

Working together to protect the security and rights of children.

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Additional support from  
a network of NGOs

May 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2012

H.E. Mr. Ban Ki-moon  
Secretary-General of the United Nations  
New York, N.Y. 10017

Dear Secretary-General:

You have announced the departure of your Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict (SRSG-CAAC) Ms. Radhika Coomaraswamy. She will be leaving her position by 31 July 2012. Watchlist on Children and Armed Conflict believes that the UN system requires continued strong leadership from a dedicated SRSG-CAAC to address the ongoing violations against children in armed conflict and to push the Security Council's Children and Armed Conflict- agenda forward.

As a strong supporter of the CAAC agenda, Watchlist urges you to conduct a timely hiring process consistent with the UN's stated high standards in transparency, accountability and professionalism.

To guarantee that the SRSG-CAAC's indispensable role in global efforts to protect children in armed conflict is preserved, we ask you to ensure that:

- The CAAC agenda has a strong Special Representative of the highest international standing and integrity, with demonstrated commitment to promote and protect the human rights of all children as an independent advocate, and the ability to speak out regardless of where violations occur.
- The recruitment process proceeds in a timely manner, in order to ensure continuity and stability of the work. The selection process must also be transparent.
- There are no 'cost-cutting measures' made, or a restructuring of the mandate, which risk diluting the efforts of this important office, weakening the MRM, and undermining the work of the Working Group – thereby potentially depriving millions of children of an effective advocate to defend their rights with world leaders at the highest level.

The SRSG-CAAC's efforts over the years have been superior and unmatched, both in dedication and effectiveness, resulting in tangible improvements in the lives of girls and boys affected by armed conflict around the world. The Children and Armed Conflict agenda is a highly successful area of UN action, demonstrating the UN's potential to address global human rights issues. We sincerely hope that you will help to ensure that this momentum continues and that children caught in conflict receive the attention they deserve.

Thank you very much.

Sincerely,



Eva Smets  
Watchlist Director



Paul Mikov  
World Vision International  
Steering Committee Chair



Greta Zeender  
Norwegian Refugee Council  
Steering Committee Vice Chair

CC : Ms. Susanna Malcorra, Chef de Cabinet  
CC : Mr. Kim Won-soo, Deputy Chef de Cabinet