



New Leadership Announcement: Watchlist on Children and Armed Conflict

Dear Watchlist friends and colleagues,

We are writing to inform you of an upcoming leadership transition at Watchlist on Children and Armed Conflict. With gratitude for his two years of dedicated service, Ezequiel Heffes will be stepping down as Director this month, and we are pleased to welcome Bethany Ellis as the new Director, effective January 22, 2025.

Bethany is well-known in the children and armed conflict community and brings a wealth of experience in engaging with key actors to advance the rights and protection of children in conflict zones. Since joining Watchlist in 2019, Bethany has led the network's advocacy efforts to defend and progress the UN's Children and Armed Conflict agenda. Some of her key contributions include co-organizing seven CAAC policy workshops, supporting three UN Security Council CAAC Working Group chairs throughout their tenures, leading our collective engagement around five Security Council open debates on CAAC, authoring Watchlist's 2024 policy note on explosive weapons and CAAC, and coordinating Watchlist's contributions and advocacy during the negotiation of Security Council resolutions 2601 (2021) and 2764 (2024). With vast experience, she is well-positioned to lead Watchlist into its next chapter.

"We are thrilled to have Bethany take on the role of the new Director. Everyone is confident that her leadership will amplify Watchlist's mission and ensure that children are protected in times of war." – Watchlist Advisory Board

Reflecting on Ezequiel's tenure, Watchlist has achieved significant progress in its mission in and outside New York, in ensuring the organization's financial stability and growth and in strengthening partnerships across sectors with various key stakeholders.

"It has been a privilege to lead Watchlist and its team and work alongside our partners to make a tangible difference for children caught in armed conflict situations." – Ezequiel Heffes

"It is an honor to be entrusted with steering Watchlist's next chapter as the new Director, and I am excited to continue working with our incredibly dedicated staff, members, and partners in our collective efforts to protect all children living in war." – Bethany Ellis

As we look to the future, we are excited about the opportunities ahead under Bethany's leadership. Please join us in thanking Ezequiel for his exceptional service and welcoming Bethany as she takes on this critical role.

Sincerely,

Watchlist Advisory Board Chairs

Faith Nimineh and Rocco Blume