

Recommendations to the Security Council

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO (DRC)

Fifteen parties are listed for grave violations in the annexes of the Secretary-General's (SG) 2019 annual report on children and armed conflict, including the Armed Forces of the DRC for rape and other forms of sexual violence against children. MONUSCO's mandate is up for renewal in December, pursuant to SCR 2463 (2019), following an independent strategic review. The SG's latest report (S/2019/783) noted an arrest warrant was issued for the leader of the NDC-R militia for crimes including the recruitment of children. Conflict-related sexual violence reportedly impacted 56 children between April and June 2019 (para. 29), and in November, the Congolese National Police (PNC) signed an action plan to prevent and end conflict-related sexual violence. On November 7, Bosco Ntaganda was sentenced by the International Criminal Court (ICC) to 30 years in prison for crimes against humanity and war crimes, including the recruitment and use of children. Over 300,000 people, mainly women and children, displaced due to violence in eastern Congo remain in precarious living conditions and are vulnerable to harassment, assault, and sexual exploitation. **The Security Council should:**

- Welcome the PNC action plan to prevent and end conflict-related sexual violence, and urge the Government to **prioritize criminal investigations and prosecutions**, including cases involving child victims;
- Urge the Government to sustain the gains of its completed action plan on recruitment and use, and **fully implement its action plan on sexual violence against children; support Country Task Force on Monitoring and Reporting (CTFMR) engagement with non-State armed groups**, including to negotiate action plans as per SCR 1612 (2005) and subsequent resolutions on CAAC;
- Renew MONUSCO's child protection mandate, **preserving the existing capacity of the Child Protection Unit**, and ensuring Child Protection Advisors (CPAs) continue to have direct access to senior mission leadership and political and operational space to engage with all parties to conflict, including non-State armed groups; **maintain distinct budget lines for child protection**;
- **Ensure child protection functions are preserved and adequately funded** in MONUSCO drawdown strategies, and that future withdrawal decisions are guided by clear benchmarks and indicators of tangible progress in protection, stabilization, structural changes in governance, and security.

FRANCE IS THE LEAD COUNTRY ON THE DRC.

MALI

Three armed groups are listed in the annexes of the SG's 2019 annual report on children and armed conflict for recruitment and use, and rape and other forms of sexual violence, and the Platform, including affiliated groups, is listed for recruitment and use. The *Coordination des Mouvements de l'Azawad* (CMA) signed an action plan on recruitment and use and sexual violence in 2017. In December, the SG will report on the implementation of MINUSMA's mandate, pursuant to SCR 2480 (2019). In his latest report (S/2019/782), grave violations against children notably increased (284) compared to the previous reporting period (145), although the numbers were not disaggregated along the six grave violations (para. 69). The first half of 2019 saw a sharp increase in grave violations, particularly killing and maiming, mostly attributed to violence in the central Mopti region. Recruitment and use also doubled compared to the same period in 2018. Over 1,050 schools remain closed or non-functional due to insecurity, impacting access to education for at least 277,600 children. The UN Independent Expert on the human rights situation in Mali visited the country in November, following separate attacks by armed groups in early October and November which resulted in the killing of one civilian and a total of 87 soldiers, and forced displacement of villagers. The Security Council Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict will visit Mali in December. **The Security Council should:**

- Strongly condemn the increasing grave violations against children, and **urge all parties to uphold their obligations** under international humanitarian law (IHL) and international human rights law and **take all possible measures to avoid child casualties**;
- Urge the CMA to **fully implement its action plan** to end and prevent recruitment and use and sexual violence against children, and allow the UN the necessary access to monitor its progress on implementation;

Situations involving parties listed for grave violations against children:

[Afghanistan](#)
[Central African Republic](#)
[Colombia](#)
[Democratic Republic of the Congo](#)
[Iraq](#)
[Mali](#)
[Myanmar \(Burma\)](#)
[Nigeria](#)
[Philippines](#)
[Somalia](#)
[South Sudan](#)
[Sudan](#)
[Syrian Arab Republic](#)
[Yemen](#)

For resolution language on Children and Armed Conflict, download the Children and Armed Conflict smartphone app from Watchlist, Liechtenstein, and Switzerland available on [iPhone](#), [iPad](#), [Android](#), [Blackberry](#), and [the web!](#)



MALI cont'd

- Demand that armed groups **immediately release all children from their ranks** and take action to prevent future recruitment of children and other grave violations, including through the **adoption and implementation of action plans**;
- Call on the Government of Mali to **ensure full implementation of the 2013 protocol** on the transfer of children captured during military operations to child protection actors, and to swiftly **adopt a revised Child Protection Code** which criminalizes child recruitment and use;
- **Call upon all parties to cease attacks on schools and education personnel**, and urge the Government to uphold its obligations under the Safe Schools Declaration;
- Call on all parties to **allow the unimpeded delivery of humanitarian assistance**.

FRANCE IS THE LEAD COUNTRY ON MALI, AND THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC CHAIRS THE SANCTIONS COMMITTEE.

SOUTH SUDAN

The South Sudan People's Defense Forces (SSPDF), including Taban Deng-allied SSPDF, and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army-in-Opposition (SPLA-IO) are listed for grave violations in the annexes of the SG's 2019 annual report. The SSPDF are the only government forces listed for all five 'trigger' violations. In December, the SG will report on the implementation of the UNMISS mandate, pursuant to SCR 2459 (2019). According to his latest report (S/2019/722), the CTFMR verified 39 grave violations, including recruitment and use, killing and maiming, and rape and sexual violence (para. 65). In July, 32 boys were released from SPLA-IO forces. In October, the Security Council visited Juba to follow up on the implementation of the 2018 peace deal. The deadline to form a transitional government has been extended by 100 days to allow for progress on critical pre-transition benchmarks. On October 27, three IOM humanitarian workers were killed in crossfire between two armed groups in Isebi; a female volunteer and a four-year-old child were also abducted. Following the incident, IOM suspended Ebola screening operations in five areas along the border between South Sudan, Uganda, and the DRC. **The Security Council should:**

- Urge all parties to **publicly recommit to maintaining the ceasefire**, and fully implement the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of Conflict in South Sudan of September 2018;
- Demand that all parties **allow the safe passage of humanitarian aid**, especially in areas along the DRC border to allow for Ebola screening and response;
- **Welcome progress** made by parties to the revitalized peace agreement, with support from UNICEF and UNMISS, in screening, verification, and releasing children from armed groups;
- Urge the Government to **swiftly sign and implement the draft comprehensive action plan** addressing all six grave violations; urge the SPLA-IO to continue implementing its action plan on recruitment and use and killing and maiming of children and engage with the UN on child abductions;
- Call on the Government to **cease attacks on and military use of schools** and fully comply with its obligations under the Safe Schools Declaration;
- **Request an update from the Government on accountability for sexual violence and other conflict-related crimes**, including the status of establishing a hybrid court with the African Union and special units within the national justice system to investigate and prosecute these crimes.

THE UNITED STATES IS THE LEAD COUNTRY ON SOUTH SUDAN.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE WORKING GROUP

AFGHANISTAN

In September, the Working Group received the SG's fourth report on children and armed conflict in Afghanistan. Negotiations began in November and are ongoing. For targeted recommendations, see Watchlist's November 2019 CAC Monthly Update.

YEMEN

In June, the Working Group received the SG's second report on children and armed conflict in Yemen. Negotiations began in August and are ongoing. For targeted recommendations, see Watchlist's July 2019 CAC Monthly Update.

Presidency of the Security Council for December: United States

- Party to Geneva Conventions I-IV, Additional Protocol III, the Optional Protocol to the CRC on the involvement of children in armed conflict, and ILO Convention 182; not a party to Additional Protocols I or II of the Geneva Conventions, or the Rome Statute of the ICC, and is the only UN Member State not to have ratified the CRC; has not endorsed the Paris Principles and Paris Commitments, the Vancouver Principles, nor the Safe Schools Declaration.

NGO resources

- ➔ Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack, "It Is Very Painful to Talk About": The Impact of Attacks on Education on Women and Girls, Nov. 25, 2019
- ➔ Save the Children, Hunger Crisis Set to Hit Thousands of Yemeni Children Living in Areas Cut Off from Aid Supplies, Nov. 21, 2019
- ➔ Save the Children, Many Afghan Children Are Afraid to Go Outside, Nov. 19, 2019
- ➔ Human Rights Watch, CAR: Peacekeeping Mandate Renewed as Attacks Continue, Nov. 19, 2019
- ➔ Save the Children, Schools Closed in Gaza and Israel as Eight Palestinian Children Are Killed, Nov. 14, 2019
- ➔ Refugees International, Displacement and Despair: The Turkish Invasion of Northeast Syria, Nov. 12, 2019
- ➔ Norwegian Refugee Council, Seven Things You Should Know About the Crisis in Somalia, Nov. 11, 2019
- ➔ Human Rights Watch, Nigeria Releases 86 More Children and Youth from Military Prison, Nov. 8, 2019

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.

To subscribe to Watchlist updates and recommendations, click here or visit: <http://watchlist.org/#get-involved>

Watchlist on Children and Armed Conflict
919 2nd Avenue, 2nd Floor
New York, NY 10017
Telephone: 212.972.0695
Email: watchlist@watchlist.org
Website: www.watchlist.org

