**Statement by the State of Palestine (Item 3 – Clustered ID SRGs: violence against children and children in armed conflict):**

Thank you Mr. President and I would like also to thank the Special Representative for her report and presentation.

Mr. President,

As a State under the longest military occupation known in contemporary history for 50 years now, the State of Palestine aspires to protect the rights of Palestinian children to the extent possible within the confines and restraints of occupation.

Israel, the Occupying Power, systematically commits crimes against Palestinian children, its actions contravening its obligations under human rights law, including the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and international humanitarian law.

In 2016, Israel continued its policy of systematically targeting Palestinian youth. In the West Bank 32 children were killed at the hands of Israeli occupation forces and many were displaced as Israel carried out a record-breaking pace of home demolitions to advance Israel’s illegal settlement enterprise.

Equally alarming, Israel’s systematic military detention of Palestinian children has continued with 158 children detained in 2016 alone, subjected to widespread and institutionalized ill treatment and torture, and prosecuted in the only juvenile military court system in the world. Moreover, 25 children were held in solitary confinement, and 10 children received sentences between 12 and 39 months.

In Gaza, Palestinian children slipped deeper into poverty, with some still living in protracted displacement, as a result of the Israeli blockade that entered its tenth year, as well as Israel’s repeated military aggressions. Israel continues to kill and maim children, and prevent humanitarian access, with devastating impact on the rights, lives and well-being of Palestinian children. ((The children that survive this constant aggression are left to cope with deep physical and psychological wounds, gravely impairing their lives, including as a result of loss of family members.))

Mr. President

As highlighted by the Special Representative, “Accountability remains the key to ending grave violations”. Yet it is clear that the crimes committed by Israel, the occupying Power, against children are a symptom of a complete lack of accountability.

In this regard, we would like to ask the Special Representative what recommendations could be made to ensure full accountability in a situation where crimes are persistently committed against children as part of State policy.

We would also encourage the Special Representative to pay more attention to the situation of Palestinian children in her upcoming reports.

I thank you.