

## For Immediate Release

### **UN: List All Warring Parties Responsible for Violations against Children** 21 Nongovernmental Organizations Call for Evidence-Based “List of Shame”

(New York, May 24, 2019) In an [open letter](#) made public today, the Watchlist on Children and Armed Conflict joined 21 nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) in calling on UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres to publish a complete and accurate list of perpetrators of violations against children in his upcoming annual report to the Security Council on children and armed conflict. The Secretary-General is expected to make his decision by the beginning of June regarding which parties will be listed in his 2019 report, which is slated for publication in late July.

The list of perpetrators has become highly politicized in recent years. In 2016, former Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon removed the Saudi-led coalition from his list for killing and maiming children in Yemen after Saudi Arabia threatened to withdraw funding for UN programs. Secretary-General Guterres returned the coalition to the list in 2017, but placed it in a new category for parties that have “put in place measures [...] aimed at improving the protection of children.” In 2018, he “de-listed” the Saudi-led coalition for attacking schools and hospitals, even though his report found that it was responsible for 19 out of 20 UN-verified attacks on schools, and 5 out of 11 UN-verified attacks on hospitals in 2017.

“All perpetrators of grave violations need to be held to the same standard,” said the joint letter. The NGOs urged the Secretary-General to “identify, unequivocally condemn, and list those parties to armed conflict that have committed grave violations against children.”

The listing process serves as a foundation for the UN to engage with parties to conflict, secure concrete commitments through UN action plans, and create real change for children affected by war, the NGOs stated in the letter. Once listed, a party should only be removed after signing and fully implementing an action plan to end violations against children. To date, 28 parties to conflict have signed action plans with the UN.

In a separate [document](#), Watchlist released specific recommendations to the Secretary-General regarding his list. Drawing on UN-verified information and other credible reports, the Watchlist recommended that 12 parties in eight countries be either added to the list, listed for additional violations, or investigated further with a view towards possible listing. Watchlist also recommended that Cameroon and Ukraine be added to the narrative of the report as situations of concern, where children’s rights are at risk. Neither country has previously been included in the Secretary-General’s report.

“Whether in Afghanistan, South Sudan, Yemen, or elsewhere, parties to conflict have shown blatant disregard for international law, and children are increasingly the target,” said Adrienne Lapar, program director for Watchlist. “Secretary-General Guterres should not mince words when it comes to calling out perpetrators of child rights violations in his upcoming report.”

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*Watchlist on Children and Armed Conflict is a New York-based coalition of NGOs that seeks to end violations against children in armed conflict and to guarantee their rights. For more information, please visit: <https://watchlist.org/>.*