

PRESS RELEASE

Watchlist Welcomes Listing of New Parties in the UN Secretary-General's Annual Report on Children and Armed Conflict, Calls for Further, More Accurate Listings

New York, June 8, 2016 – Watchlist welcomes the release of the United Nations Secretary-General's annual [report](#) on children and armed conflict and the addition of new perpetrators of grave child rights violations listed in the report's annex. The report covers grave violations against children perpetrated between January and December 2015 and includes several new listings. Some of these perpetrators are listed for abductions following the adoption of Security Council Resolution 2225, including Al-Shabaab, Boko Haram, the Lord's Resistance Army, Islamic State, and the Taliban.

Others were omitted from the list of perpetrators in the Secretary-General's report, including armed groups in Thailand, Maoists in India, the Taliban in Pakistan, international forces supporting the Syrian government, and the Israel Defense Forces. The report also makes no reference to the conflict in Ukraine, where hundreds of children were killed and hundreds of schools attacked. The inclusion of these actors would more accurately reflect the plight of children in conflict zones around the world.

“Last June, the UN Security Council strongly spoke out against mass abductions of children committed by Boko Haram, ISIL and others. It now ensures greater accountability by featuring perpetrators of abduction in the Secretary-General's report,” said Dragica Mikavica, Advocacy Officer at Watchlist on Children and Armed Conflict, a network of international human rights and humanitarian organizations. “Other perpetrators are missing from the list, however. In the global response to protect children in situations of armed conflict, there is no room for double standards.”

Watchlist welcomed the listing of the Civilian Joint Task Force (CJTF) in Nigeria for the recruitment and use of children. Since 2014, Watchlist documented and published cases of recruitment and use by the CJTF.

Despite these positive steps for the protection of children in war, Watchlist notes with [continued](#) disappointment the absence of certain perpetrators from the report's annex.

For Yemen, until June 6 when the Secretary-General issued a statement temporarily removing it, Watchlist supported the listing of the Saudi Arabia-led coalition for the killing and maiming of children and attacks on schools and hospitals.

“This listing represented the first time an international military coalition is included among perpetrators in the Secretary-General's report and indicated a strong stance regarding the large number of violations against children in Yemen and a dire need for accountability. In the first instance, the Secretary-General applied an impartial method in the treatment of parties committing grave violations against children in Yemen. The temporary removal risks harming the credibility of the mechanism and creates a double standard for children, which they and the UN's children and armed conflict agenda cannot afford,” said Mikavica.



“In 2015, we have received numerous accounts of how the conflict in Ukraine impacts children’s safety and rights. However, the report completely omits the situation of children in Ukraine,” said Mikavica. “Other parties have been mentioned in the report for years for grave violations against children, but have never been included in the list of perpetrators. We call upon the UN to report on all situations of concern and list perpetrators in equal measure.”

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Background on Watchlist on Children and Armed Conflict:

Established in 2001, Watchlist on Children and Armed Conflict (‘Watchlist’) is an international network of human rights and humanitarian non-governmental organizations striving to end violations against children in armed conflict and to guarantee their rights. As a global network, Watchlist builds partnerships among local, national and international NGOs, enhancing mutual capacities and strengths. Working together, we strategically collect and disseminate information on violations against children in conflict to influence key decision-makers to create and implement programs and policies that effectively protect children. Watchlist on Children and Armed Conflict is a project of Tides Center, a non-profit public charity.

Background on the Secretary-General’s Report on Children and Armed Conflict:

Each year, the Secretary-General submits a report on children and armed conflict to the UN Security Council. These annual reports provide information on grave violations committed against children. The reports include annexes listing parties responsible for these violations. The listing of a party in the Secretary-General’s reports is not only a ‘name and shame’ strategy, it also triggers enhanced monitoring and reporting pursuant to Security Council Resolution 1612 (2005). Including parties on the ‘list of shame’ enhances the protection of children in armed conflict by facilitating UN’s engagement with the responsible parties to end grave violations.

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Press Contact:

Bonnie Berry

+1 212.972.0695

bonnieb@watchlist.org