

Children and Armed Conflict

Recommendations to the Security Council

Monthly Update:
June 2022

CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC (CAR)

Anti-balaka local defense militias, the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), and the *Front populaire pour la renaissance de la Centrafrique* (FPRC), *Mouvement patriotique pour la Centrafrique* (MPC), and *Union pour la paix en Centrafrique* (UPC) as part of the former Séléka coalition are listed in the annexes of the Secretary-General's (SG) 2021 annual report ([S/2021/437](#)) on children and armed conflict (CAAC) for various grave violations against children. In June, the SG will report on the implementation of MINUSCA's mandate, pursuant to SCR 2605 (2021). According to his February report ([S/2022/119](#)), the UN verified 429 grave violations against children between October 2021 and February 2022, including recruitment and use (149), killing and maiming (47), rape and other forms of sexual violence (126), abductions (80), attacks on schools and hospitals (10), and denial of humanitarian access (17). Parties to conflict used eight schools for military purposes. In March, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights noted [allegations](#) of "killings, conflict-related sexual violence, and grave violations and abuses against children," by all parties, including "[government] security forces, supported by [...] armed elements and foreign private contractors." Briefing the 2127 Sanctions Committee in May, the SG's Special Representative for CAAC [stressed](#) that the protection of children must remain central to peace efforts and underlined the need to develop and implement a national prevention plan and nominate child protection focal points within the armed forces.

The Security Council should:

- Call on all parties to uphold their obligations under international humanitarian law (IHL) and human rights law (IHRL), and to **end and prevent grave violations against children**, including by engaging with the UN to sign and implement action plans to end and prevent all six grave violations against children; urge the MPC, FPRC, and UPC to **fully and swiftly implement their respective action plans** and release all children still in their ranks;
- Call on the Government to **fully implement all aspects of the Child Protection Code** and to **ensure perpetrators of grave violations are held accountable** and that child survivors of sexual violence have access to comprehensive, gender-sensitive, and age-appropriate response and protection; encourage the Government to appoint child protection focal points in the armed forces and establish effective measures in cooperation with the UN to end and prevent grave violations by National Defense Forces and other security personnel;
- **Urge the Government to adopt and implement a handover protocol** to facilitate the release of children to civilian child protection actors, prioritizing their reintegration in line with the Paris Principles and Commitments, which the Government has endorsed;
- Call on all parties to **swiftly and fully implement the recommendations of the Security Council Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict** (SCWG-CAAC) as per its fourth [conclusions](#) on CAR.

France is the lead country on CAR.

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO (DRC)

Thirteen parties are listed in the annexes of the SG's latest annual report on CAAC for various grave violations against children, including the Armed Forces of the DRC (FARDC) for rape and other forms of sexual violence. In June, the SG will report on MONUSCO's mandate, pursuant to SCR 2612 (2021). According to the SG's March report ([S/2022/252](#)), the UN verified 419 grave violations against children between December 2021 and March 2022, including 104 children killed or maimed. During the same period, commanders from the *Union des patriotes pour la défense du Congo* in North Kivu and the *Rassemblement congolais contre l'occupation et la balkanisation* in South Kivu signed unilateral declarations and road maps to end and prevent child recruitment and use and sexual violence against children. In May, a primary school in Ituri Province was [attacked](#)—representing the fourth such attack on an education facility in the province since December. **The Security Council should:**

- Urge all parties to **immediately cease recruiting and using children**, release those within their ranks, uphold their obligations under IHL and IHRL, and if they have not yet done so, engage with the UN to **develop, sign, and implement action plans to end and prevent grave violations**;
- Call on the Government to ensure swift and full operationalization of its national strategy for implementation of the Demobilization, Disarmament, Community Recovery, and Stabilization Program and **call on international partners to support and ensure predictable funding for the reintegration of children separated from armed groups**;

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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DRC (cont'd)

- Call on all parties to take immediate and specific steps to **end and prevent rape and other forms of sexual violence against children**, including by ensuring perpetrators of grave violations against children are held accountable and that survivors have access to comprehensive, gender-sensitive, and age-appropriate response and protection; **call on the Government to accelerate efforts to implement aspects of its 2012 action plan relating to sexual violence and the Joint Communiqué signed with the UN to fight sexual violence in conflict**;
- Call on all parties to **immediately cease attacks and threats of attack on educational facilities and personnel**, as well as to refrain from the military use of schools, and encourage the Government implement its commitments under the Safe Schools Declaration;
- Stress the need to **maintain adequate child protection capacity during MONUSCO's transition**, including capacity for monitoring and reporting on grave violations per SCR 1612 (2005) and subsequent resolutions on CAAC;
- Call on all parties to **swiftly and fully implement the recommendations of the SCWG-CAAC** as per its seventh [conclusions](#) on the DRC.

France is the lead country on DRC.

MALI

Platform, including affiliated groups, is listed in the annexes of the SG's latest annual report on CAAC for recruiting and using children, while *Ansar Eddine* and *Mouvement national de libération de l'Azawad* are listed for recruitment and use and rape and other forms of sexual violence. In June, MINUSMA's mandate is up for renewal, per SCR 2584 (2021). As of February, [1,672](#) schools remained closed due to insecurity, mostly in the central and northern regions, preventing 500,000 children from accessing education. According to the SG's March report ([S/2022/278](#)), between January and March, the UN verified a significant increase (57 percent) in grave violations against children as compared to the previous reporting period. Violations included 149 children recruited and used, 91 children killed or maimed, 19 children subjected to rape and other forms of sexual violence, and 38 children abducted. The UN also verified attacks on 61 schools and four hospitals and 34 incidents of denial of humanitarian access. **The Security Council should:**

- **Renew MINUSMA's child protection mandate**, taking child protection fully into account as a cross-cutting issue, and in subsequent budget negotiations, ensure allocation of sufficient resources to enable the mission to fully deliver on this mandate;
- Urge the transitional Government to **strengthen the legal framework on child protection and reinforce efforts to hold perpetrators of grave violations accountable**, including by finalizing the revision of the Child Protection Code, reinforcing national systems to prevent child recruitment and use, and conducting timely and impartial investigations and prosecutions; Urge the *Coordination des mouvements de l'Azawad* and the Platform to swiftly and fully implement their respective action plans;
- Call on the transitional Government and international actors to **ensure that counterterrorism operations fully uphold obligations under IHL and IHRL**, and call for **continued and full implementation of the 2013 handover protocol**, including for children allegedly associated with armed groups designated as terrorist, treating children primarily as victims and prioritizing their reintegration, as guided by the Paris Principles;
- Call on all parties to **immediately cease attacks on schools and education personnel** and urge the transitional Government to continue to uphold its commitments under the Safe Schools Declaration, including by enacting the draft bill on protecting education from attack;
- Call on all parties to **swiftly and fully implement the recommendations of the SCWG-CAAC** elaborated in its third [conclusions](#) on Mali.

France is the lead country on Mali.

Recommendations to the Working Group

Since January 2021, the Working Group has received the SG's reports on children and armed conflict in Myanmar ([S/2020/1243](#)), Syria ([S/2021/398](#)), Afghanistan ([S/2021/662](#)), CAR ([S/2021/882](#)), Colombia ([S/2021/1022](#)), and Iraq ([S/2022/46](#)). For targeted recommendations, see Watchlist's Monthly CAAC updates from [February 2021](#), [June 2021](#), [September 2021](#), [December 2021](#), [February 2022](#), and [March 2022](#), respectively.

Presidency of the Security Council for June: Albania

Party to the Geneva Conventions I-IV, Additional Protocols I-III, the Convention on the Rights of the Child and its Optional Protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict, the Rome Statute of the ICC, and ILO Convention 182. Has endorsed the Paris Principles and Commitments, the Safe Schools Declaration, and the Vancouver Principles.

NGO RESOURCES

Watchlist et al., [Open Letter from 18 NGOs to the UN Secretary-General Calling for a Credible List](#), May 31, 2022

Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack, Oxfam, and World Vision, [Transforming Education to Protect Children's Rights in Emergencies and Crises](#), May 30, 2022

Safeguarding Health in Conflict Coalition, [Unrelenting Violence: Violence Against Health Care in Conflict, 2021](#), May 24, 2022

Save the Children, [Conflict, Climate Disasters Drive Number of Internally Displaced Children to Record 25 Million in 2021](#), May 23, 2022

Save the Children, [Rates of Child Marriage Double Amongst Thousands of Children Displaced by Conflict in Cabo Delgado](#), May 17, 2022

Action on Armed Violence, [At Least Three Killed and 19 Injured in Ninth Recorded Russian Airstrike on a School in Ukraine](#), May 13, 2022

War Child, [The Unseen Scars: Gaza: One Year On](#), May 10, 2022

World Vision, [South Sudan's Hunger Crisis: The Impact on Children in Armed Conflict](#), May 3, 2022