



Explosive Weapons and the Children and Armed Conflict Agenda

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INTRODUCTION

The use of explosive weapons, especially those in populated areas, is widely acknowledged to be a leading cause of harm to civilians in conflict settings. Among the civilian population, children face distinct vulnerabilities, from the specific physical impact of blast injuries caused by explosive weapons on children's bodies, to the complexity of their long-term recovery needs, to the impact on their mental health and development.

In addition to direct harms to children caused by explosive weapons, the use of these weapons in populated areas often damages civilian infrastructure critical to children's survival and well-being and the recovery of communities crucial to children's overall protective environment. Homes, schools, hospitals, water and sanitation facilities, and electrical and other infrastructure may all be damaged by explosive weapons, continuing to impact children's access to basic needs and creating barriers to the full realization of their rights for years even after a conflict has ended.

The United Nations' Children and Armed Conflict (CAAC) agenda has established a key set of tools to address serious harm against children in war, and the threats posed to children by the use of explosive weapons have been consistently acknowledged since its very conception. From landmines and explosive remnants of war (ERW) to the use of explosive weapons with wide-area effects in populated areas with the growing urbanization of warfare, the Secretary-General's annual reports on children and armed conflict are replete with statistics of children affected by explosive weapons. Explosive weapons

are among the leading causes of the killing and maiming of children in armed conflict. Children recruited or used by armed forces or armed groups may be forced to use explosive weapons. Such weapons are frequently used in attacks on schools and hospitals and can hinder humanitarian access for children – all of which constitute grave violations of children's rights in armed conflict, as identified by the United Nations (UN).

This policy note aims to highlight the impact of explosive weapons on children through the lens of the UN's CAAC agenda. It is not meant to provide an exhaustive examination of all areas in which explosive weapons affect children's experiences in conflict. Rather, it is a snapshot to demonstrate a longstanding and pernicious relationship between the use of explosive weapons and grave violations against children, as well as the particular risks these weapons pose for children in war. Finally, this policy note provides recommendations for specific actions that can be taken to mitigate and address the devastating effects of explosive weapons on children in armed conflict.

KEY TERMS

Blast injury: Save the Children's report *Blast Injuries: The Impact of Explosive Weapons on Children in Conflict* defines blast injuries as "the injuries caused by the multiple effects of explosive weapons and the 'overpressure' created by them."¹ There are four types of blast injuries: including primary injuries caused by the blast pressure; secondary injuries caused by fragments and debris, such as shrapnel; tertiary injuries caused by the individual being thrown or hurled into the air and into other objects; and quaternary injuries which include other types of injuries caused by the blast such as burns, inhalation injuries, exposure to toxic material, etc.²

Explosive weapons: This paper uses the working definition provided by the International Network on Explosive Weapons (INEW) and understands "explosive weapons" as those weapons that affect an area around the point of detonation, usually through the effects of blast and fragmentation, including "explosive ordnance" and "improvised explosive devices" – both of which are subject to legal rules in the Convention on Conventional Weapons (CCW).³

Populated areas: This paper uses the working definition provided by INEW and understands "populated areas" to refer to "concentrations of civilians," which is defined in the CCW.⁴

Six grave violations: The United Nations Children and Armed Conflict agenda has identified six grave violations of children's rights in conflict. These include recruitment and use, killing and maiming, rape and other forms of sexual violence, abduction, attacks on schools and hospitals, and the denial of humanitarian access.⁵

¹ Save the Children, "Blast Injuries: The Impact of Explosive Weapons on Children in Conflict," 2019, https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/pdf/ch1325872_2_0.pdf/ (accessed March 24, 2024), p. 3.

² Imperial College London and Save the Children, "The Paediatric Blast Injury Field Manual," 2019, <https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/document/paediatric-blast-injury-field-manual/> (accessed March 24, 2024), p. 49.

³ INEW, "INEW Call Commentary," <https://www.inew.org/about-inew/inew-call-commentary/> (accessed December 3, 2023).

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ See: UN Security Council Resolutions 1261 (1999), 1314 (2000), 1379 (2001), 1460 (2003), 1539 (2004), 1612 (2005), 1882 (2009), 1998 (2011), 2068 (2012), 2143 (2014), 2225 (2015), 2427 (2018), and 2601 (2021).

IMPACT OF EXPLOSIVE WEAPONS ON CHILDREN IN ARMED CONFLICT

The dangers posed to children by explosive weapons have long been acknowledged, including from the very beginning of the UN's CAAC agenda.

In Graça Machel's 1996 landmark report to the UN General Assembly on the impact of armed conflicts on children, an entire section is dedicated to the particular threat that landmines and unexploded ordnance (UXO) pose for children in war, calling this threat "probably the most insidious and persistent danger."⁶ The report details the natural curiosity of children – making them more likely to touch, pick up, and handle found objects and less likely than adults to recognize the potential dangers of doing so. Children may be less likely to be able to read and understand warning signs about mine contamination and may be less able to spot mines as their field of vision is lower to the ground. Many children, particularly those in low-income communities, frequent areas that may be likely to be contaminated with UXO – such as in fields while tending to livestock, gathering water or firewood, or scavenging for scrap metal. Machel further details the more severe physical impact that mines and UXO are likely to have on children's bodies,

the impact on children of losing caregivers or other family members due to explosions, and the impact on the communities' ability to recover post-conflict.

The first annual report of the Secretary-General to the Security Council on children and armed conflict (A/55/163–S/2000/712) similarly dedicated a section to "Ending the threat of landmines" and noted that "each year, between 8,000 and 10,000 children are the victims of landmines."⁷ Subsequent annual reports have expressed concerns regarding the impact on children of the use of explosive weapons, aerial bombardments and drones (2012), indiscriminate attacks on civilian areas or attacks directly targeting civilians, through explosive weapons, airstrikes or the use of terror tactics (2014), and attacks on schools and hospitals linked to the increasing use of airstrikes and explosive weapons in populated areas (EWIPA) (2015).⁸ Security Council thematic resolutions have also drawn attention to particular explosive weapons and the harm they cause to children.

⁶ UN General Assembly, The Impact of Armed Conflict on Children (A/51/306), August 26, 1996, <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/223213?ln=en> (accessed September 29, 2023), para. 111 – 126.

⁷ UN Security Council, Report of the Secretary-General on Children and Armed Conflict (A/55/163–S/2000/712), July 19, 2000, <https://undocs.org/S/2000/712> (accessed December 3, 2023), para. 2, 23-24.

⁸ OSRSG-CAAC, "Study on the Evolution of the Children and Armed Conflict Mandate, 1996-2021," January 2022, <https://childrenandarmedconflict.un.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/Study-on-the-evolution-of-the-Children-and-Armed-Conflict-mandate-1996-2021.pdf> (accessed September 29, 2023), p. 32-35.

Such references have particularly focused on mines, ERW, improvised explosive devices (IEDs), and UXO.⁹ However, Resolutions 1882 (2009), 2143 (2014), and 2427 (2018) also highlight cluster munition, and Resolution 2427 also includes the impact of aerial bombardment.¹⁰

The Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict's (OSRSG-CAAC) January 2022 study on the first 25 years of the CAAC mandate identified "the impact of landmines, ERWs, and IEDs on children in conflict and post-conflict situations" as an area that requires further attention in the future.¹¹ The OSRSG-CAAC's 2023 annual report to the UN General Assembly called on UN Member States to sign and fully implement international legal instruments pertaining to explosive weapons, including anti-personnel mines and cluster munitions, to comply with international humanitarian law, and to prioritize mine clearance, explosive ordnance risk education, victim assistance, and stockpile destruction.¹² In his 2023 annual report, the Secretary-General called on parties to conflict to refrain from using EWIPA and encouraged UN Member States to "adhere to commitments set out in the Political Declaration on Strengthening the Protection of Civilians from the Humanitarian Consequences Arising from the Use of Explosive Weapons in Populated Areas."¹³

Explosive Weapons and the Six Grave Violations

Across a wide range of conflicts included in the UN's CAAC agenda, the use of explosive weapons features regularly in connection with grave violations against children. Explosive weapons are a leading and persistent cause of the killing and maiming of children. Attacks on schools and hospitals frequently involve the use of explosive weapons. Armed groups and armed forces have recruited and used children, exposing them to explosive weapons and even using children to make, carry, or deploy explosive weapons, particularly IEDs. Finally, explosive weapons have featured in attacks on humanitarian workers, destroyed critical civilian infrastructure, and disrupted children's access to lifesaving aid in ways that have amounted to the grave violation of denial of humanitarian access.

Killing and Maiming

The UN Secretary-General's 2023 annual report on children and armed conflict again noted the negative impact for children of the use of explosive weapons, particularly in populated areas. Twenty-six percent of the methods used in killing and maiming children in 2022 involved ERW, IEDs, and landmines.¹⁴ Similarly, in 2021, ERW, IEDs, and landmines led to 2,257 child casualties – over 25 percent of all UN-verified child casualties that year.¹⁵ In 2020, UNICEF carried out an

⁹ See UN Security Council Resolutions 1261 (1999), OP 17; 1379 (2001), OP 8; 2143 (2014), preamble; 2601 (2021), preamble.

¹⁰ See UN Security Council Resolutions 1882 (2009), preamble; 2143 (2014), OP 23; 2427 (2018), OP 12.

¹¹ OSRSG-CAAC, "Study on the Evolution of the Children and Armed Conflict Mandate, 1996-2021," p. 90.

¹² UN General Assembly, Report of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, (A/78/247), July 27, 2023, <https://undocs.org/A/78/247> (accessed April 18, 2024), para. 83.

¹³ UN Security Council, Report of the Secretary-General on Children and Armed Conflict (A/77/895-S/2023/363), June 5, 2023, <https://undocs.org/S/2023/363> (accessed September 22, 2023), para. 336.

¹⁴ UN Security Council, Report of the Secretary-General on Children and Armed Conflict (A/77/895-S/2023/363), para. 12.

¹⁵ UN Security Council, Report of the Secretary-General on Children and Armed Conflict (A/76/871-S/2022/493), June 23, 2022, <https://undocs.org/S/2022/493> (accessed September 22, 2023), para. 7.

analysis that included all types of explosive weapons, not limited to ERW, IEDs, and landmines, and found that as much as 47 percent of all child casualties that year were caused by explosive weapons.¹⁶

UNICEF has expanded on this trend in its report on *25 Years of Children and Armed Conflict*, in relation to the killing and maiming of children, referring to explosive weapons as a “persistent threat to children and their families.”¹⁷ The report goes on to detail child casualty statistics from Afghanistan, Iraq, South Sudan, Syria, and Yemen caused by missiles and bombs dropped in aerial attacks, the proliferation of IEDs, and accidents caused by landmines and ERW.¹⁸

An analysis of disaggregated child casualties as recorded in the Secretary-General’s annual reports on CAAC covering reporting periods of 2012-2022, shows that as many as 30,107 verified incidents of killing and maiming of children were attributed to explosive weapons.¹⁹ [See Table 1]. Such weapons included ERW, IEDs, mines, mortar and shelling, and airstrikes. As a proportion of overall child casualties, killing and maiming attributed to explosive weapons appears to be increasing, though this may be due – at least in part – to changes in the level of data disaggregation included in the Secretary-General’s reports across different years. [See Figure 1]. Since these numbers represent only those incidents that have been verified

by the UN’s Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism (MRM), and that even among those, not all incidents of killing and maiming included in the reports were attributed to a specific type of weapon, the real number is likely to be higher.

TABLE 1

Year	Killing & Maiming Explicitly Attributed to Explosive Weapons
2022	3961
2021	3807
2020	3580
2019	3796
2018	3238
2017	3718
2016	1711
2015	3007
2014	1429
2013	1108
2012	752
Total	30,107

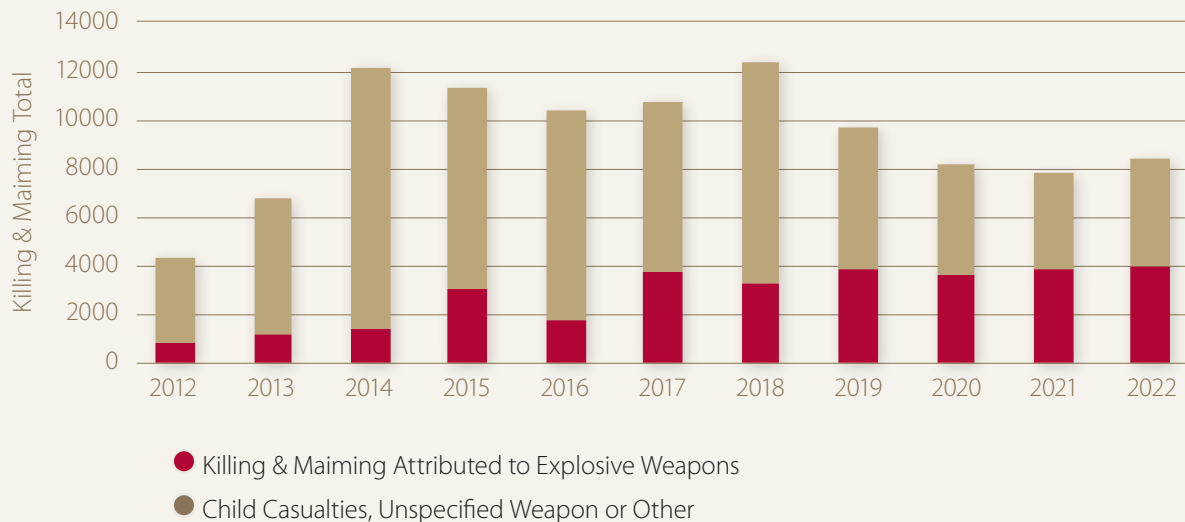
¹⁶ UNICEF, “25 Years of Children and Armed Conflict: Taking Action to Protect Children in War,” June 2022, <https://www.unicef.org/media/123021/file/25%20Years%20Children%20in%20Armed%20Conflict.pdf> (accessed January 11, 2024), p. 17.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Data reported in the annual reports of the Secretary-General on children and armed conflict were analyzed for all reports from 2013 to 2023, covering reporting periods from 2012-2022. Where specific incidents of killing and maiming, as verified by the UN’s MRM, were explicitly attributed to “explosive weapons,” “improvised explosive devices,” “explosive ordnance,” “explosive remnants of war,” “airstrikes,” “shelling,” “mortar and artillery shelling,” “rockets,” and “mines” – these numbers were included in the tally. Where casualties were attributed jointly to explosive weapons and non-explosive weapons (i.e. “shelling and crossfire”), those numbers were excluded.

FIGURE 1:
Proportion of Child Casualties Explicitly Attributed to Explosive Weapons
2012 - 2022



The Secretary-General's 2023 annual report on children and armed conflict includes incidents of the killing and maiming of children specifically attributed to explosive weapons in 22 of 24 country situations included in the report.²⁰ In the remaining two (Mozambique and the Philippines), no details were included on weapon type. For example, 92 percent of all UN-verified incidents of the killing and maiming of children in Syria in 2022 were caused by explosive weapons.²¹ These included 375 children killed and maimed by explosive ordnance, 217 children killed and maimed by ground shelling, and 63 children killed and maimed due to airstrikes. Also in 2022, at least

75 percent of verified child casualties in Afghanistan, Iraq, Pakistan, Yemen, and Ukraine were attributed to explosive weapons.

Outside of the UN's verified numbers, other sources have attempted to record the devastating toll explosive weapons take on children. Action on Armed Violence (AOAV), for example, released an assessment in May 2023 of data it collected on explosive violence and its impact on children from 2013 to 2022.²² Drawing on English-language media reports on incidents of explosive violence, AOAV recorded 18,760 child casualties due to explosive weapons

²⁰ UN Security Council, Report of the Secretary-General on Children and Armed Conflict (A/77/895-S/2023/363). Those 22 situations include: Afghanistan, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Colombia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, Iraq, Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territory, the Lake Chad Basin, Lebanon, Libya, Mali, Myanmar, Nigeria, Pakistan, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Syria, Ukraine, and Yemen.

²¹ Ibid., para. 194.

²² Iain Overton, "The Impact of Explosive Violence on Children: A Global Crisis," AOAV, May 2, 2023, <https://aoav.org.uk/2023/the-impact-of-explosive-violence-on-children-a-global-crisis/> (accessed January 17, 2024).

during the specified period, noting that this is likely to be a significant under-report as the methodology “only captures data where reporters explicitly state that a child has been harmed.”²³ Media reports of casualties from explosive weapons rarely disaggregate victims by age – leaving many child casualties invisible

in the data.²⁴ Of these incidents recorded by AOAV, 89 percent of the child casualties occurred in populated areas. Incidents included child casualties caused by airstrikes, IEDs, shelling, unexploded ordnance, mines, and stockpile explosions.

Child-Specific Impacts – Blast Injuries

In addition to making up a large proportion of the civilian casualties from explosive weapons,²⁵ children also experience different types of injuries than adults who are affected by blasts, and these injuries are more likely to be fatal.²⁶ Due to their physiology and growth, children experience different patterns of injuries than adults, requiring specialist care and posing serious challenges to trauma and rehabilitation teams. A child’s age, gender, disability, and other characteristics are all likely to impact where they are when a blast occurs, how they will react, and physical injuries they incur.²⁷ One study on casualties in the Syrian conflict found that children were as much as seven times more likely to die from blast injuries than adults.²⁸ The areas and proportion of children’s bodies that are impacted in a blast, the severity of the injuries children sustain, and the resulting complex health care requirements to treat children, all contribute to children’s fatality rates.²⁹ According to Landmine and Cluster Muniton Monitor, between 2011 and 2020, between 28 percent and 38 percent of all child casualties from landmines or explosive remnants of war resulted in fatalities each year.³⁰

²³ Ibid. See also AOAV’s Explosive Violence Monitor, accessible at: <https://aoav.org.uk/explosiveviolence/>.

²⁴ Watchlist Interview (virtual), NGO representative, September 12, 2023.

²⁵ In 2022, Landmine and Cluster Muniton Monitor found that children made up 49 percent of all civilian casualties and 35 percent of all casualties from mines and ERW, where age was recorded. Children made up three-quarters of all civilian casualties from ERW. Similarly, in 2022, children made up 72 percent of all casualties from cluster muniton remnants, where the age group was recorded. See: Landmine and Cluster Muniton Monitor, “Landmine Monitor 2023,” https://www.the-monitor.org/media/3389440/landmine-monitor-2023_web.pdf, p. 2, 55; and “Cluster Muniton Monitor 2023,” https://www.the-monitor.org/media/3383234/Cluster-Muniton-Monitor-2023_Web.pdf, p. 2, 42.

²⁶ Save the Children, “Blast Injuries: The Impact of Explosive Weapons on Children in Conflict”; Verity Hubbard, “The Impact of Explosive Weapons on Children’s Physical Health,” AOAV, January 18, 2021, <https://aoav.org.uk/2021/the-impact-of-explosive-weapons-on-childrens-physical-health/> (accessed January 17, 2024); Caroline Brogan, “World’s First Research Hub for Treating Child Blast Injuries Launched,” March 28, 2023, <https://www.imperial.ac.uk/news/243993/worlds-first-research-treating-child-blast/#:~:text=Children%20are%20seven%20times%20more,for%20their%20physiology%20and%20growth> (accessed March 22, 2024).

²⁷ International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), “Childhood in Rubble: The Humanitarian Consequences of Urban Warfare for Children,” May 2023, <https://shop.icrc.org/childhood-in-rubble-the-humanitarian-consequences-of-urban-warfare-for-children-pdf-en.html> (accessed January 17, 2024).

²⁸ Save the Children, “Blast Injuries: The Impact of Explosive Weapons on Children in Conflict,” p. 7.

²⁹ Save the Children, “Blast Injuries: The Impact of Explosive Weapons on Children in Conflict”; Hubbard, “The Impact of Explosive Weapons on Children’s Physical Health.”

³⁰ Landmine and Cluster Muniton Monitor, “The Impact of Mines/ERW on Children,” June 2022, https://www.the-monitor.org/media/3327340/Impact-of-Mines-ERW-on-Children_June-2022.pdf (accessed March 19, 2024).

Children are overwhelmingly likely to experience penetrating injuries to the face, head, and upper body.³¹ Children caught in blasts tend to experience multiple injuries, and some injuries, such as burns, affect a much larger portion of children's bodies than adults.³² Infants and very young children also have thinner skin than older children and adults, making them more likely to experience severe burns.³³ Finally, the greater intensity of injuries experienced by children results in disproportionate requirements for health services, including surgeries.³⁴ Even trained medical staff can lack the specialized training, experience, and equipment for dealing with children with blast injuries in armed conflict.³⁵ For example, the normal values for breathing rate, heart rate, and approximate blood volume differ for children than adults and among age groups and should be known by first responders treating an injured child.³⁶ The Pediatric Blast Injury Field Manual, developed by the Pediatric Blast Injury Partnership led by Imperial College London and Save the Children, is one practical tool that seeks to address this gap.³⁷

Those children who do survive still face complex, long-term recovery and rehabilitation needs, which are frequently difficult to meet in resource-scarce conflict or post-conflict settings. For example, lost limbs or amputations due to blast injuries impact children's skeletal growth and may require multiple surgeries as children grow, and obstacles to their recovery are exacerbated in resource-scarce conflict and post-conflict settings by the lack of prosthetics designed for children and the need for more frequent replacements when children outgrow prosthetics, wheelchairs, and other assistive products.³⁸ The mental health consequences for children who have suffered a blast injury, lost family members to explosive weapons, or been repeatedly exposed to explosive weapons through living in a conflict zone are also profound, and resources to address these consequences are scarce.³⁹

³¹ Save the Children, "Blast Injuries: The Impact of Explosive Weapons on Children in Conflict"; John Milwood Hargrave, "The Impact of Blast Injury on Children: A Literature Review," Centre for Blast Injury Studies, Imperial College London, 2017, <https://www.imperial.ac.uk/media/imperial-college/research-centres-and-groups/centre-for-blast-injury-studies/Literature-Review-on-paediatric-blast-injury.pdf> (accessed March 30, 2024); ICRC, "Childhood in Rubble: The Humanitarian Consequences of Urban Warfare for Children"; Hubbard, "The Impact of Explosive Weapons on Children's Physical Health."

³² Ibid.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ UNICEF, "Assistance to Victims of Landmines and Explosive Remnants of War: Guidance on Child-Focused Victim Assistance," November 2014, <https://www.unicef.org/media/73581/file/Assistance-to-Victims-Landmines-2014.pdf.pdf> (accessed April 15, 2024), p. 47.

³⁷ Imperial College London and Save the Children, "The Paediatric Blast Injury Field Manual."

³⁸ Humanity & Inclusion, "The Waiting List: Addressing the Immediate and Long-term Needs of Victims of Explosive Weapons in Syria," 2019, https://www.hi.org/sn_uploads/document/THE-WAITING-LIST_Final-WEB-SMALLER.pdf (accessed September 28, 2023), p. 19, 20; UNICEF, "Assistance to Victims of Landmines and Explosive Remnants of War: Guidance on Child-Focused Victim Assistance," p. 53; C. Giannou, M. Baldan, and A. Molde, *War Surgery: Working with Limited Resources in Armed Conflict and Other Situations of Violence*, Volume 2, ICRC, <https://www.icrc.org/fr/doc/assets/files/publications/icrc-002-4105.pdf> (accessed April 15, 2024), p. 196.

³⁹ Save the Children, "Blast Injuries: The Impact of Explosive Weapons on Children in Conflict"; ICRC, "Childhood in Rubble: The Humanitarian Consequences of Urban Warfare for Children"; Verity Hubbard, "The Impact of Explosive Weapons on Children's Psychological Health," AOA, January 12, 2021, <https://aoav.org.uk/2021/the-impact-of-explosive-violence-on-childrens-psychological-health/> (accessed March 30, 2024).

Attacks on Schools and Hospitals

In addition to killing and maiming children, explosive weapons are regularly used in attacks on schools and hospitals, including attacks on students, teachers, and protected education and health personnel. Landmines, IEDs, and ERW near schools or hospitals, or along pathways to and from schools or hospitals, can also hinder children's access to education and health care even after a conflict ends.

Data analyzed by AOA found that between 2011 and 2019, there have been "at least 370 incidents of explosive weapons on schools and universities worldwide, resulting in over 5,541 civilian casualties – at least 27 percent of these were children."⁴⁰ Non-state armed groups were found responsible for over one-third of these incidents, and IEDs were used more than any other explosive weapon in attacks on schools.⁴¹ In the 2022 *Education under Attack* report, the Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack (GCPEA) found that explosive weapons were used in approximately one-fifth of all reported attacks on education in 2020 and 2021.⁴² Such attacks involved airstrikes, artillery shelling, landmines, IEDs, and ERW,

and caused damage or destruction to educational facilities and killed or injured students and education personnel. GCPEA recorded attacks using explosive weapons in 25 countries during the reporting period, though the highest numbers of attacks were reported in Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Myanmar, the Occupied Palestinian Territory, Syria, and Yemen.⁴³

The following examples serve to illustrate these dynamics:

- Between 2018 – 2021, GCPEA identified over 200 attacks on schools and universities in **Afghanistan** that involved the use of explosive weapons, resulting in the death and injury of hundreds of students and educators and the destruction and damage of schools. During this period, the proportion of attacks on education involving the use of explosives increased each year.⁴⁴ Similar incidents have been reported by the UN's MRM in 2022, including an incident on September 30, 2022, where a body borne IED was detonated outside of Kaaj Educational Centre while students were taking a mock examination. The resulting explosion killed three girls and maimed an additional 10 children.⁴⁵

⁴⁰ Verity Hubbard, "The Impact of Explosive Weapons on Children's Education," AOA, March 10, 2021, <https://aoav.org.uk/2021/the-impact-of-explosive-weapons-on-childrens-education/> (accessed March 22, 2024).

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² GCPEA, "Education under Attack 2022," 2022, https://protectingeducation.org/wp-content/uploads/eua_2022.pdf (accessed March 22, 2024), p. 8, 32.

⁴³ GCPEA, "Education under Attack 2022," p. 36.

⁴⁴ GCPEA, "The Impact of Explosive Weapons on Education: A Case Study of Afghanistan," September 2021, <https://protectingeducation.org/wp-content/uploads/EWIPA-Afghanistan-2021.pdf> (accessed March 24, 2024).

⁴⁵ UN Security Council, Report of the Secretary-General on Children and Armed Conflict in Afghanistan (S/2023/893), November 21, 2023, <https://undocs.org/s/2023/893> (accessed March 24, 2024), para. 35.

- Attacks on schools in **Myanmar** dramatically increased following the February 2021 military coup.⁴⁶ Explosive weapons such as IEDs and hand grenades were reportedly used in the vast majority of the 103 education facilities that came under attack in Myanmar in May 2021 alone.⁴⁷ The UN also reported attacks on schools using “helicopters, fighter jets, and heavy artillery,” between February 2021 and March 2022.⁴⁸
- In his 2023 report on children and armed conflict, the Secretary-General noted that most attacks on schools and hospitals in **Ukraine** in 2022 involved the use of explosive weapons with wide-area effects.⁴⁹ For example, Amnesty International reported that a pre-school in north-eastern Ukraine was hit by cluster munitions, resulting in the death of one child and injury of another.⁵⁰

Hospitals and other health care facilities have also come under attack from explosive weapons. According to the Safeguarding Health Coalition, health care facilities were damaged or destroyed in 2022

primarily by explosive weapons, including from “air and drone strikes, improvised explosive weapons, missiles, and shelling, and the wide-area effects of these explosives.”⁵¹ The Coalition’s report details attacks on health care facilities or health care workers involving the use of explosive weapons in Afghanistan, Burkina Faso, Mali, Myanmar, Syria, Ukraine, and Yemen. In **Myanmar**, for instance, the Coalition found that at least 36 incidents of the use of explosive weapons against health facilities were reported in 2022 alone. Incidents involved the use of airstrikes, shelling and missiles, and IEDs.⁵² The UN documented that during one of these incidents, on October 20, 2022, the Myanmar military conducted an airstrike on a newly opened hospital in Sagaing Region, killing one woman and injuring five others.⁵³ In **Syria**, at least 13 incidents reported by the Coalition, involved the use of explosive weapons, 11 of these incidents involved damage to health facilities, and two involved the death of one doctor in a car bomb explosion and one health worker in an airstrike.⁵⁴ Physicians for Human Rights found that explosive weapons were

⁴⁶ Watchlist on Children and Armed Conflict, “A Credible List”: Recommendations for the Secretary-General’s 2022 Annual Report on CAAC, April 2022, https://watchlist.org/wp-content/uploads/watchlist_credible-list_final_.pdf (accessed March 24, 2024), p. 8-9.

⁴⁷ Save the Children, “Myanmar: More than 100 Attacks on Schools in May,” June 11, 2021, <https://protectingeducation.org/news/myanmar-more-than-100-attacks-on-schools-in-may/> (accessed December 2, 2023).

⁴⁸ UN Human Rights Council, “Losing a Generation: How the Military Junta Is Attacking Myanmar’s Children and Stealing Their Future,” conference room paper of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar (A/HRC/50.CRP.1), June 14, 2022, <https://www.ohchr.org/en/documents/thematic-reports/ahrc50crp1-conference-room-paper-special-rapporteur-losing-generation> (accessed April 17, 2024), para. 99.

⁴⁹ UN Security Council, Report of the Secretary-General on Children and Armed Conflict (A/77/895-S/2023/363), para. 316.

⁵⁰ Amnesty International, “Cluster Munitions Kill Child and Two Other Civilians Taking Shelter at a Preschool in Ukraine,” February 27, 2022, <https://www.amnestyusa.org/press-releases/cluster-munitions-kill-child-and-two-other-civilians-taking-shelter-at-a-preschool-in-ukraine/> (accessed March 24, 2024).

⁵¹ Safeguarding Health in Conflict and Insecurity Insight, “Ignoring Red Lines: Violence Against Health Care in Conflict, 2022” June 1, 2023, <https://insecurityinsight.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/SHCC-Report-Ignoring-Red-Lines.pdf> (accessed December 2, 2023).

⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 57-59.

⁵³ UN Human Rights Council, Report of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights on the Situation of Human Rights in Myanmar Since 1 February 2022 (A/HRC/52/21), March 2, 2023, https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/hrbodies/hrcouncil/sessions-regular/session52/advance-version/A_HRC_52_21_AdvanceEditedVersion.docx (accessed March 30, 2024), para. 15.

⁵⁴ Safeguarding Health in Conflict and Insecurity Insight, “Ignoring Red Lines: Violence Against Health Care in Conflict, 2022,” p. 90-92.

used in 89 percent of all incidents of damaged or destroyed health infrastructure in **Ukraine** during the first year after the full-scale Russian invasion.⁵⁵

The Military Use of Schools and Hospitals

Though not categorized as a “grave violation,” the Secretary-General’s annual reports on CAAC document and report on verified incidents of the military use of schools and hospitals. In the case of schools, when armed forces and armed groups occupy educational facilities for military purposes, they may lose their protected status as civilian objects under international humanitarian law, becoming legitimate targets for attack. Explosive weapons being stored in or near a school or hospital may detonate, leading to damage or destruction of the facility.⁵⁶ For example, in one incident in April 2019, a school in Mukha’ District, Ta’izz Governorate in Yemen was used to store explosive materials which then exploded.⁵⁷ Similarly, in 2021, the UN recorded no fewer than five incidents in which schools or hospitals were damaged in Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territory due to the explosion of munitions stored in their vicinity.⁵⁸ The presence of mines, munitions, or ERW around schools

that have been used for military purposes creates risks for children returning to school even long after fighting ends.

The Safe Schools Declaration and specifically its Guidelines for Protecting Schools and Universities from Military Use During Armed Conflict call for all weapons, munitions, and UXO or other remnants of war to be cleared from any schools or universities that may have been used for military purposes, following the withdrawal of fighting forces.⁵⁹

Denial of Humanitarian Access

The use of explosive weapons and the presence of mines, IEDs, and ERW can also hinder children’s access to lifesaving humanitarian aid. In some cases, this has amounted to the grave violation of the denial of humanitarian access. Explosive weapons have featured in attacks where humanitarian actors have been killed or injured. For example, the Aid Worker Security Report recorded 16 attacks on humanitarian workers in airstrikes and/or shelling in Ethiopia, Myanmar, Syria, and Ukraine in 2022.⁶⁰ Following the October 7 attacks and subsequent escalation of violence in Israel and the Occupied Palestinian

⁵⁵ Physicians for Human Rights, “Destruction and Devastation: One Year of Russia’s Assault on Ukraine’s Health Care System,” February 21, 2023, <https://phr.org/our-work/resources/russias-assault-on-ukraines-health-care-system/> (accessed March 24, 2024).

⁵⁶ GCPEA, “Education under Attack 2022,” p. 37.

⁵⁷ UN Security Council, Report of the Secretary-General on Children and Armed Conflict in Yemen (S/2021/761), August 27, 2021, <https://undocs.org/S/2021/761> (accessed March 22, 2024), p. 8.

⁵⁸ UN Security Council, Report of the Secretary-General on Children and Armed Conflict (A/76/871-S/2022/493), para. 89.

⁵⁹ Guidelines for Protecting Schools and Universities from Military Use During Armed Conflict, Guiding Principle 2 (c), December 2014, https://protectingeducation.org/wp-content/uploads/documents/documents_guidelines_en.pdf (accessed January 16, 2024). By signing Geneva Call’s Deed of Commitment for the Protection of Children from the Effects of Armed Conflict, non-state armed groups commit to “avoid using for military purposes schools or premises primarily used by children.” Available at: <https://www.genevacall.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/Official-DoC-Protecting-children-in-armed-conflict.pdf>.

⁶⁰ Humanitarian Outcomes, “Revised Aid Worker Security Report: Figures at a Glance 2023,” July 2023, https://www.humanitarianoutcomes.org/sites/default/files/publications/ho_aws-preview_july_23_final.pdf (accessed March 27, 2024).

Territory, an unprecedented number of aid workers have been killed in Gaza, including 178 from UNRWA alone as of April 17, 2024⁶¹ – many of these fatalities occurring in the contexts of airstrikes and shelling.⁶²

Ongoing use of explosive weapons, in particular those in populated areas and those with wide-area effects, can prevent humanitarian responders from being able to reach children with lifesaving aid and may even lead to temporary suspensions of activities due to unacceptable levels of risk to humanitarian workers. The presence of mines, IEDs, and ERW can continue to contaminate areas even after fighting has reduced in intensity or stopped, restricting access to only those areas that have been cleared or leading to the displacement of children and families. In UNICEF's *25 Years of Children and Armed Conflict* report, incidents in which "operations were disrupted and/or hampered by the use of IEDs" are explicitly included in recorded incidents of denial of humanitarian access, particularly among the 11 percent of incidents for which attribution to a particular perpetrator was not possible.⁶³ For example, in an incident in 2021 verified by the UN's MRM, the driver of an international

NGO vehicle was killed and two staff were seriously injured when the vehicle hit explosive ordnance in Ouham-Pendé prefecture in Central African Republic.⁶⁴

The use of explosive weapons, particularly in populated areas, may also lead to damage or destruction of critical infrastructure – such as water and sanitation infrastructure – limiting children's access to lifesaving essential services and leaving them open to a myriad of additional harms, sometimes referred to as "reverberating" impacts, to which they are uniquely at risk. For example, in July 2019, the Bsida water station in Idlib was hit by shelling disrupting water availability for 120,000 persons – this was just one of 46 separate attacks on water facilities in Syria documented by the UN between May and November 2019.⁶⁵ Children suffer quickly and severely when such essential services break down. For example, children may face malnutrition, stunting, or lose access to immunizations when essential infrastructure is destroyed by explosive weapons.⁶⁶ Cholera and diarrheal diseases remain a leading cause of mortality among children under five years old and are strongly linked to poor water, sanitation, and hygiene.⁶⁷

⁶¹ Philippe Lazzarini, "Statement by the Commissioner-General of UNRWA to the Security-Council," April 17, 2024, <https://www.unrwa.org/newsroom/official-statements/statement-commissioner-general-unrwa-security-council> (accessed April 18, 2024).

⁶² See: Aid Worker Security Database, filtered for incidents in 2023, Country: Occupied Palestinian Territory, and Means of Attack: aerial bombardment, shelling, body-born IED, roadside IED, vehicle-born IED, other explosives, landmine. Accessible at <https://www.aidworkersecurity.org/incidents>.

⁶³ UNICEF, "25 Years of Children and Armed Conflict: Taking Action to Protect Children in War," p. 26.

⁶⁴ United Nations Security Council, Report of the Secretary-General on Children and Armed Conflict in the Central African Republic (S/2024/93), January 24, 2024, <https://undocs.org/s/2024/93> (accessed March 25, 2024), para. 95.

⁶⁵ United Nations Security Council, Report of the Secretary-General on Children and Armed Conflict in the Syrian Arab Republic (S/2021/398), April 22, 2021, <https://undocs.org/s/2021/398> (accessed March 30, 2024), para. 42.

⁶⁶ ICRC, "Childhood in Rubble: The Humanitarian Consequences of Urban Warfare for Children," p. 28-31.

⁶⁷ UNICEF, "Water Under Fire, Vol. 3," May 2021, <https://www.unicef.org/media/98976/file/Water%20Under%20Fire%20%20%20Volume3.pdf> (accessed March 30, 2024), p. 29.

Recruitment and Use

Children who have been recruited and used by armed forces and armed groups also face dangerous exposure to explosive weapons violence. In July 2022, for instance, Colombian Armed Forces bombed the camp of a *Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia-Ejército del Pueblo* (FARC-EP) dissident group that had children among its ranks, resulting in the death of three children (two girls and one boy).⁶⁸ In another example from Myanmar in 2020, two boys were killed while being used by a Tatmadaw unit to ensure the path towards a military camp was clear of landmines.⁶⁹ While the boys were ultimately killed as a result of crossfire, the incident serves as another example of how the use of explosive weapons in a conflict may expose children to grave violations.

Children have also been used in the construction, delivery, and detonation of explosive weapons, particularly IEDs, including person-borne IED attacks.

UNICEF's *25 Years of Children and Armed Conflict* report describes a concerning trend of armed forces or armed groups using children to plant or carry explosive devices, particularly in Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, Yemen, and the Lake Chad Basin region.⁷⁰ For example, in north-east Nigeria, the UN has documented at least 203 children (72 percent of whom were girls) being used by Boko Haram-affiliated and splinter groups as carriers of person-borne explosive devices between 2017 and 2020.⁷¹ As far back as 2009, the UN's Assistance Mission in Afghanistan cited "several cases throughout the year of children being used to carry out suicide attacks or to plant explosives, often resulting in their deaths as well as that of numerous civilians."⁷²

⁶⁸ United Nations Security Council, Report of the Secretary-General on Children and Armed Conflict in Colombia (S/2024/161), <https://undocs.org/S/2024/161> (accessed March 26, 2024), para. 30.

⁶⁹ "CTFMR Expresses Grave Concern over Circumstances of Two Children Killed in Fighting between the Tatmadaw and the Arakan Army in Buthidaung, Rakhine State," Statement by the Co-Chairs of the UN Country Task Force on Monitoring and Reporting on Grave Violations against Children in Myanmar, October 14, 2020, <https://www.unicef.org/press-releases/ctfmr-expresses-grave-concern-over-circumstances-two-children-killed-fighting> (accessed December 2, 2023).

⁷⁰ UNICEF, "25 Years of Children and Armed Conflict: Taking Action to Protect Children in War," p. 23.

⁷¹ UNICEF, "25 Years of Children and Armed Conflict: Taking Action to Protect Children in War," p. 23.

⁷² United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), Annual Report on Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict 2009, January 2010, https://unama.unmissions.org/sites/default/files/protection_of_civilian_2009_report_english_1.pdf (accessed March 26, 2024), p. 4.

BEYOND THE SIX GRAVE VIOLATIONS – AREAS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

In addition to the six grave violations, children face a myriad of harms from explosive weapons in ways that are often distinct from adults that warrant further research and response. As is clear from the above, even direct impacts – such as injury and death – of explosive weapons use on children are insufficiently captured in data collection. Efforts are underway and should be supported to capture a more accurate picture of the full range of consequences on children – including the reverberating (or “indirect”) impacts of explosive weapons use, as well as to consider the intersectionality of harms.

Reverberating Impacts

As noted above, the destruction of critical civilian infrastructure from explosive weapons often restricts children’s access to health care, education, nutrition, water and sanitation, and other essential services – all of which create challenges for children’s survival, recovery, growth, development, and long-term health and livelihood prospects.⁷³ Children also face heightened risks of exploitation and abuse when the use of explosive weapons leads to their displacement, particularly when they are unaccompanied or separated from parents and other caregivers.

Mental Health

Exposure to explosive weapons often leads to long-term negative effects on children’s mental health and psychological well-being, with humanitarian responders observing trauma, post-traumatic stress disorder, anxiety, and depression in children in war. Blasts from explosive weapons can be particularly scary for children – they may witness the death or injury of friends and family members, see their homes destroyed, and lose families and caregivers. Studies from Gaza,⁷⁴ Iraq,⁷⁵ and Syria⁷⁶ all point to detrimental impacts on children living through war, including

⁷³ ICRC, “Childhood in Rubble: The Humanitarian Consequences of Urban Warfare for Children,” p. 28-31.

⁷⁴ Save the Children, “Trapped: The Impact of 15 Years of Blockade on the Mental Health of Gaza’s Children,” 2022, https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/pdf/gaza_blockade_mental_health_palestinian_children_2022.pdf/ (accessed April 2, 2024); A. Thabet, Y. Abed, and P. Vostanis, “Emotional Problems in Palestinian Children Living in a War Zone: A Cross-Sectional Study,” *The Lancet*, Vol. 359, Issue 9320, May 25, 2002, [https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736\(02\)08709-3/abstract](https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140-6736(02)08709-3/abstract) (accessed April 2, 2024).

⁷⁵ Save the Children, “An Unbearable Reality: The Impact of War and Displacement on Children’s Mental Health in Iraq,” 2017, <https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/document/unbearable-reality-impact-war-and-displacement-childrens-mental-health-iraq/> (accessed April 2, 2024).

⁷⁶ Save the Children, “Invisible Wounds: The Impact of Six Years of War on the Mental Health of Syria’s Children,” 2017, https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/pdf/invisible_wounds.pdf/ (accessed April 2, 2024).

prolonged exposure to bombardment. Yet, resources to adequately and sustainably address mental health and psychosocial needs of children living in war and its aftermath are severely under-resourced.⁷⁷

Children with Disabilities

Children with disabilities are often overlooked in existing data on children and armed conflict.⁷⁸ Those who had a disability prior to a conflict may have specific needs in an encounter with explosive weapons, i.e. a deaf child may not be able to hear sirens warning of an attack, a child with limited mobility may not be able to flee, especially in cases where caregivers are killed or absent.⁷⁹ Children who are left with a disability as a result of a blast injury face particular obstacles to their recovery and may need sustained medical care and specialized devices or equipment such as prostheses or wheelchairs.⁸⁰ The availability of such devices is often limited in resource-scarce conflict and post-conflict contexts. As above,

children impacted by blast injuries face mental health needs associated with such injuries. They may also face stigma or isolation within their communities, are less likely to be able to return to school, and face additional obstacles to accessing basic services.

Gender-Specific Impacts

Alongside age, disability, and other intersectional factors, gender – and the socio-cultural norms and expectations regarding gender roles – also impacts a child’s experience of armed conflict, including their exposure to explosive weapons.⁸¹ Data collected by the MRM shows that boys are more likely to be killed and maimed in armed conflict, and this pattern appears to extend to child casualties from explosive weapons.⁸² According to the 2023 Landmine Monitor Report, where age and sex were recorded, boys made up 79 percent of child casualties from mines and ERW in 2022.⁸³ The ICRC finds that adolescent boys are disproportionately at risk of direct harm from

⁷⁷ Watchlist on Children and Armed Conflict and Fordham University’s Institute of International Humanitarian Affairs, “Report of the annual policy workshop on children and armed conflict: priorities for the United Nations children and armed conflict agenda 2022,” June 2022, https://watchlist.org/wp-content/uploads/a_76_860-s_2022_476-en.pdf (accessed April 2, 2024).

⁷⁸ OSRSG-CAAC, “Towards Greater Inclusion: A Discussion Paper on the CAAC Mandate and Children with Disabilities in Armed Conflict,” December 2023, <https://childrenandarmedconflict.un.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/Towards-Greater-Inclusion-high-res-no-bleed.pdf> (accessed April 2, 2024).

⁷⁹ Ibid., p. 29-30; Watchlist on Children and Armed Conflict and Fordham University’s Institute of International Humanitarian Affairs, “Report of the annual policy workshop on children and armed conflict: priorities for the United Nations children and armed conflict agenda 2023,” April 2023, https://watchlist.org/wp-content/uploads/2023-watchlist-and-fordham-caac-workshop-report_final.pdf (accessed April 23, 2024).

⁸⁰ Humanity & Inclusion, “The Waiting List: Addressing the Immediate and Long-term Needs of Victims of Explosive Weapons in Syria,” p. 19, 20; UNICEF, “Assistance to Victims of Landmines and Explosive Remnants of War: Guidance on Child-Focused Victim Assistance,” p. 53; C. Giannou, M. Baldan, and A. Molde, *War Surgery: Working with Limited Resources in Armed Conflict and Other Situations of Violence*, p. 196.

⁸¹ United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR), “Gendered Impacts of Explosive Weapons in Populated Areas,” March 2021, <https://unidir.org/publication/gendered-impacts-of-explosive-weapons-in-populated-areas/> (accessed April 17, 2024).

⁸² UNICEF, “25 Years of Children and Armed Conflict: Taking Action to Protect Children in War,” p. 14, 18; OSRSG-CAAC, “The Gender Dimensions of the Six Grave Violations against Children in Armed Conflict,” May 2022, https://childrenandarmedconflict.un.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/UN_Gender-Dimensions-Grave-Violations-Against-Children-WEB-2.pdf (accessed April 2, 2024). p. 17; Save the Children, “Stop the War on Children 2020: Gender Matters,” 2020, <https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/pdf/ch1413553.pdf/> (accessed April 2, 2024), p. 20.

⁸³ Landmine and Cluster Munition Monitor, “Landmine Monitor 2023,” p. 55.

explosive weapons because they are more likely to be out in the communities, and also may be more likely to be perceived as combatants and directly targeted.⁸⁴

The UN-verified numbers on the recruitment and use of children also show boys as more likely to be impacted.⁸⁵ Despite this trend, girls have been specifically targeted in some contexts – such as girls abducted for such use by Boko Haram and affiliated groups – to deploy explosive weapons, for example,

in the form of person-borne IED attacks.⁸⁶ In this context, social norms around gender roles may lead girls to be chosen as a particularly effective vehicle for the delivery of such explosives, as they may be initially less likely to be viewed as a threat.⁸⁷ Similarly, when explosive weapons are used to target schools and hospitals, girls may be differently impacted both directly when girls' schools are targeted or indirectly through the loss of access to health care services.⁸⁸

⁸⁴ ICRC, "Childhood in Rubble: The Humanitarian Consequences of Urban Warfare for Children," p. 8.

⁸⁵ UNICEF, "25 Years of Children and Armed Conflict: Taking Action to Protect Children in War," p. 14, 18; OSRSG-CAAC, "The Gender Dimensions of the Six Grave Violations against Children in Armed Conflict."

⁸⁶ OSRSG-CAAC, "The Gender Dimensions of the Six Grave Violations against Children in Armed Conflict," p. 33; Save the Children, "Stop the War on Children 2020: Gender Matters," p. 21.

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ GCPEA, "Education under Attack 2022," p. 9, 26; OSRSG-CAAC, "The Gender Dimensions of the Six Grave Violations against Children in Armed Conflict," p. 21; Save the Children, "Stop the War on Children 2020: Gender Matters," p. 36.

EFFORTS TO MITIGATE THE IMPACT OF EXPLOSIVE WEAPONS ON CHILDREN

The increasing visibility of civilian harm caused by explosive weapons, particularly in populated areas, has resulted in a number of initiatives to mitigate this harm over the past decade.

These initiatives can be further leveraged to ensure the impact of explosive weapons on children is specifically addressed. One of the most significant of these initiatives is the Political Declaration on Strengthening the Protection of Civilians from the Humanitarian Consequences Arising from the Use of Explosive Weapons in Populated Areas (EWIPA Declaration). Furthermore, existing frameworks, such as the tools available to the CAAC agenda, can be further supported and leveraged to address harm to children caused by explosive weapons. These initiatives seek to improve compliance with obligations under international humanitarian and human rights law – in particular, limits on the means and methods of warfare, respect for key principles of distinction, proportionality, and precaution, and special protections for children⁸⁹ – as well as go

beyond the strict obligations of international law, to support a stronger protective environment for children in armed conflict.

The EWIPA Declaration

In November 2022, 83 States endorsed the EWIPA Declaration.⁹⁰ As of April 12, 2024, that number had risen to 86 endorsements.⁹¹ This initiative represented the culmination of a decade-long advocacy push led by INEW, ICRC, the UN, and a group of “champion” Member States,⁹² alongside three years of negotiation headed by Ireland. The Declaration supports stronger standards to protect civilians and commits endorsers to implement it through national policy and practice.⁹³ The Declaration acknowledges the particular vulnerability of children to “severe and long-lasting indirect effects,” including those which

⁸⁹ For an overview of key relevant international law provisions related to the use of explosive weapons and to the protection of children in armed conflict, see: ICRC, “Childhood in Rubble: The Humanitarian Consequences of Urban Warfare for Children,” p. 15-20; ICRC, “Legal protection of children in armed conflict: Factsheet,” 2003, www.icrc.org/en/document/legal-protection-children-armed-conflict-factsheet; and ICRC, “Explosive Weapons in Populated Areas: Factsheet,” 2023, <https://www.icrc.org/en/document/legal-protection-children-armed-conflict-factsheet>.

⁹⁰ Department of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Ireland, “Protecting Civilian in Urban Warfare,” <https://www.gov.ie/en/publication/585c8-protecting-civilians-in-urban-warfare/> (accessed March 30, 2024).

⁹¹ Department of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Ireland, “EWIPA Dublin Conference: List of Endorsing States, as of 12 April 2024,” <https://www.gov.ie/pdf/?file=https://assets.gov.ie/290326/e4387d29-3e3f-46a4-b83d-210cf26e6944.pdf#page=null> (accessed April 18, 2024).

⁹² In particular: Austria, Chile, Ireland, Mexico, Mozambique, New Zealand, and Norway.

⁹³ INEW, “Dublin Conference to Adopt the Political Declaration on Explosive Weapons,” November 19, 2022, <https://www.inew.org/dublin-conference-to-adopt-the-political-declaration-on-explosive-weapons/> (accessed April 2, 2024).

“stem from damage to or destruction of critical civilian infrastructure.”⁹⁴ The Declaration also recognizes the importance of appropriate data collection – including sex- and age-disaggregated data – to “inform policies designed to avoid, and in any event minimize, civilian harm; aid efforts to investigate harm to civilians; support efforts to determine or establish accountability, and enhance lessons learned processes in armed forces.”⁹⁵ Finally, the Declaration welcomes “work to empower, amplify, and integrate the voices of all those affected, including women and girls,” and encourages “further research into the gendered impacts of the use of explosive weapons.”⁹⁶

The UN Children and Armed Conflict Framework

The UN’s CAAC agenda and the mandate of the SRSG-CAAC continue to provide a crucial framework for the protection of children in war. The unique tools established under this framework can be further leveraged to mitigate the impact of explosive weapons on children in armed conflict. The UN’s MRM continues to monitor and verify reports of grave violations against children, but resources need to be sustained and adequately expanded to meet the growing number of situations included on the agenda, including when conflicts intensify and when

UN missions draw down or exit. Action plans continue to be a crucial tool in the UN’s CAAC framework to spur concrete, time-bound actions to end and prevent grave violations against children in armed conflict. Such plans can include specific provisions for enhancing compliance with international humanitarian law, notably avoiding the use of explosive weapons that are inherently indiscriminate or disproportionate; improving military doctrine, policies, and planning to include child-specific impact assessments; banning the military use of schools and hospitals; and strengthening accountability for grave violations. Dedicated child protection capacity in UN missions and Country Teams, as well as UN Mine Action Service (UNMAS), regularly advocate for explosive ordnance mitigation, including mine clearance, and conduct explosive ordnance risk education and conflict preparedness and protection for affected communities, including children. Conclusions of the Security Council Working Group on CAAC can address specific recommendations related to the use of explosive weapons in situations on the agenda and can follow up on implementation during field visits. The Working Group can also call on donors to provide resources for explosive ordnance risk education, demining and explosive ordnance clearance, as well as long-term physical, psycho-social support for children impacted by explosive weapons.

⁹⁴ EWIPA Declaration, section 1.3.

⁹⁵ EWIPA Declaration, section 1.8.

⁹⁶ EWIPA Declaration, section 1.10.

RECOMMENDATIONS

To All Parties to Conflict:

- All parties to conflict must fully abide by their obligations under international humanitarian law and international human rights law. States should strengthen accountability for violations of international law.
- All parties to conflict should take immediate and concrete steps to end and prevent all incidents of the six grave violations against children by armed forces and any allied armed forces and groups, including through engagement with the UN to develop and implement concrete, time-bound commitments, including action plans, where relevant.

To UN Member States:

- States who have not already done so, should ratify and fully implement international law instruments relevant to the protection of children in war and disarmament.⁹⁷
- States should endorse the Safe Schools Declaration and implement the Guidelines for Protecting Schools and Universities from Military Use During Armed Conflict, the Paris Principles and Commitments, and the Vancouver Principles. Those who have endorsed these frameworks should share lessons learned and good practices toward their implementation.
- States should support financially and diplomatically the UN's CAAC agenda, including the MRM, dedicated child protection capacity in UN peacekeeping and special political missions, and a complete, evidence-based, and impartial listing of perpetrators in the annexes of the Secretary-General's annual reports.
- States should review military doctrine, policies, and planning around the use of explosive weapons, particularly for operating in populated areas, and adopt avoidance policies that restrict the use of EWIPA and endorse and implement the EWIPA Declaration to that end. Those who have endorsed the EWIPA Declaration should, with support from UN agencies and international organizations, ensure its increased visibility and monitoring.
- States' military planning teams should carry out a detailed assessment of the civilian environment, including critical civilian infrastructure, and prioritize options for avoiding and/or mitigating harm to civilians and civilian objects. Advisors with child protection expertise should be included in the planning team and context-specific analyses of the civilian population during the planning phase should include demographic data on children.

⁹⁷ This includes, for example: the Convention on the Rights of the Child and its Optional Protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict (OPAC); the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on their Destruction; the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons which may be deemed to be Excessively Injurious or to have Indiscriminate Effects and its Protocols; the Arms Trade Treaty; the Convention on Cluster Munitions.

- States should systematically replicate good practices within military operations, including on moving theaters of operations away from populated areas, on allowing civilians to evacuate from active conflict zones, and on using early warnings and evacuation protocols that can be understood by all children, including children with disabilities or children in institutions.
- States should ensure that the risks of serious violations against children are central to assessments under article 7 of the Arms Trade Treaty. States must deny or suspend the export, supply, and transfer of arms, weapons, and other military assets to parties to conflict where there is an overriding risk that they will be used to undermine peace and security or to commit or to facilitate serious violations of international law, including gender-based violence and serious violence against children.
- States should improve data collection for the purpose of battle damage estimates that better foresee the intersectional harm done to children, including by disaggregating data by types of weapons used in addition to disaggregating data by age, sex, gender, disability, and relevant diversity characteristics, and by developing tools to assess the expected indirect effects of explosive weapons. In light of evidence of the unique, far-reaching, and long-lasting harms to children, including direct and reverberating impacts, militaries should review and improve their approach to assessing proportionality in the conduct of hostilities.

To All Relevant Stakeholders:

- States and medical professionals working in conflict settings should improve autopsy procedures and strengthen training of forensic practices to better understand the specific and distinct impact of explosive weapons on children, and systematically deploy pediatricians as part of response teams to preemptively work on the trauma and challenges resulting from the use of explosive weapons. The Paediatric Blast Injuries Manual is a resource to support such training.⁹⁸
- UN agencies, humanitarian organizations, and relevant academic institutions should invest in a body of research on the reverberating, mental health, and gendered impacts of explosive weapons on children, as well as the impact on children with disabilities, as urgent priority areas for further research.
- States and donors should ensure the provision of long-term, well-resourced specialized care for children affected by armed conflict and their families, including both physical rehabilitation and mental health and psychosocial support. Mental health and psychosocial support should be fully mainstreamed as an essential component of all humanitarian responses, and also in post-conflict stabilization and reconstruction settings.
- Donors should support scaled-up mine clearance efforts – prioritizing areas children frequent, such as near schools and along pathways to and from schools – as well as resources for explosive ordnance risk education and conflict preparedness and protection.

⁹⁸ Imperial College London and Save the Children, “The Paediatric Blast Injury Field Manual.”

Annex I – Child Protection Framework Endorsements⁹⁹

Member State	OPAC ¹⁰⁰ (2002)	Paris Principles and Commitments (2007)	Safe Schools Declaration (2015)	Vancouver Principles (2017)	EWIPA Declaration (2022)
Afghanistan	Yes - Ratified	Endorsed	Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed
Albania	Yes - Ratified	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed
Algeria	Yes - Ratified	Not Endorsed	Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed
Andorra	Yes - Ratified	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed
Angola	Yes - Ratified	Endorsed	Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed
Antigua and Barbuda	No	Not Endorsed	Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed
Argentina	Yes - Ratified	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed
Armenia	Yes - Ratified	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed	Not Endorsed
Australia	Yes - Ratified	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed
Austria	Yes - Ratified	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed
Azerbaijan	Yes - Ratified	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed
The Bahamas	Yes - Ratified	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed
Bahrain	Yes - Ratified	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed
Bangladesh	Yes - Ratified	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Endorsed	Not Endorsed
Barbados	No	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed
Belarus	Yes - Ratified	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Endorsed	Not Endorsed
Belgium	Yes - Ratified	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed
Belize	Yes - Ratified	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed
Benin	Yes - Ratified	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed	Not Endorsed
Bhutan	Yes - Ratified	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed
Bolivia	Yes - Ratified	Endorsed	Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Yes - Ratified	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed
Botswana	Yes - Ratified	Not Endorsed	Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed



⁹⁹ As of April 12, 2024. Endorsers who are not UN Member States are noted with an asterisk*.

¹⁰⁰ The Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict

◀ *continued*

Member State	OPAC (2002)	Paris Principles and Commitments (2007)	Safe Schools Declaration (2015)	Vancouver Principles (2017)	EWIPA Declaration (2022)
Brazil	Yes - Ratified	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed
Brunei	Yes - Ratified	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed
Bulgaria	Yes - Ratified	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed
Burkina Faso	Yes - Ratified	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed	Not Endorsed
Burundi	Yes - Ratified	Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed
Cambodia	Yes - Ratified	Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed
Cameroon	Yes - Ratified	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed	Not Endorsed
Canada	Yes - Ratified	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed
Cape Verde	Yes - Ratified	Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Endorsed
Central African Republic	Yes - Ratified	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed
Chad	Yes - Ratified	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed	Not Endorsed
Chile	Yes - Ratified	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed
China	Yes - Ratified	Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed
Colombia	Yes - Ratified	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed
Comoros	No	Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed
Republic of the Congo	Yes - Ratified	Endorsed	Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed
Costa Rica	Yes - Ratified	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed
Côte d'Ivoire	Yes - Ratified	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed
Croatia	Yes - Ratified	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed
Cuba	Yes - Ratified	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed
Cyprus	Yes - Ratified	Endorsed	Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Endorsed
Czech Republic	Yes - Ratified	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed
Democratic People's Republic of Korea	No	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed
Democratic Republic of the Congo	Yes - Ratified	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed	Not Endorsed



◀ continued

Member State	OPAC (2002)	Paris Principles and Commitments (2007)	Safe Schools Declaration (2015)	Vancouver Principles (2017)	EWIPA Declaration (2022)
Denmark	Yes - Ratified	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed
Djibouti	Yes - Ratified	Endorsed	Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed
Dominica	Yes - Ratified	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed
Dominican Republic	Yes - Ratified	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed
Ecuador	Yes - Ratified	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed
Egypt	Yes - Ratified	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed
El Salvador	Yes - Ratified	Not Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed
Equatorial Guinea	No	Not Endorsed	Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed
Eritrea	Yes - Ratified	Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed
Estonia	Yes - Ratified	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed	Not Endorsed
Eswatini	Yes - Ratified	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed
Ethiopia	Yes - Ratified	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed
Fiji	Yes - Ratified	Not Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed	Not Endorsed
Finland	Yes - Ratified	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed
France	Yes - Ratified	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed
Gabon	Yes - Ratified	Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Endorsed	Not Endorsed
The Gambia	Yes - Ratified	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed	Not Endorsed
Georgia	Yes - Ratified	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed
Germany	Yes - Ratified	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed
Ghana	Yes - Ratified	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed	Not Endorsed
Greece	Yes - Ratified	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed
Grenada	Yes - Ratified	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed
Guatemala	Yes - Ratified	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed
Guinea	Yes - Ratified	Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed
Guinea-Bissau	Yes - Ratified	Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed
Guyana	Yes - Ratified	Not Endorsed	Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Endorsed



◀ *continued*

Member State	OPAC (2002)	Paris Principles and Commitments (2007)	Safe Schools Declaration (2015)	Vancouver Principles (2017)	EWIPA Declaration (2022)
Haiti	Signed	Endorsed	Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed
Holy See*	Yes – Ratified				Endorsed
Honduras	Yes - Ratified	Not Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed	Not Endorsed
Hungary	Yes - Ratified	Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed
Iceland	Yes - Ratified	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed
India	Yes - Ratified	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed
Indonesia	Yes - Ratified	Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Endorsed
Iran	Signed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed
Iraq	Yes - Ratified	Not Endorsed	Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed
Ireland	Yes - Ratified	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed
Israel	Yes - Ratified	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Endorsed	Not Endorsed
Italy	Yes - Ratified	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed
Jamaica	Yes - Ratified	Endorsed	Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed
Japan	Yes - Ratified	Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed
Jordan	Yes - Ratified	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed
Kazakhstan	Yes - Ratified	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed	Not Endorsed
Kenya	Yes - Ratified	Not Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed
Kiribati	Yes - Ratified	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Endorsed
Kuwait	Yes - Ratified	Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed
Kyrgyzstan	Yes - Ratified	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed
Laos	Yes - Ratified	Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Endorsed
Latvia	Yes - Ratified	Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Endorsed	Not Endorsed
Lebanon	Signed	Not Endorsed	Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed
Lesotho	Yes - Ratified	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Endorsed	Not Endorsed
Liberia	Signed	Endorsed	Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Endorsed
Libya	Yes - Ratified	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed



◀ continued

Member State	OPAC (2002)	Paris Principles and Commitments (2007)	Safe Schools Declaration (2015)	Vancouver Principles (2017)	EWIPA Declaration (2022)
Liechtenstein	Yes - Ratified	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed
Lithuania	Yes - Ratified	Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Endorsed	Not Endorsed
Luxembourg	Yes - Ratified	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed
Madagascar	Yes - Ratified	Not Endorsed	Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Endorsed
Malawi	Yes - Ratified	Not Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed
Malaysia	Yes - Ratified	Not Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed
Maldives	Yes - Ratified	Not Endorsed	Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Endorsed
Mali	Yes - Ratified	Endorsed	Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed
Malta	Yes - Ratified	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed
Marshall Islands	No	Not Endorsed	Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed
Mauritania	No	Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed
Mauritius	Yes - Ratified	Not Endorsed	Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed
Mexico	Yes - Ratified	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed
Federated States of Micronesia	Yes - Ratified	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed
Moldova	Yes - Ratified	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed
Monaco	Yes - Ratified	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed
Mongolia	Yes - Ratified	Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Endorsed	Not Endorsed
Montenegro	Yes - Ratified	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed
Morocco	Yes - Ratified	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed
Mozambique	Yes - Ratified	Not Endorsed	Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed
Myanmar	Yes - Ratified	Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed
Namibia	Yes - Ratified	Not Endorsed	Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed
Nauru	Signed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Endorsed	Not Endorsed
Nepal	Yes - Ratified	Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed
Netherlands (Kingdom of the)	Yes - Ratified	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed



◀ *continued*

Member State	OPAC (2002)	Paris Principles and Commitments (2007)	Safe Schools Declaration (2015)	Vancouver Principles (2017)	EWIPA Declaration (2022)
New Zealand	Yes - Ratified	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed
Nicaragua	Yes - Ratified	Not Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed	Not Endorsed
Niger	Yes - Ratified	Endorsed	Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed
Nigeria	Yes - Ratified	Not Endorsed	Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed
North Macedonia	Yes - Ratified	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed
Norway	Yes - Ratified	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed
Oman	Yes - Ratified	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed
Pakistan	Yes - Ratified	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Endorsed	Not Endorsed
Palau	No	Not Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed
Palestine*	Yes - Ratified		Endorsed		Endorsed
Panama	Yes - Ratified	Endorsed	Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed
Papua New Guinea	No	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed
Paraguay	Yes - Ratified	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed	Not Endorsed
Peru	Yes - Ratified	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed
Philippines	Yes - Ratified	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed
Poland	Yes - Ratified	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed	Not Endorsed
Portugal	Yes - Ratified	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed
Qatar	Yes - Ratified	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed
Republic of Korea	Yes - Ratified	Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed
Romania	Yes - Ratified	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed
Russia	Yes - Ratified	Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed
Rwanda	Yes - Ratified	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Endorsed	Not Endorsed
Saint Kitts and Nevis	No	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Endorsed
Saint Lucia	Yes - Ratified	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines	Yes - Ratified	Not Endorsed	Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Endorsed
Samoa	Yes - Ratified	Not Endorsed	Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed



◀ *continued*

Member State	OPAC (2002)	Paris Principles and Commitments (2007)	Safe Schools Declaration (2015)	Vancouver Principles (2017)	EWIPA Declaration (2022)
San Marino	Yes - Ratified	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed
São Tomé and Príncipe	No	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed
Saudi Arabia	Yes - Ratified	Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed
Senegal	Yes - Ratified	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed
Serbia	Yes - Ratified	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed
Seychelles	Yes - Ratified	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed	Not Endorsed
Sierra Leone	Yes - Ratified	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed
Singapore	Yes - Ratified	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Endorsed	Not Endorsed
Slovakia	Yes - Ratified	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed
Slovenia	Yes - Ratified	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed
Solomon Islands	Yes - Ratified	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed
Somalia	Signed	Endorsed	Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Endorsed
South Africa	Yes - Ratified	Endorsed	Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed
South Sudan	Yes - Ratified	Not Endorsed	Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed
Spain	Yes - Ratified	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed
Sri Lanka	Yes - Ratified	Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Endorsed	Not Endorsed
Sudan	Yes - Ratified	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed	Not Endorsed
Suriname	Yes - Ratified	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed
Sweden	Yes - Ratified	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed
Switzerland	Yes - Ratified	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed
Syria	Yes - Ratified	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed
Tajikistan	Yes - Ratified	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed
Tanzania	Yes - Ratified	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Endorsed	Not Endorsed
Thailand	Yes - Ratified	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Endorsed	Not Endorsed
Timor-Leste	Yes - Ratified	Endorsed	Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed
Togo	Yes - Ratified	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed



◀ *continued*

Member State	OPAC (2002)	Paris Principles and Commitments (2007)	Safe Schools Declaration (2015)	Vancouver Principles (2017)	EWIPA Declaration (2022)
Tonga	No	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed	
Trinidad and Tobago	No	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed
Tunisia	Yes - Ratified	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed	Not Endorsed
Türkiye	Yes - Ratified	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Endorsed
Turkmenistan	Yes - Ratified	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed
Tuvalu	No	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed
Uganda	Yes - Ratified	Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Endorsed	Not Endorsed
Ukraine	Yes - Ratified	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed	Not Endorsed
United Arab Emirates	No	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed
United Kingdom	Yes - Ratified	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed
United States	Yes - Ratified	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Endorsed
Uruguay	Yes - Ratified	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed
Uzbekistan	Yes - Ratified	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed
Vanuatu	Yes - Ratified	Not Endorsed	Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed
Venezuela	Yes - Ratified	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed
Vietnam	Yes - Ratified	Not Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed	Not Endorsed
Yemen	Yes - Ratified	Endorsed	Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed
Zambia	Signed	Not Endorsed	Endorsed	Endorsed	Not Endorsed
Zimbabwe	Yes - Ratified	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed	Not Endorsed



Watchlist on Children and Armed Conflict

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