



**Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

At the outset, I would like to thank the government of Switzerland and the United Nations Development Program for organizing and inviting Morocco to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Regional Review Conference on the Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development. The organization of this Conference shows the commitment of the two parties to tackle one of the long lasting issues in today's world.

As a member of the Core Group of the Geneva Declaration, Morocco hopes that the Conference will offer an opportunity to discuss the issue of armed violence and Development in the prospect to take concrete actions to end the negative impact that armed violence has on the achievement of development in affected countries.

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Statistics shows that, each year, at least 740.000 people die directly or indirectly from armed violence. Armed violence is the fourth leading cause of death for people aged between 15 and 44. Economically, the cost of armed violence on productivity is about USD 95million for non-conflict or criminal violence alone and it might even reach as high as USD 163 billion per year. As for war-related violence, it decreases the annual growth of an average economy by around 2%.

Beyond the chilling calculus, armed violence affects the social fabric of communities, spreads fear and insecurity in societies, destroys human and social capital, and undermines development. All in all, armed violence is a real threat to development and to the achievement of the Millennium Development goals by 2015.

Being aware of this impact, Morocco was among the first countries to endorse the Geneva Declaration and to support all the initiatives that aiming at reducing armed violence. Morocco believes that it is high time for all signatory states to assume their responsibilities and take concrete actions to include the principles of the Geneva Declaration in their national policies.

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Morocco recognizes that, although many progresses have been realized since the adoption of the Geneva Declaration, efforts still need to be redoubled to ensure the reduction of armed violence and hence development in each country. It's only through a collective and joint action of both the governments and civil society that the impact of armed violence can be reduced. In this regard, armed violence reduction starts from the awareness of the impact of armed violence on development. This goes through the gathering of accurate data on the social and financial impact of armed violence. By doing so, we can guarantee the adoption of the declaration by other states.

Morocco believes that the reduction of armed violence requires the strengthening of national, regional and international programs that include measurable objectives and targeted actions. Moreover, these programs need to be designed in a way that takes into consideration the particularities and specificities of each conflict and country. Solutions to armed violence can include: the control of arms trafficking, the reconstruction of national unity, the enhancement of peace consolidation in post-conflict situations, the promotion of the participation of women as agents of change. All these actions have to be accompanied by dialogue, mutual respect between states and non-interference in internal issues to ensure peace.

In this context, Morocco, as part of its commitment to fight armed violence, will host on the **28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> of October, 2014**, the 4<sup>th</sup> Regional Review Conference on the Geneva Declaration for the MENA region. This conference will offer the opportunity to assess the engagement of the countries in the region to the principles of the declaration and be able to ensure peace and stability to the region that will help in its reconstruction effort, reconciliation, economic and social development.