



LEILA ZERROUGUI APPOINTED AS SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL FOR CHILDREN AND ARMED CONFLICT

New York, 13 July 2012 – Today, the UN Secretary-General appointed Ms. Leila Zerrougui, of Algeria, as his Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict. Ms. Zerrougui replaces Ms. Radhika Coomaraswamy, who will leave the post at the end of this month.

Watchlist welcomes the appointment of Ms. Zerrougui and looks forward to working with her to protect the security and rights of children in conflict. Ms. Zerrougi has an extensive legal background, and, as the Deputy Head of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO), Ms. Zerrougui has first-hand knowledge of the challenges that children face in conflict zones.

“The selection process was relatively swift and inclusive. Watchlist had the opportunity to share its views on the qualities and skills required for the mandate with the Office of the Secretary-General”, says Eva Smets, Director of the Watchlist on Children and Armed Conflict. “Today’s appointment will enable a direct handover between Ms. Coomaraswamy and Ms. Zerrougui. This is a major improvement from 2005, when an interim SRSG was employed due to the extended delay in the selection procedure. We see this as a recognition of the importance of the mandate.”

Watchlist thanks Ms. Radhika Coomaraswamy for her leadership, dedication and effectiveness, which led to tangible improvements in the lives of girls and boys affected by armed conflict around the world.

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Watchlist on Children and Armed Conflict, established in 2001, is an international network of non-governmental organizations striving to end violations against children in armed conflicts and to guarantee their rights. As a global network, Watchlist builds partnerships among local, national and international NGOs, enhancing mutual capacities and strengths. Working together, we strategically collect and disseminate information on violations against children in conflicts to influence key decision-makers to create and implement programs and policies that effectively protect children.

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