

Children and Armed Conflict

Recommendations to the Security Council

Monthly Update:
April 2021

SUDAN/SOUTH SUDAN (ABYEI)

The Secretary-General (SG) is expected to report to the Council on the implementation of UNISFA's mandate no later than April 15 and to report on options for UNISFA drawdown and exit by March 31, pursuant to SCR 2550 (2020). UNISFA's current mandate is set to expire on May 15. In his October report ([S/2020/1019](#)), the SG notes that the general security situation in Abyei remains tense, and describes the abduction of two children and death of a four-year-old child as a result of intercommunal violence in April. The report also states that "protection, in particular of children and against gender-based violence, remained the key challenge because of the limited resources available." **The Security Council should:**

- **Strongly condemn all grave violations against children**, call for perpetrators to be held accountable, and urge all parties to uphold their obligations under international humanitarian law (IHL) and human rights law (IHRL);
- **Renew its call to sustain adequate child protection expertise in UNISFA**, including throughout the transition phase, and ensure dedicated capacity and access to monitor and report on child rights violations in Abyei;
- Call for the **protection, rights, well-being, and empowerment of children to be fully incorporated and prioritized in ongoing and future efforts to build and sustain peace at the community level**, drawing on the [Practical Guidance for Mediators](#); and encourage and facilitate consideration of children's views in these processes where possible and compatible with the child's best interests;
- **Ensure that child protection is appropriately considered and prioritized in UNISFA's drawdown and exit strategy**, including monitoring and reporting on grave violations committed against children in Abyei, building on lessons learned, and consulting with the relevant child protection experts.

The United States is the lead country on Sudan/South Sudan (Abyei).

YEMEN

Government forces, including Yemeni armed forces, and four non-State armed groups are listed in the annexes of the SG's 2020 annual report on children and armed conflict (CAAC) for committing grave violations against children. In April, the Security Council will receive its monthly briefing on the implementation of Resolutions 2534 (2020) and 2451 (2018). In January, the Panel of Experts on Yemen (PoE) released its final [report](#), pursuant to SCR 2511 (2020), which found that "all parties continue to commit egregious violations of [IHL] and [IHRL]," and "there has been no significant initiative to hold perpetrators of violations to account." Briefing the Council on March 16, Special Envoy Martin Griffiths warned that [one million](#) internally displaced persons are among the civilians at risk as Houthi and Government forces clash in Marib and urged resuming an inclusive political process as a humanitarian priority. At the same briefing, Under-Secretary-General Mark Lowcock warned that Yemen is "speeding towards a massive famine" and lamented that the recent donor conference raised less than half of the needed funds to fulfill the humanitarian response plan. New analysis by Save the Children reveals that children have made up nearly [one quarter](#) of all civilian casualties in Yemen over the past six years since the war began. Between 2018 and 2020, there were 2,341 confirmed child casualties, though the true number is likely higher. According to UNICEF, at least [eight](#) children have been killed and 33 more injured in attacks since the beginning of March, and a school and a hospital were attacked in Taiz governorate. **The Security Council should:**

- **Strongly condemn escalating violence, including violations against children**, and reiterate demands for a general and immediate cessation of hostilities, in line with the SG's appeal for a global ceasefire, per SCR 2532 (2020) and SCR 2565(2021), as well as respect for IHL, and full, safe, and unhindered humanitarian access;
- **Call on parties to urgently work towards a comprehensive and inclusive peace process that includes meaningful child participation and protection measures**, pursuant to SCR 2427 (2018) and drawing on the [Practical Guidance for Mediators](#);

Situations involving parties listed for grave violations against children:

Afghanistan
Central African Republic
Colombia
Democratic Republic of Congo
Iraq
Mali
Myanmar
Somalia
South Sudan
Sudan
Syria
Yemen

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YEMEN (cont'd)

- In accordance with recommendations from both the UN Group of Eminent International and Regional Experts (GEE) and the PoE, **integrate human rights and accountability dimensions of the conflict in Yemen into the Council's regular monthly meeting on Yemen**, including a focused discussion on potential mechanisms for accountability, justice, and redress for violations of international law;
- As recommended by the GEE, **refer the situation in Yemen to the International Criminal Court (ICC)** to ensure accountability for acts that may amount to war crimes;
- **Call on all parties to swiftly and fully implement the recommendations of the Security Council Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict**, as elaborated in its second [conclusions](#) on the situation of children and armed conflict in Yemen, in particular the need for parties to sign and fully implement action plans with the UN to address and prevent grave violations of children's rights.

The **United Kingdom** is the lead country on Yemen.

Recommendations to the Working Group

In February, the Working Group received the SG's sixth report on children and armed conflict in Myanmar ([S/2020/1243](#)). For targeted recommendations, see [Watchlist's February 2021 CAAC Monthly Update](#).

NGO RESOURCES

Dallaire Institute for Children, Peace, and Security, [Podcast: Women and Girls in Conflict](#), March 26, 2021

Amnesty International, [Nigeria: Boko Haram Brutality against Women and Girls Needs Urgent Response](#), March 24, 2021

Plan International, [Listen to Us: Adolescent Girls in North West and South West Cameroon on Conflict and COVID-19](#), March 24, 2021

Eminent Persons Group, [Keeping the Promise: An Independent Review of the UN's Annual List of Perpetrators of Grave Violations against Children, 2010 to 2020](#), March 17, 2021

Childfund Alliance member WeWorld, [Stuck in Time: Ten Years of War in Syria](#), March 15, 2021

Plan International, et al., [Joint Statement: UN Human Rights Council – 46th Session Interactive Dialogue with the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict](#), March 8, 2021

Save the Children, et al., [Joint Statement: UN Human Rights Council – 46th Session Interactive Dialogue with the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict](#), March 8, 2021

World Vision, [Too High a Price to Pay: The Cost of Conflict for Syria's Children](#), March 4, 2021

Amnesty International, [What I Saw Is Death: War Crimes in Mozambique's Forgotten Cape](#), March 2, 2021

Presidency of the Security Council for April: Viet Nam

Party to Geneva Conventions I-IV, Additional Protocol I, the Convention on the Rights of the Child and its Optional Protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict, and ILO Convention 182; not a party to Additional Protocols II or III of the Geneva Conventions, nor the Rome Statute of the ICC. Has endorsed the Vancouver Principles and the Safe Schools Declaration; has not endorsed the Paris Principles and Commitments.