WATCHLIST ON CHILDREN AND ARMED CONFLICT

Employment Opportunity:
Director, Watchlist on Children and Armed Conflict

Job Title: Director, Watchlist on Children and Armed Conflict
Position based in: New York, New York
Application deadline: November 12, 2026

Watchlist on Children and Armed Conflict ('Watchlist') is an international network of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) striving to end violations against children during armed conflicts and to guarantee their rights. We strategically collect and disseminate information on violations against children in conflicts to influence key decision makers, in order to create and implement programs and policies that effectively protect children.

Established in 2001, Watchlist is the leading NGO advocacy network working alongside the UN to push the UN's Children and Armed Conflict (CAAC) agenda forward. Watchlist is a fiscally sponsored project of United Charitable, a US-based 501(c)3 not-for-profit organization, and official employer for this position. An Advisory Board comprised of leading international human rights and humanitarian NGOs provides general supervision, and Watchlist's Associate Members frequently collaborate on advocacy initiatives.

Watchlist is seeking a highly motivated and qualified Director to lead the network.

SCOPE OF WORK

The Director of Watchlist on Children and Armed Conflict provides strategic and organizational leadership for Watchlist. With support and guidance from the Advisory Board, he/she is responsible for overseeing all advocacy, research, partnerships, and communications initiatives of Watchlist. He/she is responsible for fundraising and grant and budget management, and represents Watchlist with external audiences including media, governments, UN representatives, donors, and others. The Director manages relations with Watchlist's Advisory Board and United Charitable, Watchlist's fiscal sponsor. He/she is responsible for hiring and managing a small New York-based secretariat, as well as remotely based consultants. The Director is based in New York and reports to Watchlist's Advisory Board (Chair) and United Charitable.

The Director is an exempt position. Exempt employees are expected to work the appropriate and necessary time in order to complete key assignments and related tasks on schedule.

ESSENTIAL JOB FUNCTIONS

Strategic Planning and Leadership

- Actively build and maintain Watchlist's profile and influence as a leading voice on children and armed conflict.
- Oversee the conceptualization and implementation of Watchlist's key programmatic areas (advocacy, research, partnerships, and communications) and ensure their alignment with strategic goals and priorities.

- Actively seek support of Watchlist objectives from governments, intergovernmental agencies, international organizations, local NGO partners, media, and others.
- Work with Watchlist's staff, members, and partners to implement Watchlist's organizational strategic goals and objectives as outlined in the 2024-2027 strategic plan, and to develop Watchlist's strategic plan for 2028-2030.

Development, Fundraising, and Grants Management

- Develop and implement a fundraising strategy for Watchlist, in coordination and collaboration with Watchlist's Grants and Operations Coordinator, with goal of building an annual operating budget upwards of USD $500,000.
- With support from the Advisory Board and in collaboration and coordination with Watchlist's Grants and Operations Coordinator, identify new donors and cultivate existing ones, prepare funding proposals, and manage and report on grants.
- Prepare and manage Watchlist's overall budget, in close collaboration with United Charitable finance department, and oversee expenditures and grant compliance.

Oversee Watchlist Programs

- In coordination and collaboration with the Senior Advocacy Officer, identify strategic advocacy opportunities, develop and manage advocacy strategies to advance the CAAC agenda at the UN, and oversee implementation of Watchlist's advocacy.
- Oversee the development and production of Watchlist reports, policy papers, and other publications.
- Oversee conceptualization and implementation of Watchlist partnerships, including specific projects with local NGOs, where relevant.
- Oversee all media-related initiatives, including press conferences, press releases, media advisories, and interviews.
- Oversee external communications (i.e., newsletters, website, listservs, and social media).

Build and Maintain Critical Relationships

- Build and maintain strategic relationships with members of the UN Security Council, other relevant governments, the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict (OSRSG-CAAC), UNICEF, the Department of Peace Operations (DPO), the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), and other relevant UN offices and agencies, as well as relevant global policy stakeholders.
- Build and maintain Watchlist's profile and influence, acting as primary spokesperson for public audiences (e.g., media, panels, briefings, conferences) and representing Watchlist at meetings with relevant UN and other high-level policy officials.
- Identify, build, and maintain strong relationships with current and potential donors.
- Build and maintain strong relationships with Advisory Board members and other NGO partners.
- Manage relationship with United Charitable and ensure Watchlist adherence to its policies and requirements.
- Act as Watchlist's focal point for the Alliance for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action, the Safeguarding Health in Conflict Coalition (SHCC), and any other relevant coalitions or fora.

Team Management

- Supervise the Watchlist team, including full-time staff and relevant consultants through coaching, goal setting, staff development, and staff appraisals.

- Conduct all recruitment and hiring for Watchlist staff and relevant consultants.
- With staff, develop strategic plans, reviews, and annual activity plans.

EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE

- Master's degree in international relations, law, humanitarian affairs, human rights, public health, or relevant field required.
- Minimum 10 years' work experience, with at least 2 years' work experience on related child protection issues.
- Previous experience in fundraising, budgeting, financial reporting, and personnel management.
- Previous child protection work with grass-roots NGOs and/or UN, preferably in armed conflict settings.
- Proven political and diplomatic/negotiation skills and previous experience working with NGOs and governments.
- Minimum 3 years of executive-level experience highly recommended.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, AND ABILITIES

- Ability to effectively lead and supervise staff and consultants, and to be flexible and work well under pressure in a fast-paced environment.
- Experience managing complex projects and deadlines involving different partners.
- Experience working with and cultivating government donors is highly desirable.
- Working knowledge of UN system and relevant international and regional organizations.
- Knowledge of international human rights and humanitarian law, with specialization in child rights issues.
- Excellent written and spoken English, including grant writing; excellent editing skills.
- Working knowledge of French, Spanish, Arabic, or other relevant languages highly desirable.
- Willingness and ability to travel periodically, including internationally.

ORGANIZATIONAL RELATIONSHIPS

- The Director reports to United Charitable and the Advisory Board (Chair).
- The Director supervises two full-time staff of Watchlist, including the Senior Advocacy Officer and the Grants and Operations Coordinator, as well as any relevant consultants.

WORK ENVIRONMENT

The successful candidate will be expected to work from Watchlist's office in Midtown Manhattan several days per week, with frequent off-site meetings in New York and flexibility to work remotely on some days. Work is generally sedentary in nature and primarily performed within an office environment, with standard office equipment available.

Candidates must have the legal right to work in the United States. Watchlist on Children and Armed Conflict, a program of United Charitable, is an equal opportunity employer. We strongly encourage and seek applications from women, people of color, including bilingual and bicultural individuals, as well as members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender communities. Applicants shall not be discriminated against because of race, religion, sex, national origin, ethnicity, age, disability, political affiliation, sexual orientation, gender identity, color, marital status, medical condition (cancer-related) or conditions Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) and AIDS-related conditions (ARC). Reasonable accommodation will be made so that qualified applicants with disabilities may participate in the application process. Please advise in writing of special needs at the time of application.

Physical Demands:
Must be able to sit and key data into computer and read computer screen. Must be able and willing to travel occasionally, including to international destinations.

Annual Salary Range: $120,000 - $130,000 USD. United Charitable offers benefits for full-time positions including medical, dental, and vision, long- and short-term disability, and life insurance with premiums covered by the employer at 85 percent. United Charitable also offers a 401k plan with contributions matched up to 5 percent.

HOW TO APPLY
To be considered for this position, please send application materials via email, with the subject line "[Your name] – Director, Watchlist" to watchlist@watchlist.org. All applications must include:

- A résumé;
- A thoughtful cover letter detailing relevant skills, experience, and salary requirements; and
- One brief, unedited writing sample (approximately three to five pages).

Applications will be considered on a rolling basis. The final deadline to apply is November 12, 2026. No phone calls please. Only short-listed candidates will be contacted.