

Recommendations to the Security Council

IRAQ

Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) is listed for the recruitment and use of children, killing and maiming, rape and other forms of sexual violence, abductions, and attacks on schools and hospitals. In April, the Council will receive the Secretary-General's (SG) progress report on UNAMI pursuant to SCR 2299 (2016). In his latest report (S/2017/75, para. 31), the SG noted calls by the co-chairs of the Country Task Force on Children and Armed Conflict (CTFMR), UNAMI, and UNICEF for the Government to activate the inter-ministerial committee on grave violations of the rights of children. In December 2016, in northern Iraq, Human Right Watch reported that armed groups affiliated with the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) abducted and recruited children to fight against ISIL, citing 29 cases between 2014 and 2016. **The Security Council should:**

- **Reinforce calls by UNAMI and UNICEF, the Co-Chairs of the CTFMR, and urge the Government to establish an inter-ministerial committee on Security Council Resolution 1612** to facilitate direct dialogue between the UN, Government representatives, and other relevant actors to discuss and address violations of children's rights, action plans, and conclusions by the Security Council Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict;
- Urge the Government to treat children associated with armed groups primarily as victims and to **ensure that their deprivation of liberty, for any purpose, is a measure of last resort, and for the shortest possible time, and to respect existing international principles and juvenile justice standards** while dealing with detention of children formerly associated with armed groups;
- **Call upon the SG to collect and verify information regarding the PKK's recruitment and use of children for the purposes of determining a listing in his upcoming annual report on children and armed conflict;**
- **Urge the Government of Iraq to criminalize recruitment and use by all parties and fully commit to developing a joint strategy with the UN and other key stakeholders for preventing recruitment and use of children by armed groups;**
- **Urge the Government and the Popular Mobilization Forces (PMF) Commission under the Prime Minister's Office to work with the UN on ending and preventing recruitment and use of children by the PMF and pro-Government militias, and release all children currently associated with them and assist their reintegration, including with help from religious leaders.**

THE UNITED STATES IS THE LEAD COUNTRY ON IRAQ.

SUDAN/SOUTH SUDAN (ABYEI)

In April, pursuant to SCR 2318 (2016) extending its mandate until May 15, 2017, the SG will inform the Council on progress in implementing UNISFA's mandate, including on the strategic review he conducted. Resolution 2318 (2016) urged all parties to cease all forms of violence, human rights violations and abuses, violations of international humanitarian law, and violations and abuses against children in violation of applicable international law. A dedicated child protection focal point post was recently approved for UNISFA and the staff recruitment process is underway. **The Security Council should:**

- **Urge parties to cease all forms of violence, human rights violations and abuses, including against children, and violations of international humanitarian law;**
- **Urge UNISFA to complete the recruitment process of its newly-approved child protection focal point as soon as possible;**
- **Call on UNISFA to monitor and report on grave violations against children in Abyei, including through the community-based child protection networks trained by UNICEF and partners; particular attention should be paid to the security of children forcibly migrating from South Sudan;**
- **Call for strengthening of child protection mechanisms within Abyei, including greater support to the above-mentioned community-based child protection networks, in close collaboration with UNICEF.**

THE UNITED STATES IS THE LEAD COUNTRY ON SUDAN/SOUTH SUDAN.

Situations before the Council involving parties listed for grave violations against children:

[Afghanistan](#)
[Central African Republic](#)
[Colombia](#)
[Democratic Republic of the Congo](#)
[Iraq](#)
[Mali](#)
[Myanmar \(Burma\)](#)
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SYRIA

Six parties are listed for grave violations against children. In April, the Council will receive its regular briefings on the implementation of SCR 2139 (2014), 2165 (2014), 2191 (2014), 2258 (2015), 2328 (2016), 2332 (2016), and 2336 (2016). On March 13, UNICEF [reported](#) that 2016 has been the worst year yet for Syria's children since the beginning of the conflict 6 years ago, with 652 children killed (a 20 percent increase from 2015), more than 850 recruited, and at least 338 attacks against hospitals and medical personnel. **Council Members should:**

- **Call for an immediate and complete implementation of relevant Security Council Resolutions;**
- **Given an increase in child recruitment by all parties to the conflict, preventative measures should be taken for children's release from armed forces and groups**, and children captured by opposing parties should be treated in line with international standards and released to civilian child protection actors for support and reintegration;
- **Call on parties to conflict to facilitate rapid and unimpeded humanitarian access to all civilians in need, in compliance with international humanitarian law**, and to this end, immediately lift all sieges on populated areas, allow for immediate medical evacuation of civilians in besieged areas in need of lifesaving care, and end deliberate water cuts used as a weapon of war;
- **Call for independent investigations of all attacks on schools and hospitals** and ensure they feed into the newly-established Impartial and Independent Mechanism to Assist Investigation and Prosecution of Persons Responsible for the Most Serious Crimes under International Law Committed in the Syrian Arab Republic since March 2011.

EGYPT AND SWEDEN ARE LEADING ON HUMANITARIAN ISSUES ON SYRIAN ARAB REPUBLIC.

Recommendations to the Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict

SOMALIA

The Working Group formally received the [SG's report on children and armed conflict in Somalia](#) on February 14 and began negotiating its conclusions, currently underway. For targeted recommendations, see [Watchlist's February 2017 CAC Monthly Update](#).

SUDAN

The [SG's report on children and armed conflict in Sudan](#) became public on March 24, and the Working Group will soon begin its conclusion negotiations. In Sudan, six parties are listed for grave violations against children, including Government security forces. In March 2016, the Government of Sudan signed an Action Plan with the UN to end and prevent the recruitment and use of children by government forces. The listed armed groups, namely JEM, SLA/MM, SLA/AW, and SPLM-N, have also made commitments with the UN towards ending and preventing grave violations. **The Working Group Members should:**

- **Urge the Government and armed groups to allow unimpeded access to humanitarian actors for ensuring safe and rapid delivery of humanitarian assistance to children affected by conflict;**
- **Urge the Government to fully and swiftly implement its Action Plan**, with the engagement from the CTFMR, and furthermore, **allow the UN to monitor its progress on implementation**; donors should support implementation of all action plans;
- **Urge the Government to treat children associated with armed groups primarily as victims guided by the 'best interests of the child' principle and international protection standards;**
- **Express concern about the military use of schools by the Sudan Armed Forces despite the Government's commitment to implement the Safe Schools Declaration**, and call upon the Government to **take concrete measures to protect schools, including by ending and preventing this practice;**
- **Urge the armed groups to continue to engage with the UN on developing and implementing actions plans to end and prevent grave violations against children**, with the CTFMR's support, and to this end, **call upon the Government to facilitate and support that engagement;**
- Request the SG to **ensure continued monitoring and reporting on all six grave violations**, and to that end, the Council should **ensure adequate resources for Child Protection Advisors** deployed to UNAMID; the Government should **allow the UN access to conflict-affected areas** for verification.

THE UNITED KINGDOM IS THE LEAD COUNTRY ON DARFUR. UKRAINE CHAIRS THE 1591 SUDAN SANCTIONS COMMITTEE.

Presidency of the Security Council for April: United States

- Party to the Geneva Convention IV, Optional Protocol to the CRC, and ILO Convention 182; Not a party to the Additional Protocol I or II of the Geneva Convention, the Rome Statute of the ICC, and is the only UN member in the world to not have ratified the CRC; Has not endorsed the Paris Principles and the Paris Commitments, and has not endorsed the Safe Schools Declaration.

NGO resources

- 🔗 Watchlist on Children and Armed Conflict, 2017 Annual Report: Putting Children's Rights Up Front, March 2017
- 🔗 Watchlist on Children and Armed Conflict, "Every Clinic is Now of the Frontline," The Impact on Children of Attacks on Health Care in Afghanistan, March 2017
- 🔗 Human Rights Watch, Protecting Schools from Military Use, Law, Policy, and Military Doctrine, March 2017
- 🔗 Human Rights Watch, No Class, When Armed Groups Use Schools in the Central African Republic, March 2017
- 🔗 Save the Children, Invisible Wounds, The Impact of Six Years of War on the Mental Health of Syria's Children, March 2017
- 🔗 PAX, Siege Watch, The Fifth Quarterly Report on Besieged Areas in Syria, November 2016-January 2017, March 2017

About Watchlist on Children and Armed Conflict

Watchlist on Children and Armed Conflict is a global network of international human rights and humanitarian non-governmental organizations which strives to end violations against children in armed conflicts through local partnerships, reporting and advocacy.

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