

Children and Armed Conflict

Recommendations to the Security Council

CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC (CAR)

Local militias known as anti-balaka, the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), the Front populaire pour la renaissance de la Centrafrique (FPRC), Mouvement patriotique pour la Centrafrique (MPC), and Union pour la paix en Centrafrique (UPC) are each listed in the annex of the Secretary-General's (SG) latest annual report ([S/2024/384](#)) on children and armed conflict (CAAC) for multiple grave violations against children. In November, MINUSCA's mandate is up for renewal, per SCR 2709 (2023). According to the SG's October report on MINUSCA ([S/2024/730](#)), the UN continued to verify incidents of all six grave violations against children in CAR between June and October 2024. Recruitment and use was the most prominent grave violation during this period, accounting for 35 percent of the total violations. In September, the Government and the UN [signed](#) a joint Handover Protocol on the Protection and Transfer of Children Associated with Armed Forces and Groups to Civilian Authorities. **The Security Council should:**

- Demand that all parties **uphold their obligations under international humanitarian law (IHL) and human rights law (IHRL)**, and that all parties **allow and facilitate the safe, timely, and unhindered delivery of humanitarian assistance to affected populations**, especially children;
- Call for all parties 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;
- Renew MINUSCA's child protection mandate and ensure allocation of **sufficient capacity to MINUSCA's child protection unit to fully deliver on this mandate**;
- Welcome the signing of the October 2024 handover protocol, and call on the Government to swiftly and fully implement its provisions;
- Call on the Government to **fully implement all aspects of the Child Protection Code and the national plan on the prevention of grave violations against children** 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 systems and services, and strengthen preventive measures.

France is the Security Council penholder on CAR.

IRAQ

In the SG's latest annual report on CAAC, Da'esh is listed for all "five" trigger violations against children. The UN verified 61 grave violations against 57 children in 2023, as well as an additional 16 grave violations from previous years. At the end of 2023, 749 children remained detained on national security-related charges, primarily for alleged association with Da'esh. The UN also verified the killing and maiming of 52 children, primarily due to explosive ordnance, as well as sexual violence against three girls, five abductions of children, and one attack on a school. In addition, 16 schools continued to be used for military purposes by the Iraqi Federal Police and Popular Mobilization Forces in 2023. In November, the SG is expected to report on the transition of UNAMI's responsibilities and its residual tasks, pursuant to SCR 2732 (2024). In August, the Security Council Working Group on CAAC (SCWG-CAAC) adopted its conclusions in response to the SG's fifth report on CAAC in Iraq ([S/2024/247](#)). **The Security Council should:**

- Encourage the Popular Mobilization Forces to **continue to take steps toward full implementation of all aspects of its 2023 action plan and to sustain gains toward preventing any future recurrence** of recruitment and use of children;
- Recall that **all children allegedly associated with armed forces and armed groups (CAAFAG) should be treated primarily as victims**, including those allegedly associated with armed groups designated as terrorist by the UN and those who may have committed crimes, their reintegration should be prioritized, and detention should only be used as a last resort and for the shortest appropriate time; encourage the Government to continue its **efforts to repatriate children held in Northeast Syria**, following a rights-based approach, in accordance with their duty under international law;

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Situations involving parties listed for grave violations against children:

Afghanistan
Burkina Faso
Central African Republic
Colombia
Democratic Republic of Congo
Iraq
Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territory
Lake Chad Basin
Mali
Myanmar
Philippines
Somalia
South Sudan
Sudan
Syria
Ukraine
Yemen

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 WATCH LIST ON CHILDREN AND ARMED CONFLICT

IRAQ (Con't)

- Call on the Government to **endorse the Paris Principles and Commitments** and **encourage the development and signing of a handover protocol** to facilitate the release of children to child protection actors for reintegration and other support services; urge donors to provide long-term, predictable funding for reintegration;
- Call on all parties to immediately cease attacks on schools and education personnel and to **take concrete measures to mitigate and avoid the military use of schools, pursuant to SCR 2601 (2021)**; encourage the Government to **uphold its commitments under the Safe Schools Declaration**;
- Call on the Government to **implement international legal instruments on landmines and other explosive remnants of war**, and to promote mine clearance and age-appropriate explosive ordnance risk education, conflict preparedness, and protection for affected communities.
- Call on all parties to **swiftly and fully implement the recommendations of the SCWG-CAAC**, as elaborated in its fifth [conclusions](#) on Iraq.

The **United States** is the Security Council penholder on Iraq.

Recommendations to the Working Group

The Working Group has received the following reports of the SG on children and armed conflict and conclusions remain pending: Myanmar ([S/2020/1243](#)), Syria ([S/2023/805](#)), Sudan ([S/2024/443](#)), and Nigeria ([S/2024/559](#)). For targeted recommendations, see Watchlist's Monthly CAAC updates from [February 2021](#), [December 2023](#), [September 2024](#), and [October 2024](#), respectively.

Philippines

In September, the SG released his seventh report ([S/2024/626](#)) on the situation of CAAC in the Philippines, covering the period from January 1, 2022, to December 31, 2023. During this period, the Country Task Force on Monitoring and Reporting (CTFMR) verified 58 grave violations against 43 children (33 boys, 10 girls), representing a decrease of 49 percent compared to the previous reporting period. Non-State armed groups were responsible for 84 percent of verified violations, with the New People's Army (NPA) accounting for the highest number (24 violations). Recruitment and use (22), killing and maiming (25), and attacks on schools and hospitals (7) were the most verified violations. The Armed Forces of the Philippines were responsible for 12 percent of the violations, primarily related to killing, maiming, and attacks on schools. Additionally, the CTFMR verified the detention of six children for alleged association with armed groups, as well as one incident of the denial of humanitarian access. **The Working Group should:**

- Strongly condemn all ongoing grave violations, **demand that all parties uphold their obligations under IHL and IHRL, and call for all perpetrators of grave violations to be held accountable**;
- Welcome and encourage the Government to **continue efforts to implement the Special Protection of Children in Situations of Armed Conflict Act (Republic Act No. 11188) and Children in Situations of Armed Conflict Handling Protocol**, including with regard to the treatment of children affected by the armed conflict primarily as victims and ensuring their swift handover to civilian child protection authorities; and call for the establishment of and funding for reintegration programs;
- Urge all parties to **immediately end attacks against schools, hospitals, and protected personnel**, including schools in indigenous communities; further call on the Government to **take concrete measures to avoid military use of schools and cease all threats against education personnel**, pursuant to SCR 2601 (2021), to ensure accountability and redress for attacks on education, and to endorse and implement the Safe Schools Declaration;
- Call on the Government to **extend and continue to implement the strategic plan with the Armed Forces of the Philippines**, and **respect and protect humanitarian personnel, assets, and infrastructure**;
- Call for the **protection, rights, well-being, and empowerment of children to be fully incorporated and prioritized in ongoing and future peacebuilding and mediation efforts**, notably by the National Democratic Front of the Philippines, and encourage and facilitate consideration of children's views in these processes where possible and compatible with their best interests, pursuant to SCR 2427 (2018).

Presidency of the Security Council for November: United Kingdom

Party to 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

Save the Children, [Over 2.8 million children under five forced from their home across Sudan](#), October 30, 2024.

Human Rights Watch, [Joint Statement: Defend UNRWA from Israeli Ban and Prevent Catastrophic Consequences for Palestinians](#), October 26, 2024.

Amnesty International, [Haiti: children victims of gang violence amid impunity](#), October 10, 2024.

Norwegian Refugee Council, [The Hidden Casualties of War](#), October 14, 2024.

Save the Children, [Nowhere safe in Gaza as attacks in the north and hospital ablaze in the south put the lives of children and families at risk](#), October 14, 2024.

War Child, [Gaza: For 365 Days Too Long, 1.1 Million Children's Lives Have Been Allowed to Become a War Zone](#), October 8, 2024.

Human Rights Watch, [Northeast Syria: Military Recruitment of Children Persists](#), October 2, 2024.