

Children and Armed Conflict

Recommendations to the Security Council

Monthly Update:
April 2025

HAITI

Haiti is a situation of concern in the Secretary-General's (SG) annual report ([S/2024/384](#)) on children and armed conflict (CAAC). According to UNICEF's Humanitarian Situation Report, Haiti experienced a significant [escalation](#) in grave violations against children in 2024, with incidents surging twelvefold compared to the previous year due to increased violence from armed gangs and self-defense groups. These groups have increased their recruitment of children by 70 percent, with children now comprising up to 50 percent of their members. Armed groups frequently coerce or deceive children with false promises of safety and social recognition, placing them in the center of the conflict. Between May to October 2024 Amnesty International [reported](#) 18 cases of sexual violence including abductions and collective rape perpetrated by gang members. In April, the Security Council is expected to receive its regular report on the implementation of the Multinational Security Support mission (MSS) in Haiti, pursuant to SCR 2751 (2024).

The Security Council should:

- Ensure that the **MSS prioritizes and mainstreams the protection of children** during all operations; supports the release and recovery of children from armed groups and their immediate handover to civilian child protection actors; provides protection to and facilitates access for child protection actors to affected children; and shares with the UN Working Group on CAAC in Haiti information on grave violations against children, as appropriate;
- Encourage the Government of Haiti to fully and consistently implement its **January 2024 handover protocol**, including through sufficient child protection capacities;
- Call on all parties to **take immediate and concrete steps to end and prevent rape and other forms of sexual violence** against children, ensure survivors have access to comprehensive, gender-sensitive, and age-appropriate response systems and services, and strengthen preventive measures;
- Call for **the safe and unimpeded delivery of humanitarian assistance** to affected populations, including children;
- Urge donors to swiftly mobilize additional flexible funds to **support the humanitarian response** in Haiti, including resources for child protection.

The United States is the Security Council penholder on Haiti.

SOUTH SUDAN

The South Sudan People's Defence Forces (SSPDF) are listed in the annex of the SG's latest annual report on CAAC for recruitment and use, killing and maiming, rape and other forms of sexual violence, and abduction. The Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army in Opposition – pro-Machar (SPLM/AIO – pro-Machar) is also listed for recruitment and use, killing and maiming, and abduction. The Secretary-General's 90-day report on South Sudan ([S/2024/776](#)) covering 16 July to 15 October 2024, verified 26 grave violations against 19 children, including abductions, killings, maiming, recruitment, and rape and other forms of sexual violence. The report also documented two verified attacks on schools and four on hospitals, with the South Sudan People's Defence Forces using one school and one hospital for military purposes. Various groups, including the National Salvation Army (NAS), the South Sudan People's Defence Forces, and the SPLM/A-IO, carried out these violations across regions such as Central and Western Equatoria, Unity, and Upper Nile. In March 2025, Special Representative of the SG for CAAC (SRSG-CAAC), [called](#) on all parties in South Sudan to protect children and adhere to the Revitalized Peace Agreement and signed action plans amid recent escalations of violence. In April, UNMISS' mandate is up for renewal, per SCR 2729 (2024). **The Security Council Should:**

- **Renew UNMISS's child protection mandate**, maintaining its child protection capacity, and, in subsequent budget negotiations, ensure distinct budget lines for child protection;
- Urge the Government and parties that have endorsed the 2020 Comprehensive Action Plan to **fully and swiftly implement their commitments**, and urge all parties to **immediately cease all grave violations against children, to facilitate humanitarian assistance and protect humanitarian personnel**, and to release and hand over to child protection actors all children from their ranks;
- Call on all parties to **take immediate and specific steps to end and prevent rape and other forms of sexual violence** against children, ensure survivors have access to comprehensive, gender-sensitive, and age-appropriate response systems and services, and strengthen preventive measures;

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

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, and the web!

WATCH LIST ON CHILDREN AND ARMED CONFLICT

SOUTH SUDAN (Con't)

- Urge the Government to **end impunity for grave violations against children** through timely and impartial investigation and, where appropriate, prosecution; urge allocation of appropriate resources to ensure survivors of grave violations have access to justice, including for rape and other forms of sexual violence; and designate a focal point on CAAC in the Ministry of Justice.

The United States is the Security Council penholder on South Sudan.

YEMEN

The Houthis (who call themselves Ansar Allah) are listed in the annexes of the SG's latest report on CAAC for recruitment and use, killing and maiming, and attacks on schools and hospitals. Security Belt Forces, pro-government militias, including the Salafists, and popular committees, and Al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula, are also each listed for recruitment and use. The Security Council receives a monthly briefing on Yemen, pursuant to SCR 2747 (2024). Since May 2024, the Houthis have **detained** over 50 United Nations, diplomatic, and NGO personnel. In late January, the group captured eight more UN staff members, among them a World Food Programme (WFP) staff member who died in detention on February 10, 2025. In addition, recent US military **airstrikes** in Yemen have resulted in the deaths of ten people, including four children, and injuries to over 20 in the northern Saada Governorate. **The Security Council should:**

- Call for the immediate and unconditional release of all detained UN and civil society workers, and demand that all parties fully comply with obligations under IHL and IHRL, including allowing and facilitating the **immediate, safe, and unimpeded delivery of humanitarian aid** to children and other civilians in need;
- Reiterate support for continued dialogue **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](#);
- Call on the Government of Yemen, the Security Belt Forces, the Amaliqah Brigades and all groups affiliated with the Presidential Leadership Council to **fully and swiftly implement all relevant activities under the Government's 2014 action plan and 2018 roadmap**, including the adoption of a handover protocol on the release of children detained during military operations, further capacity-building for officers and a complaints mechanisms;
- Call on the Houthi's to **fully and swiftly implement the 2022 action plan and handover protocol**, in close collaboration with the UN, notably to continue conducting age assessments in recruitment centers and training of officers on child protection and granting unimpeded access for the UN to all places of detention of children.

The United Kingdom is the Security Council penholder on Yemen.

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](#)), the Democratic Republic of Congo ([S/2024/705](#)), and Mali ([S/2024/883](#)). For targeted recommendations, see Watchlist's Monthly CAAC updates from [February 2021](#), [December 2023](#), [December 2024](#), and [March 2025](#), respectively.

Presidency of the Security Council for April: France

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

Human Rights Watch, [Colombia: Armed Groups Batter Border Region](#), March 26, 2025

Save the Children, [Ukraine: More children killed and injured in past five days than in all of January](#), March 25, 2025

Plan International, [Children in Haiti in danger and out of school because of armed violence](#), March 20, 2025

Save the Children, [Gaza: Children among highest casualties of Israeli airstrikes in return to widespread death and destruction](#), March 18, 2025

Human Rights Watch, [Burkina Faso: Government -Allied Militias Linked to Massacre](#), March 14, 2025

Save the Children, [Children among over 1,000 people killed in renewed fighting in Syria, 45,000 displaced](#), March 10, 2025

Human Rights Watch, [Israel/Lebanon: Hezbollah Attacks Endangered Civilians](#), March 7, 2025

Save the Children, [DRC: More than 375,000 children out of school in North Kivu at risk of violence and recruitment](#), March 6, 2025

ChildFund Alliance, [Her Future at Risk. The Cost of Humanitarian Crises on Women and Girls](#), March 5, 2025