds of thousands of them have suffered traumatic experiences, with attacks on children rising in 2019, with Mali registering about (571) serious violations against children in the first three quarters of 2019, compared to (544) in 2018 and (386) in 2017.

Since the beginning of 2019, more than 670,000 children across the region have been forced to flee their homes due to armed conflict and insecurity, according to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) at the beginning of 2020.

The rise in violence has had devastating effects on children's learning. At the end of 2019, more than 3,300 schools in Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger - or some of them not working because of violence - were closed, a sixfold increase since April 2017, affecting 650,000 children and 16,000 schools.

In 2020, the Global Alliance for the Protection of Education from Attack documented some 100 attacks on schools in the Sahel region. "The Sahel region is a particularly worrying region, and in Burkina Faso and Mali Niger, the threat, kidnapping, killing of teachers and the burning or bombing of schools have increased," said Marika Tsulakis, a representative of the coalition. Both the army and armed groups used schools as execution sites or military bases."

Insecurity and displacement create significant barriers for children and families trying to access basic services, food and food supplies, which can lead to a deterioration in children's health and nutritional status. UNICEF estimates that more than 709,000 children under the age of five



are severely malnourished across the central Sahel and will need life-saving treatment this year.

At the same time, household access to safe drinking water is decreasing. In Burkina Faso alone, access to safe drinking water fell by 10 percent from 2018 to 2019 across areas where IDPs account for more than a fifth of the population. Some areas experienced a 40% decline.

Today, armed conflicts are becoming increasingly protracted and complex in terms of outcomes, causes and nature. The UNICEF director stated that it has become increasingly violent and is characterized by a "disturbing contempt" for international humanitarian law by parties to the conflict, both governmental and non-governmental.

Boko Haram kidnappings and bombings of children in Sahel countries.

Kidnappings have become the method used by the terrorist group Boko Haram, In April year 2014, the terrorist group Boko Haram kidnapped (276) students from a public high school in Chibok town, Borno state, northern Nigeria Reports indicated, that Boko Haram was planning to use the girls as hostages to negotiate in exchange for the release of some of its detained members, which Abubakar Shekau the leader of the terrorist group revealed in May 2014 in a video showing the return of the kidnapped schoolgirls in exchange for the release of elements imprisoned by the Nigerian government.

In February 2018, at a school in northeastern Nigeria, Boko Haram abducted 111 school girls following an attack on their school in Dabchi village, Yobe state.

Also in September 2019, gunmen abducted three girls from a school in Lagos, the country's commercial capital, before rescuing them a week later.



400 students were also kidnapped by gunmen who attacked a high school in Katsina state for a ransom. They are the students of Kankara in Katsina state, Nigeria.

The terrorist group Boko Haram usually takes abductees to their camps in remote communities, or temporary transit camps, such as those in Ngoshi prison, including temporary camps, transporting abductees to homes in towns and villages, forcing them to receive the teachings and interpretation of Islam by the militant Boko Haram, in order to prepare them to marry the group's fighters, and train them on how to fight and use bombs. The Al-Azhar monitor has designated the Boko Haram terrorist group as "the bloodiest terrorist group in the world."

Violence during 2020.

Nearly 50,000 people, including thousands of women, children and the elderly, have been displaced within the region this year, including 25,000, when the Chadian army launched Operation Puma Fury on the shores of Lake Chad at the end of March with the support of armies from other countries.

Chadian authorities have declared Foley and Aya provinces a war zone. In addition, more than 4,000 people have been displaced by clashes earlier this April 2020 in Niger's Tilaberry region, while hundreds of insecure people have also crossed the border in search of safety in parts of Mali.

Some 6,000 people from Niger have fled to Mali to join at least 10,000 Malians displaced inside their country by unrest that has engulfed the entire Sahel region since January 2020.

In Niger, UNHCR and its partners recorded 191 incidents involving 549 victims in the first three months of 2020 in areas 50 kilometers from the border. The humanitarian situation is extremely



difficult with limited access to aid. Some 3.8 million people have been internally displaced across the two regions, while 270,000 have fled to neighboring countries as refugees.

Violence in 2021.

In early 2021, a massacre took place in several villages in Niger, Sahel, by an armed group most likely ISIL, where attacks targeted the villages of Takuma, Bango and Zarumdaria, and. At least 100 people were killed (including 10 children and 7 girls under the age of 16). According to the UNHCR more than 1,000 people have been displaced by the massacre and have taken refuge in the town of Mangaiz, about 20 kilometers southeast of the scene of the massacre inside Niger. Boko Haram terrorists also abducted the UNHCR Protection Assistant, Abubakar Garba Idris after they ambushed Damaturu Maiduguri road.

Boko Haram terrorists also spread panic in the Kawtikari neighborhood of Chibok, Borno state, where more than 200 schoolgirls were abducted six years ago, causing panic among the town's Christians and forcing them to flee, and the same group killed 11 people, burned down a church and kidnapped a priest in a town near Chibok.

Previously, there had been successive attacks attributed to Boko Haram targeting the Diffa area of Nigeria, which took place in December 2020, killing 45 people, including 10 children, and burning 100 homes.

(b) Hunger in Africa



A 2018 report by the African Children's Policy Forum indicates that about 90% of children in Africa do not meet minimum meal standards and that children die every three seconds from hunger.

Hunger in the Sahel countries is the result of a variety of different causes, one of the main causes being poverty.

Hunger in Africa is also largely due to political unrest and civil war, which in turn lead to food shortages and famine. With more than 48% of the population of sub-Saharan Africa living below the poverty line.

Gender inequality is also the most common cause of child hunger, as there are many types of social inequality that make girls more vulnerable to physical and sexual abuse.

Without adequate access to education (medical or public) or birth control resources, women find themselves in a poor social and economic situation, often with children who must care for them without assistance. It is important to note that gender inequality is by no means the only reason for the severe hunger of children in Africa, but a significantly contributing factor that needs to be addressed.

According to UNICEF, at least one in three children under the age of five in Africa suffers from stunted growth.

Third: Violations of children's rights in Sahel countries

(a) Violation of the rights of African children to education and consequences:



There is no doubt that the Covid-19 pandemic has had a clear impact on the closure of schools in the Sahel countries and the retention of children without education, as reports have shown that there has been progress in providing education rights to African children, but because of this pandemic these positive indicators have declined:

1. In 2019, 2,000 schools were closed in Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger, resulting in more than 400,000 children having their right to education taken away, a doubling of the number of educational services that have been closed since 2017. In 2020 1260 schools were closed in central Mali, and (2500) Schools in "Burkina Faso" were also closed. During 2021 Organizations expect to lose a whole generation in Sahel countries where about 91% of the students in the world had their education disrupted. This has affected (12) million children out of school; before the pandemic more than (8) Million children, aged 6-14, are already out of school.
2. Schools are used for military purposes, and children are conscripted into armed terrorist groups.
3. Exploiting children to work in agricultural fields for agricultural production working double shifts, not to mention not having access to the food required for their health. "ImpACT International Human Rights Policies" stated that thousands of African children are forced to work to produce cocoa for international companies such as Nestlé, Mars and Cargill.

This was through an oral statement before the United Nations Human Rights Council at its (46th) session, where children there are treated as slaves. A lawsuit was filed on behalf of eight children subjected to slavery in cocoa plantations in Ivory Coast. The cocoa industry in Ivory Coast employs nearly one million small farmers and produces about 45% of the world supply.



4. Children have been subjected to sexual abuse, with more than 21,000 reports of sexual abuse of children, not counting the cases that go unreported and what happens within terrorist hideouts.
5. There are 15 million working children in Nigeria under the age of 14.
6. The closure of schools has affected the education of more than 8.1 million students, along with 3.6 million children who were out of school before the pandemic in Sudan, and the prolonged closure of schools will affect an estimated 2 million children who depend on school meals as part of their food security.

(b) Violations of children's rights to health:

Violations of children's health rights are as follows:

- 1) Countries (Chad, Niger and Mali) are the worst countries in providing health services to children, spreading environmental pollution, and malnutrition.
- 2) Late detection of immuno-deficiency in children which result in the death of two children out of 10 children under the age of five.
- 3) The difficulty of providing health services due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the difficulty of inter-state transmission and the dispatch of basic health services.
- 4) The Stopping of the provision of preventive vaccinations against diseases prevalent in Sahel countries such as "malaria, diarrhea, pneumonia and others.
- 5) Increased physical violence against children, deteriorating mental state, forced marriage and female genital mutilation.



Fourth: Efforts of organizations and governments to protect children's rights in Sahel countries

Some countries in the region have taken concrete steps and actions to implement guidelines for national protection, or investing in alternatives to detaining children, or reforming laws to end child statelessness and helping children to access services. Those procedures included, for example, Zambia's guidelines on protecting and assisting vulnerable migrants prevent

unaccompanied children from being placed in detention centers as Rwanda has included protection against child statelessness in its national law. UNICEF also urged governments African Union to work together To better collect and share data and evidence and be accessible in a timely manner, categorized by age and gender, which will improve understanding of how migration and forced displacement affect children and their families.

As part of the African Action Programme for Displaced Children and Youth, UNICEF called on governments to protect migrant children from violence, abuse, exploitation and trafficking, strengthen cross-border protection responses, end the detention of children for migration purposes, keep families together and give children legal status, give every migrant and homeless child access to education and access to services. Health and other good services without discrimination based on their legal status, addressing the underlying causes of uprooting children from their homes, and strengthening measures to combat xenophobia and marginalization.

Here are some of what governments and organizations have done to protect children's rights in Sahel countries:



- The African Regional Commission has declared the African region free of wild polio, bringing five of the organization's six regions free of the virus, which threatens the lives of future children, and 47 African countries achieved this achievement in 2020.
- The governments of countries (Mali, Burkina Faso, Niger) supported the protection of schools and ensuring their continuity during the armed conflict, in cooperation with UNICEF. In addition, the Government of Burkina Faso has undertaken a new strategy to protect education and ensure its continuity in insecure areas and its commitment to providing education to every child in the country. This strategy includes developing curricula to help closed children make up for their learning, integrating displaced children into open schools, enhancing security in the school environment, and rebuilding schools that have been destroyed.
- The partnership between the governments of Burkina Faso, Cameroon and Niger helps expand the innovative radio education programmes, which provides an alternative educational platform for children and young people affected by conflicts and their aftermath.
- UNICEF is working with its partners to develop plans to safeguard education, including tools for teachers working in high-security places, psychological and social support for schoolchildren who bear the emotional repercussions of violence.
- In 2019, according to UNICEF's annual report, 307 million children under the age of five were reached with malnutrition prevention services, 17 million out-of-school children with education; and (4) 1 million children and young people received skills development;(18.3) million people had access to clean drinking water, 15.5 million people had basic sanitation services; and humanitarian assistance in 281 emergencies in 96 States.



- The partnership between UNICEF and other organizations and governments in 2019, estimated at 137 partners, contributed about US\$4.7 billion. Partnerships with the private sector have contributed \$1.5 billion to growth.
- Funding states for humanitarian action and protection of children's rights by 2021 include:

U.S. DOLLAR FINANCING	States
154,968,652	Burkina Faso
59,500,890	Chad
108,295,507	Mali
74,858,228	Niger
187,778,750	Nigeria
11,800,000	Guinea
26,948,402	Ghana
12,734,000	Sierra Leone
83,074,000	Cameroon
17,711,799	Mauritania
16,160,000	Senegal

In 2020, results were achieved despite the repercussions of the Covid-19 crisis:



- 1) 13.2 million received 60% of safe drinking water. In addition, 3.4 million children received measles vaccination at a rate 41%.
 - 2) 1.5 million children were treated for malnutrition at a rate of 31%, while 2.4 million children received their right to education, including early childhood education at a rate of 27%.
 - 3) 667,000 people received cash aid at a rate of 43%. 1.5 children received psychological and mental support and protection at a rate of 31%.
- The top 10 countries and organizations donating millions of dollars to UNICEF Children's Organization for 2020 come in order: (USA, UK, Japan, Central Emergency Response Fund, UNHCR, World Bank, Germany, U.S. Fund for UNICEF, Canada, Saudi Arabia), have allocated the largest share to West and Central Africa, East and South Africa, Where it is believed that these countries need more funding, and hastening of relief, and this funding has been allocated in the sectors of health, water, sanitation, education; Because they play a vital role in preparing the child.
 - One of the desired results for 2021, which is being worked on by the UN is the determination to help 300.1 million people, including 149 million women/girls, and 15.9 million disabled people. Of these, 190.8 million children, including 93.3 million girls and 7.4 million disabled children, in 149 countries, including all Sahel countries, requiring \$6.4 billion.
 - 6.3 million children will be treated for acute malnutrition, 37.4 million will receive protection for cleaner drinking water and measles protection, and 19.3 million will benefit from mental health services and psychological support.
 - At the level of education, 93.3 million children will receive education, 9.6 million families will benefit from cash transfers, and finally 495.8 million children and adults at risk will be reached.



- Strict EU laws have been put in place to protect forests, reduce child labor and end the poverty of Ivory Coast farmers regarding the matter child slavery who work long hours for cocoa cultivation, with an initiative launched to improve cocoa cultivation with Ghana and Ivory Coast in January 2021, in addition to Member States, cocoa growers, and civil society. As it accounts for 25 percent of the economy and 40 percent of export earnings.
- A committee of 40 child and adolescent health experts in 2019, at the invitation of the World Health Organization, the United Nations Children's Organization and The analyst magazine, called for:
 1. Stopping CO2 emissions as quickly as possible to ensure the future of children on the planet.
 2. Putting children and adolescents at the heart of efforts to achieve sustainable development.
 3. All sectors seek to develop new policies and invest in children's health and rights.
 4. Integrating children's voices into political decisions.
 5. Tighten national regulations on harmful commercialization, while supporting a new optional protocol to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Fifth: The role of the African Union in protecting the rights of the child

- In 2019, the AU in Addis Ababa discussed the exploitation of children through the Internet, where the Union saw an increase in the abuse of children sexually and morally.
- The AU launched a campaign to end child marriage in Africa in 2015, and in 2019, a regional conference on the elimination of child marriage and FGM was held, in partnership with the



European Union, UN organizations and Plan International. To launch campaigns to educate girls and mothers at home.

This campaign includes the following:

1. Visiting several African countries to implement the child marriage strategy, where the campaign will last for the next five years, and its activity is continuously evaluated in collaboration with UNICEF.
 2. Strengthening the political commitment to eliminate FGM in Africa, as well as clarifying the initiative's strategy for 2023.
 3. This campaign aims to eliminate FGM and requires significant cooperation between the concerned authorities, and nearly 25 countries have taken steps to end FGM. This practice is a violation of medical ethics, human rights and the law punishable by the withdrawing of a doctor's license and not practicing the profession.
- The Chairman of the African Committee of Experts on Children's Rights and Well-being (ACERWC and representatives of the African Union) visited the headquarters of the National Council for Children and Motherhood organized by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in cooperation with the National Council for Children and Motherhood, the African Union, UNICEF and Development Partners, with the aim of identifying its activities, particularly the services provided by the 16000-child help line. This is on the cusps of the 34th session of 2019
 - The African Union, in collaboration with international organizations, has denounced the sexual exploitation of children and, as a result, the AU Children's Committee has stepped up its efforts to protect the rights of children and women.



Recommendations

- African countries need to effectively implement their commitments under global and regional child rights conventions, and to ensure the effective application of these obligations, and under their procedural mechanisms they must play their full and undiminished role in monitoring and observing all progress and lack of protection for children in all African countries.
- African countries, governmental and non-governmental organizations must redouble efforts through health, education, development and environmental programs, policies and plans. In order to realize the rights of children in the Countries of the African continent, and to ensure that African children enjoy them, so that the reality of African children also corresponds to what is stipulated in the documents of the system for the protection of their rights.
- Civil society sectors, such as associations, the media and even individuals, take on the role of following up on the realities of childhood in the African continent, proposing solutions, monitoring their implementation, and implementing all commitments and



commitments, and detecting violations, shortcomings or abuses in the protection of children's rights.

- Special attention is paid to the category of children with special needs, orphaned children, refugee and migrant children, and children born outside marriage as victims of their own guilt. This group of children between the walls and walls of child aid centres and immigration centres, if any, others are homeless and suffering from loss and homelessness in the streets and alleys, and care for this fragile group is achieved through health care, psychological support, education and training programmes so that they can integrate as positive members of society.
- Make a greater effort to protect the violations of children that occur in the UN by spreading awareness and allocating more resources and activities that provide students with protection and well-being, taking into account the causes that violate the rights of the child and studying them well and setting limits in the long run, and serious and speedy trial of anyone who is found to have violated the rights of the child in any country.