



Recommendations for the 2019 Annual Report of the Secretary-General on Children in Armed Conflict

The UN Secretary-General's annual report on children and armed conflict, including its annexes listing perpetrators of violations against children, serves as an important tool for informing the work of the UN Security Council to protect children affected by war. In particular, the Secretary-General's 'list of shame' serves as a foundation for the UN to dialogue with warring parties, secure concrete commitments to end and prevent violations through UN action plans, and create real change for children affected by conflict.

Watchlist on Children and Armed Conflict urges Secretary-General Antonio Guterres to publish a complete and accurate list of perpetrators in his 2019 annual report. This submission provides Watchlist's recommendations regarding parties that should be *added* to the annexes of the Secretary-General's report and listings that should be *expanded* to include additional violations. In cases where parties have already been listed in the annexes of the Secretary-General's 2018 report on children and armed conflict,¹ Watchlist has not made recommendations.

Using a similar approach to its submissions in previous years, Watchlist conducted a desk review of various publicly available reports for 15 relevant country situations for the period from January 1 to December 31, 2018, to make its recommendations regarding parties to be included in the annexes of the report.

Watchlist's sources include the Secretary-General's 2018 annual report on children and armed conflict, reports from UN agencies and peace missions, treaty bodies, Member State governments, and documentation by Watchlist's members and other reputable international nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) with relevant expertise. In some cases, Watchlist also analyzed credible news media sources. Its review focused on the five "trigger" violations: recruitment and use; killing and maiming; rape and other forms of sexual violence; attacks on schools and hospitals; and abductions.

Please note that Watchlist's review is neither comprehensive nor exhaustive. Given its resource constraints, Watchlist has focused on country situations where it was able to collect publicly available information. Moreover, the information contained in this briefing note is not intended to serve as a complete list of all incidents perpetrated against children in all relevant situations during the reporting period, but rather to highlight specific incidents to support Watchlist's recommendations to list certain parties, add additional violations to parties already listed, or to further investigate certain situations.

¹ See UN Security Council, "Report of the Secretary-General on Children and Armed Conflict" (A/72/865-S/2018/465), May 16, 2018, <https://undocs.org/s/2018/465> (accessed April 30, 2019).

On the basis of our review, detailed below,² Watchlist recommends that the Secretary-General:

1) List the following parties known to have committed grave violations against children in the annexes of his upcoming annual report for specific grave violations:

- Afghanistan
 - Afghan National Defense and Security Forces (ANDSF)³ – *for killing and maiming, attacks on schools and hospitals, and rape and other forms of sexual violence*
 - International Military Forces – *for killing and maiming, and attacks on schools and hospitals*
- Colombia
 - Dissident groups of the *Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia – Ejército del Pueblo* (FARC-EP) – *for recruitment and use of children*
 - Paramilitary successor groups, especially the *Autodefensas Gaitanistas de Colombia* (AGC) – *for recruitment and use of children*
 - *Ejército Popular de Liberación* (EPL) – *for recruitment and use of children*
- Israel and the State of Palestine
 - Israel Defense Forces (IDF) – *for killing and maiming*
- South Sudan
 - Sudan People’s Liberation Army in Opposition (SPLA-IO) – pro-Machar – *for abductions, and rape and other forms of sexual violence*
 - Sudan People’s Liberation Army in Opposition (SPLA-IO) – pro-Taban Deng – *for abductions, and rape and other forms of sexual violence*
- Yemen
 - Saudi and Emirati-Led Coalition – *for attacks on schools and hospitals*

2) Collect further information from the UN country teams for the purposes of determining whether parties should be listed in the annexes of his annual report, or if current listings should be expanded:

- Somalia
 - African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM) – *for killing and maiming, and rape and other forms of sexual violence*
- Syrian Arab Republic
 - International Counter-ISIL Coalition – *for killing and maiming, and attacks on schools and hospitals*
- Philippines
 - Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) – *for killing and maiming*
- Yemen
 - Saudi and Emirati-Led Coalition – *for recruitment and use of children*

3) Include the following situations of concern in the 2019 annual report:

- Cameroon
- Ukraine

² The following submission is organized in four sections: 1) annex I countries, 2) annex II countries, 3) countries in the body of the 2018 report but for which no parties are listed in the annexes, and 4) countries not yet in the report.

³ The ANDSF includes Afghan National Army (ANA), Afghan National Police (ANP), and Afghan Local Police (ALP), as well as the Afghan National Directorate of Security (NDS).

Annex I Countries:

Afghanistan

Afghan National Defense and Security Forces (ANDSF)

Recommendation to List

Killing and maiming

In 2018, the United Nations Assistance Mission to Afghanistan (UNAMA) identified 492 child casualties (236 deaths and 256 injured) resulting from Pro-Government Forces' aerial operations.⁴ In January 2018, the Afghan armed forces carried out military operations in Pachir Agam and surrounding districts of Nangarhar province. Human Rights Watch documented an incident in which a drone strike in Karki on or around January 5, 2018, hit a private vehicle carrying at least eight civilian passengers, including men over age 60, women, and children.⁵ Three people were reportedly killed, and at least five were injured, including a 15-year-old boy who had both feet amputated as a result.

In an incident on April 2, 2018, Afghan Air Force helicopters conducted aerial operations in Dasht-e-Archi district, Kunduz province. They reportedly released multiple rockets and fired heavy machine guns during an open-air "dastar bandi" religious ceremony, next to a madrassa where hundreds of men and boys were gathered. UNAMA verified that there were 95 civilian casualties (30 killed and 65 injured), including 79 children.⁶

Attacks on Schools and Hospitals

In its 2018 annual report on the protection of civilians in armed conflict, UNAMA reports that Afghan Pro-Government Forces were responsible for 16 incidents affecting health care in 2018, including direct attacks or threats of attacks against healthcare facilities and personnel and incidental damage to healthcare facilities. Of these, five incidents were attributed to ANDSF (one to the Afghan National Police, two to Afghan National Army, one to the National Directorate of Security and one jointly to Afghan National Police and the National Directorate of Security), two to pro-Government armed groups, one to undetermined pro-Government forces, one jointly to ANDSF and Taliban, and three jointly to ANDSF and international military forces.⁷

⁴ UNAMA and OHCHR, "Afghanistan Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict: Annual Report 2018," February 2019, https://unama.unmissions.org/sites/default/files/unama_annual_protection_of_civilians_report_2018_-_23_feb_2019_-_english.pdf (accessed April 30, 2019), p. 38.

⁵ Human Rights Watch, "Afghanistan: Weak Investigations of Civilian Airstrike Deaths," press release, May 16, 2018, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2018/05/16/afghanistan-weak-investigations-civilian-airstrike-deaths> (accessed May 8, 2019).

⁶ UNAMA and OHCHR, "Afghanistan Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict: Annual Report 2018," February 2019, https://unama.unmissions.org/sites/default/files/unama_annual_protection_of_civilians_report_2018_-_23_feb_2019_-_english.pdf (accessed April 30, 2019), p. 34.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 15.

Rape and Other Forms of Sexual Violence

In 2018, UNAMA documented three incidents of sexual violence against children by the Afghan National Police.⁸ As UNAMA has noted, however, these figures do not reflect the extent of the problem, given that it is believed that such cases are widely underreported.⁹

International Military Forces

Recommendation to List

Killing and maiming

In 2017, the United Nations verified at least 96 child casualties attributed to international military forces.¹⁰ In its 2018 report on the protection of civilians, UNAMA noted a significant increase in the number of civilian casualties, including children, driven mainly as a result of aerial operations by international military forces.¹¹ UNAMA attributed 674 civilian casualties (406 deaths and 268 injured) in 2018 to international military forces, mainly from aerial operations, representing a significant increase from the previous year. For example, on July 19, 2018, international military forces conducted airstrikes in Chahar Dara district, Kunduz province, which killed 14 women and children and injured one baby.¹²

Attacks on Schools and Hospitals

According to UNAMA, international military forces were implicated in at least seven incidents affecting health care in 2018. Of these, four incidents were attributed directly to international military forces, and three to international military forces jointly with the ANDSF.¹³

Colombia

Dissident groups of the *Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia-Ejército del Pueblo* (FARC-EP)

Recommendation to List

Despite the signing of a comprehensive peace agreement between the Government of Colombia and the *Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia – Ejército del Pueblo* (FARC-EP) in 2016 and the subsequent demobilization of the armed group, groups that emerged from the FARC-EP — often called “FARC dissident groups” — continue to recruit children.

⁸ Ibid., p. 14.

⁹ Ibid., p. 14.

¹⁰ UN Security Council, “Report of the Secretary-General on Children and Armed Conflict” (A/72/865–S/2018/465), May 16, 2018, <https://undocs.org/s/2018/465> (accessed April 30, 2019), para. 23.

¹¹ UNAMA and OHCHR, “Afghanistan Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict: Annual Report 2018,” February 2019, https://unama.unmissions.org/sites/default/files/unama_annual_protection_of_civilians_report_2018_-_23_feb_2019_-_english.pdf (accessed April 30, 2019), p. 5.

¹² Ibid., pp. 40–41.

¹³ Ibid., p. 15.

In 2018, OHCHR received information indicating the continued recruitment and use of children and adolescents by dissident FARC-EP groups (as well as other armed groups and criminal groups), allegedly in rural areas of Amazonas, Caquetá, Chocó, Nariño, Norte de Santander, Putumayo, and Valle del Cauca.¹⁴

For example, child recruitment is a serious problem in the southwestern municipality of Tumaco. As of September 2018, Colombia's Attorney General's Office was investigating 21 cases of child recruitment in Tumaco since January 2017.¹⁵ Human Rights Watch documented 10 cases in Tumaco in which families fled their towns or neighborhoods after FARC-EP dissident groups attempted to recruit a child in their family.¹⁶

Ejército Popular de Liberación (EPL)

Recommendation to List

The *Ejército Popular de Liberación* (EPL) has reportedly recruited children in the northeastern region of Catatumbo, in the border with Venezuela. In April 2018, Colombia's Human Rights Ombudsperson's Office reported that 13 children in the municipality of Tibú had reported attempts to recruit them by the armed groups.¹⁷ The office noted that girls who are recruited often suffer sexual crimes.

Paramilitary successor groups, especially the *Autodefensas Gaitanistas de Colombia* (AGC)

Recommendation to List

Paramilitary successor groups, like the *Autodefensas Gaitanistas de Colombia* (AGC), also continued to recruit children in 2018. For example, in March 2018, the Human Rights Ombudsperson's Office reported that the AGC had engaged in child recruitment in the municipalities of Carmen del Darién and Riosucio, in the department of Chocó.¹⁸

Iraq

People's Defense Forces

Recommendation to Further Investigate for the Purposes of Determining a Listing

Recruitment and Use

¹⁴ OHCHR, "Report of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights on the Situation of Human Rights in Colombia," A/HRC/40/3/Add.3), February 4, 2019, <http://www.hchr.org.co/documentoseinformes/informes/altocomisionado/A-HRC-40-3-Add-3-ENG.pdf> (accessed May 8, 2019), para. 85.

¹⁵ Human Rights Watch, *Recycled Violence: Abuses by FARC Dissident Groups in Tumaco on Colombia's Pacific Coast*, December 13, 2018, <https://www.hrw.org/report/2018/12/13/recycled-violence/abuses-farc-dissident-groups-tumaco-colombias-pacific-coast> (accessed May 8, 2019).

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Human Rights Ombudsperson's Office, Early Alert No. 040-18, April 19, 2018 (on file with Human Rights Watch).

¹⁸ Human Rights Ombudsperson's Office, Note to Minister of Interior on Early Alerts 019-18, 027-18 and 068-18, March 8, 2019 (on file with Human Rights Watch).

According to the Secretary-General's 2018 annual report on children and armed conflict, the United Nations documented the recruitment and use of nine boys in 2017 by the Hêzên Parastina Gel/People's Defense Forces — the armed wing of the Kurdish Workers Party (PKK).¹⁹ These figures are concerning, and further investigation into recruitment and use by the People's Defense Forces is needed to determine if this violation has continued and if the armed group has appropriately addressed previously identified cases.

Somalia

African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM)

Recommendation to Further Investigate for the Purposes of Determining a Listing

Killing and Maiming

In his 2018 annual report on children and armed conflict, the Secretary-General reported that in 2017, the Country Task Force on Monitoring and Reporting (CTFMR) documented the killing and maiming of a total of 21 children by the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM).²⁰ Further investigation is needed to determine if AMISOM has addressed these cases, as well as if there are new cases. If so, AMISOM should be listed in the annexes of the 2019 annual report.

Rape and Other Forms of Sexual Violence

The US Department of State, in its *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2018*, states that AMISOM troops raped women and girls, including internally displaced persons.²¹ In its *2019 World Report*, covering incidents in 2018, Human Rights Watch cites local media reports on the alleged rape of two girls, as well as three women, by Kenyan forces deployed outside of AMISOM forces in Belet-Hawo town, along the Kenyan border.²²

South Sudan

Sudan People's Liberation Army in Opposition (SPLA-IO) – pro-Machar

Sudan People's Liberation Army in Opposition (SPLA-IO) – pro-Taban Deng

Recommendation to List

¹⁹ UN Security Council, "Report of the Secretary-General on Children and Armed Conflict" (A/72/865-S/2018/465), May 16, 2018, <https://undocs.org/s/2018/465> (accessed April 30, 2019), para. 75.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, para. 146.

²¹ US Department of State: Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, "Somalia," *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2018*, <https://www.state.gov/j/drl/rls/hrrpt/humanrightsreport/index.htm#wrapper> (accessed May 5, 2018), section 1(g).

²² Human Rights Watch, "Somalia: Events of 2018," *World Report 2019*, <https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2019/country-chapters/somalia> (accessed May 5, 2018).

Abductions

In 2017, the United Nations documented the abductions of at least nine children by the pro-Taban Deng SPLA-IO (6) and the pro-Machar SPLA-IO (3), noting that many of these children were abducted for recruitment purposes.²³

Abductions continued in 2018, and were often linked to forced recruitment and sexual violence, including rape and sexual slavery. The UN Mission in South Sudan Human Rights Division (UNMISS HRD) and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) reported that between April and August 2018, the pro-Machar SPLA-IO abducted at least 63 girls and 41 boys.²⁴ Through its investigation, UNMISS HRD and OHCHR established that at least 26 of the 41 abducted boys were recruited as child soldiers by the pro-Machar SPLA-IO. Considering the high prevalence of rapes in cases of abduction by the pro-Machar SPLA-IO, UNMISS HRD and OHCHR considered that the girls had been raped and/or sexually enslaved.²⁵

Rape and Other Forms of Sexual Violence

In 2017, the United Nations verified at least five incidents of rape and other forms of sexual violence attributed to the pro-Machar (3) and pro-Taban Deng (2) factions.²⁶

Such incidents continued in 2018. As described above, UNMISS HRD documented grave violations against children committed by the pro-Machar SPLA-IO in Western Equatoria between April and August 2018. The investigation found that at least 63 girls – some as young as 12 – were subjected to sexual violence by the pro-Machar SPLA-IO.²⁷ The October 2018 report details the armed group's modus operandi, in which girls who had been abducted were lined up for commanders to choose as "wives." According to witness accounts, those not chosen were left for other fighters who subjected them to repeated rapes.²⁸

Syrian Arab Republic

International Counter-ISIL Coalition

Recommendation to Further Investigate for the Purposes of Determining a Listing

²³ UN Security Council, "Report of the Secretary-General on Children and Armed Conflict" (A/72/865--/2018/465), May 16, 2018, <https://undocs.org/s/2018/465>, (accessed May 5, 2019), para. 161.

²⁴ UNMISS and OHCHR, "Violations and Abuses Against Civilians in Gbudue and Tambura States (Western Equatoria): April-August 2018," October 18, 2018, <https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Countries/SS/ReportWesternEquatoria17Oct2018.pdf> (accessed May 5, 2019), para. 29.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, para. 39.

²⁶ UN Security Council, "Report of the Secretary-General on Children and Armed Conflict" (A/72/865-S/2018/465), May 16, 2018, <https://undocs.org/s/2018/465>, (accessed May 5, 2019), para. 158.

²⁷ UNMISS and OHCHR, "Violations and Abuses Against Civilians in Gbudue and Tambura States (Western Equatoria): April-August 2018," October 18, 2018, <https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Countries/SS/ReportWesternEquatoria17Oct2018.pdf> (accessed May 5, 2019), para. 39.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, paras. 35-39.

Killing and Maiming

In 2017, the United Nations verified the killing (910) and maiming (361) of 1,271 children in Syria; of these, 43 cases were attributed to the international counter-Islamic State (ISIL) coalition.²⁹ Recently published research by Amnesty International documents 280 child casualties resulting from airstrikes and artillery strikes in the coalition's military campaign in Raqqa between June and October 2017 alone.³⁰

Evidence suggests that international coalition strikes continued to be responsible for civilian casualties in 2018, including the killing and maiming of children. Between October 18 and 21, 2018, strikes by international coalition forces reportedly resulted in the damage or destruction of civilian infrastructure, as well as civilian casualties, including children, according to a report by the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA).³¹ Between July 2017 and July 2018, Human Rights Watch documented four coalition airstrikes on residential buildings, a vehicle, and a mosque, killing at least 63 civilians, including 19 children.³²

The Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic reported that Syrian Democratic Forces reliance on international coalition air power caused a "noticeable increase" in civilian casualties in 2018. For example, the Commission received information regarding an alleged airstrike in Susah village (Dayr al-Zawr) on October 27, 2018, that reportedly killed five members of the same family, including two women, two girls and a boy; and a coalition airstrike in al-Boubadran neighborhood of Abu Kamal on November 15, 2018, that reportedly killed 18 civilians, including 3 women and 14 children.³³ The Commission stated that while these incidents required further corroboration, "numerous attacks by the international coalition resulting in death or injury to civilians, including those striking specially protected objects, such as hospitals and cultural property, raise serious concerns that war crimes and other violations of international law may have been committed."³⁴

Attacks on Schools and Hospitals

In 2017, the United Nations verified four attacks on schools and education personnel, and an additional four attacks on hospitals and medical personnel, which were attributed to the international counter-ISIL coalition.³⁵ The Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic received accounts of an alleged airstrike on November 29, 2018, that struck the Yarmouk women's hospital in Sha'fah city, causing civilian deaths.³⁶

²⁹ UN Security Council, "Report of the Secretary-General on Children and Armed Conflict" (A/72/865-/2018/465), May 16, 2018, <https://undocs.org/s/2018/465> (accessed May 5, 2019), para. 188.

³⁰ Amnesty International, "1,600+ Civilians Who Lived and Died in the War in Raqqa," interactive website, <https://raqqa.amnesty.org/people.html> (accessed May 3, 2019).

³¹ OCHA, "Syria Crisis: Northeast Syria, Situation Report No. 29 (1 October 2018 – 1 October 2018)," https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/North%20East%20Syria%20Sit%20Rep%201-31%20October_FINAL.PDF (accessed May 5, 2019), p. 2.

³² Human Rights Watch research forthcoming (can provide draft upon request).

³³ UN Human Rights Council, "Report of the Independent Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic" (A/HRC/40/70), January 31, 2019, <https://undocs.org/en/A/HRC/40/70> (accessed May 13, 2019), paras. 46-47.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, para. 48.

³⁵ UN Security Council, "Report of the Secretary-General on Children and Armed Conflict" (A/72/865-/2018/465), May 16, 2018, <https://undocs.org/s/2018/465> (accessed May 5, 2019), paras. 190-191.

³⁶ UN Human Rights Council, "Report of the Independent Commission of Inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic" (A/HRC/40/70), January 31, 2019, <https://undocs.org/en/A/HRC/40/70> (accessed May 13, 2019), para. 47.

Human Rights Watch investigated several airstrikes carried out by the coalition in towns near Raqqa, including one on a school that was housing displaced persons in Mansourah on March 20, 2017. According to Human Rights Watch, such attacks raised concerns that coalition forces did not take adequate precautions to minimize civilian casualties.³⁷

Yemen

Saudi and Emirati-Led Coalition

Recommendation to List

Attacks on Schools and Hospitals

The Saudi Arabia and Emirati-Led Coalition (SELC) carried out extensive and well-documented attacks on schools and hospitals throughout 2018. Several of these incidents are already recorded in the February 2019 open letter to the Secretary-General from a group of NGOs.³⁸

Physicians for Human Rights verified a number of attacks on hospitals by the SELC in 2018, including a June 11 bombing, which destroyed a Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) clinic in the Abs district of the Hajjah governorate, and a June 16 attack in Hodeidah, which damaged Yemen's largest medical facility, the al-Thawra Hospital.³⁹ MSF reportedly shared the coordinates of its facility in Abs with the coalition on 12 separate occasions.⁴⁰ The UN Group of International and Regional Eminent Experts also examined the June 11, 2018 incident, among others, and noted with concern the targeting process applied by the coalition.⁴¹

Other incidents of attacks on healthcare facilities and workers in Yemen by the SELC in 2018 include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Between July 26 and 28, 2018, multiple airstrikes reportedly occurred near a reproductive health center and public laboratory in Hodeidah.⁴²
- On November 11, 2018, the SELC carried out an aerial attack on Houthi positions in Hodeidah, including areas around the university, the al-Thawra Hospital, and the 22 May Hospital.

³⁷ Human Rights Watch, "Syria: Events of 2017," *World Report 2018*, <https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2018/country-chapters/syria> (accessed May 5, 2019).

³⁸ Joint Open Letter to UN Secretary-General António Guterres on Yemen, February 25, 2019,

<https://watchlist.org/publications/open-letter-to-un-secretary-general-antonio-guterres-on-yemen/>.

³⁹ Physicians for Human Rights, "Yemen: Attacks on Health October 2018 Newsletter," October 12, 2018, <https://phr.org/resources/yemen-attacks-on-health-october-2018-newsletter/> (accessed May 5, 2019).

⁴⁰ UN Human Rights Council, "Situation of Human Rights in Yemen, including violations and abuses since September 2014" (A/HRC/43), August 17, 2018, https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Countries/YE/A_HRC_39_43_EN.docx (accessed May 5, 2019), para. 36.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, para. 37.

⁴² Office of the Resident Coordinator and Humanitarian Coordinator for Yemen, "Civilians at extreme risk from airstrikes in Hodeidah," press statement, July 29, 2018, <https://reliefweb.int/report/yemen/civilians-extreme-risk-airstrikes-hodeidah-enar> (accessed May 5, 2019).

According to witness accounts, patients and medical workers were forced to flee the bombardment.⁴³

Recommendation to Further Investigate for the Purposes of Determining a Listing

Recruitment and Use

In August 2018, the Group of International and Regional Eminent Experts on Yemen reported that it had found evidence that all sides of the conflict, including coalition-backed forces, had recruited children into armed groups and forced them to participate actively in hostilities.⁴⁴

A *New York Times* investigation published in December 2018 asserted that the SELC had recruited Darfuri children from Sudan to fight in the war in Yemen. The investigation alleged that children comprised at least 20 percent of the coalition's infantry units, while two fighters interviewed claimed that children comprised more than 40 percent of their total unit.⁴⁵

An April 2019 Al-Jazeera report alleges to contain exclusive footage documenting the SELC's recruitment and use of Yemeni children.⁴⁶

Annex II Countries

The Philippines

Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP)

Recommendation to Further Investigate for the Purposes of Determining a Listing

Killing and Maiming

The United Nations verified the killing and maiming of 33 children (16 killed, 17 injured; 21 boys, 12 girls), according to the Secretary-General's last annual report covering 2017. Twelve of these cases were attributed to the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP).⁴⁷ Further investigation is needed to determine if the AFP has addressed these cases, as well as if there are new cases. If so, the AFP should be listed in the annexes of the 2019 annual report.

⁴³ Amnesty International, "Yemen: Eyewitness describes terrifying scenes as explosions rock hospital in central Hodeidah," press release, November 12, 2018, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2018/11/yemen-eyewitness-describes-terrifying-scenes-as-explosions-rock-hospital-in-central-hodeidah/> (accessed May 3, 2019).

⁴⁴ UN Human Rights Council, "Situation of human rights in Yemen, including violations and abuses since September 2014" (A/HRC/39/43), August 17, 2018, https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Countries/YE/A_HRC_39_43_EN.docx (accessed May 5, 2019), p. 13.

⁴⁵ Kirkpatrick, David D., "On the Front Line of the Saudi War in Yemen: Child Soldiers in Darfur," *The New York Times*, December 28, 2018, <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/12/28/world/africa/saudi-sudan-yemen-child-fighters.html> (accessed May 5, 2019).

⁴⁶ "Exclusive: Yemeni child soldiers recruited by Saudi-UAE coalition," *Al Jazeera*, April 1, 2019, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2019/03/exclusive-yemeni-child-soldiers-recruited-saudi-uae-coalition-190329132329547.html> (accessed May 5, 2019).

⁴⁷ UN Security Council, "Report of the Secretary-General on Children and Armed Conflict" (A/72/865-S/2018/465), May 16, 2018, <https://undocs.org/s/2018/465> (accessed April 30, 2019), para. 244.

Countries for Which No Parties Are Listed

Israel and the State of Palestine

Israel Defense Forces (IDF)

Recommendation to List

Killing and Maiming

The UN Commission of Inquiry on the 2018 Gaza Protests determined that Israeli forces killed 34 children and injured 1,642 during protests alongside the fences separating Israel and Gaza between March 30 and December 31, 2018.⁴⁸ Thirty-two children were killed and 940 injured by live fire, according to the Commission, with snipers in some case shooting at them “knowing that they were children.”⁴⁹ The Commission investigated the killings of 25 children and concluded that in none of these cases did the children “pose an imminent threat of death or serious injury” to Israeli forces when they were shot. In four cases, “children were shot as they walked or ran away from the fences.”⁵⁰

Although it did not investigate every case, Human Rights Watch research found that Israeli forces repeatedly fired on protesters who posed no imminent threat to life, pursuant to expansive open-fire orders from senior officials that contravene international human rights law standards, and may amount to war crimes since international humanitarian law applies given Israel’s effective control over Gaza.⁵¹

Countries Not Yet in the Report:

Cameroon

Recommendation to Include in the 2019 Annual Report as a Situation of Concern

While Cameroon has not been included in the Secretary-General’s annual report on children and armed conflict, it is referenced in the 2018 report in relation to Nigeria, the Boko Haram insurgency, and regional counter operations.⁵² However, well-documented attacks on education, abductions, and killing and maiming of children linked to the conflict in Cameroon’s Anglophone region give cause for

⁴⁸ UN Human Rights Council, “Report of the detailed findings of the independent international Commission of inquiry on the protests in the Occupied Palestinian Territory” (A/HRC/40/CRP.2), March 18, 2019,

https://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/HRC/RegularSessions/Session40/Documents/A_HRC_40_74_CRP2.pdf (accessed May 13, 2019), paras. 512-519.

⁴⁹ Ibid., para. 519.

⁵⁰ Ibid., para. 518.

⁵¹ Human Rights Watch, “Israel: Apparent War Crimes in Gaza,” June 13, 2018, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2018/06/13/israel-apparent-war-crimes-gaza> (accessed May 13, 2019); “Israel, Gaza Killings Unlawful, Calculated,” April 3, 2018, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2018/04/03/israel-gaza-killings-unlawful-calculated> (accessed May 13, 2019).

⁵² UN Security Council, “Report of the Secretary-General on Children and Armed Conflict” (A/72/865-S/2018/465), May 16, 2018, <https://undocs.org/s/2018/465> (accessed April 30, 2019), paras. 224, 226, 228-229.

serious concern. The UN should further investigate these incidents, and Cameroon should be included in the Secretary-General's 2019 annual report on children and armed conflict.

On January 30, 2018, a masked gunman, suspected to be a member of an armed separatist group, reportedly stormed the Government Primary School in Ntungfe (North-West region). Armed with a locally made gun, he allegedly shot one teacher in the legs and set fire to a motorbike before escaping.⁵³ The wounded teacher told Amnesty International, "The assailant [...] told me that I was still coming to school in defiance of calls for a schools boycott. [...] He then asked me to raise my hands, but before I could do so, he shot me."⁵⁴

Human Rights Watch documented a March 26, 2018 attack on a high school dormitory in Widikum, in which a student was shot and killed by gunmen believed to be armed separatists.⁵⁵

On the morning of April 30, 2018, a school principal from St. Bede's College, in Ashing near Belo, North-West region, was reportedly abducted while celebrating mass with students. He was released two days later. The school suspended classes on the day of the abduction.⁵⁶

On May 25, 2018, in separate incidents, two school principals in the towns of Buea and Muyuka, both in the Southwest region, were reportedly kidnapped. The incident was allegedly linked to Anglophone separatists.⁵⁷

On September 3, 2018, gunmen reportedly attacked the Presbyterian School of Science and Technology in Bamenda and kidnapped six students.⁵⁸

On September 16, 2018, armed men reportedly attacked the Saint Joseph's College in the southwestern town of Buea. Several dozen people, including children, were wounded in the attack. Some of the children, ranging in age from 9 to 17 years, received machete wounds, and others were shot with locally made guns. After the incident, many parents reportedly withdrew their children from the school.⁵⁹

On November 5, 2018, in a widely reported and well-documented incident, 78 children and 3 staff were kidnapped from a secondary school in Bamenda, in Cameroon's Northwest region, and released

⁵³ Amnesty International, "A turn for the worse: Violence and human rights violations in Anglophone Cameroon," press release, June 11, 2018, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2018/06/cameroon-anglophone-regions-gripped-by-deadly-violence/> (accessed May 5, 2019).

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Human Rights Watch, "These Killings Can Be Stopped': Abuses by Government and Separatist Groups in Cameroon's Anglophone Regions," July 19, 2018, <https://www.hrw.org/report/2018/07/19/these-killings-can-be-stopped/abuses-government-and-separatist-groups-camerouns> (accessed May 8, 2019).

⁵⁶ Ajumane, Francis, "St. Bede's College shuts down after kidnap of Principal," *Journal du Cameroun*, May 2, 2018, <https://www.journalducameroun.com/en/st-bedes-college-shuts-kidnap-principal/> (accessed May 8, 2019).

⁵⁷ Human Rights Watch, "Cameroon: Armed Separatists Holding School Principal," press release, May 29, 2018, <https://www.hrw.org/news/2018/05/29/cameroon-armed-separatists-holding-school-principal> (accessed May 5, 2019).

⁵⁸ Kindzeka, Moki Edwin, "Cameroon's Military, Separatists Trade Blame for School Attacks, Kidnappings," *Voice of America*, September 8, 2018, <https://www.voanews.com/a/cameroon-military-separatists-trade-blame-for-school-attacks-kidnappings/4561722.html> (accessed May 5, 2019).

⁵⁹ Kindzeka, Moki Edwin, "School Attacks in Cameroon Prompt Parents to Withdraw Students," *Voice of America*, September 18, 2018, <https://www.voanews.com/a/attacks-on-schools-in-cameroon-prompt-parents-to-withdraw-students/4576333.html> (accessed May 5, 2019).

the following day.⁶⁰ A local pastor reportedly involved in negotiating the release of the children told media sources that Anglophone separatists responsible for the incident had demanded the school be closed.⁶¹ The UN Secretary-General condemned the attack, and called for the immediate release of the students and staff, noting “There can be no justification for these crimes against civilians, particularly minors.”⁶²

In a November 20, 2018 press briefing, OHCHR expressed its deep concern about the worsening violence in Cameroon’s Southwest and Northwest regions, noting that it continued to receive reports of abductions and killings by armed groups, as well as extrajudicial killings by State armed forces.⁶³ These include reports of the abduction of eight students and one school official in Kumba, in the Southwest, and of at least 13 nuns near the locality of Bamessing-Ndop in the Northwest; according to OHCHR, the victims were subsequently released, after some parents paid ransoms and the Catholic Diocese of Kumba intervened.

In his November 2018 report on the situation in Central Africa and the activities of the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa, the Secretary-General highlighted civilian casualties, including children, resulting from fighting between security forces and armed elements in the English-speaking regions. As the report notes, “Civilians, including children, in those regions were victims of extrajudicial killings, killings, abductions, restrictions of movement and access to health and education, as armed confrontations continued.” These include the extrajudicial execution of two children and two women by members of the security forces; after video footage of the incident circulated on social media, authorities reportedly arrested the alleged perpetrators and referred them to a military tribunal.⁶⁴

Ukraine

Recommendation to Include in the 2019 Annual Report as a Situation of Concern

Throughout 2018 and the first quarter of 2019, reports of ongoing violations of children’s rights in Ukraine continued to raise concern and warrant further investigation.

Since the start of the conflict on April 14, 2014, through February 15, 2019, OHCHR recorded the killing of 97 boys and 49 girls.⁶⁵ In 2018, children continued to be killed and maimed as a result of the armed conflict. These reports should be further investigated and those responsible should be held to account. According to the Special Monitoring Mission of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in

⁶⁰ OHCHR, “Press briefing notes on Cameroon and Central African Republic,” press briefing, November 20, 2018, <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=23902&LangID=E> (accessed May 5, 2019).

⁶¹ Kouagheu, Josiane, Edward McAllister, and Juliette Jabkhiro, “Armed men in Cameroon kidnap 79 school children,” *Reuters*, November 5, 2018, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-cameroon-security/armed-men-in-cameroon-kidnap-79-school-children-idUSKCN1NA1B8> (accessed May 5, 2019).

⁶² Spokesperson for UN Secretary-General António Guterres, “Secretary-General Condemns Kidnapping of Students, School Staff in Cameroon,” press statement, November 6, 2018, <https://www.un.org/press/en/2018/sgsm19333.doc.htm> (accessed May 5, 2019).

⁶³ OCHA, “Press briefing notes on Cameroon and Central African Republic,” press briefing, November 20, 2018, <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=23902&LangID=E> (accessed May 5, 2019).

⁶⁴ UN Security Council, “The situation in Central Africa and the activities of the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa,” November 29, 2018, <https://undocs.org/en/S/2018/1065> (accessed May 5, 2019), para. 32.

⁶⁵ OHCHR, “Report on the human rights situation in Ukraine: 16 November 2018 to 15 February 2019,” March 12, 2019, <https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Countries/UA/ReportUkraine16Nov2018-15Feb2019.pdf> (accessed May 8, 2019).

Europe (OSCE), 28 children died in the first 10 months of 2018 in the Donbas conflict zone because of parties' failure to observe the Minsk Agreements and deployment.⁶⁶

UN OCHA reported that on September 3, 2018, three children were killed and one seriously injured by an explosive device while playing in the forest near Horlivka, Donetsk Oblast (Non-Government Controlled Area, or NGCA). The Humanitarian Coordinator issued a statement calling for immediate action to protect people from landmines, urging combatants to adopt the appropriate mine action legal framework, and calling for the establishment of a national coordination to facilitate upscaling of humanitarian demining.⁶⁷

The OSCE Special Monitoring Mission received reports that on October 7, 2018, a 9-year-old boy received shrapnel injuries to the head during shelling in Zolote-5/Mykhailivka (NGCA). While the OSCE could not access the area to interview the boy or his parents due to insecurity, its monitors were able to corroborate with medical staff at a hospital in nearby Pervomaisk that a child from Zolote-5/Mykhailivka had been admitted with injuries to his scalp that day and had received stitches.⁶⁸

According to the Ukraine Education Cluster, there were at least 82 security incidents involving education facilities in 2018, and an additional 19 such incidents recorded between January and April 2019.⁶⁹ These include, but are not limited to, the following:

- UNICEF reported that on April 12, 2018, a school bus transporting more than 30 children was evacuated during shelling in Zaitseve village (outskirts of Gorlivka, Donetska, NGCA).⁷⁰
- On May 11, 2018, boarding school #27 in Dokuchaievsk (NGCA) was reportedly damaged by an attack in which there were at least four windows and an entrance door damaged by shrapnel.⁷¹
- On May 13, 2018, a bullet came through the window of the Hranitne school (Government-Controlled Area, or GCA).⁷²
- On May 15, 2018, school #10 in Horlivka (NGCA) sustained damages due to shelling.⁷³

⁶⁶ "28 children die in hostilities in Donbas this year, OSCE," 112 UA, October 12, 2018, <https://112.international/conflict-in-eastern-ukraine/28-children-die-in-hostilities-in-donbas-this-year-osce-33130.html> (accessed May 5, 2019).

⁶⁷ OCHA Humanitarian Response, "Ukraine: Humanitarian Snapshot (as of 19 October 2018)," October 19, 2018, <https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/ukraine/infographic/ukraine-humanitarian-snapshot-19-october-2018> (accessed May 5, 2019).

⁶⁸ Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, "Latest from the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine (SMM), based on information received as of 19:30, 9 October 2018," October 10, 2018, <https://www.osce.org/special-monitoring-mission-to-ukraine/399341> (accessed May 5, 2019).

⁶⁹ Ukraine Education Cluster, "Attacks on Education in Ukraine: Situation Report as of April 19, 2019," April 19, 2019, https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/sites/www.humanitarianresponse.info/files/documents/files/attacks_on_education_-_april_19_2019.pdf (accessed May 8, 2019).

⁷⁰ UNICEF and Education Cluster, "Education Cluster Incident Report: School bus with more than 30 children evacuated during shelling in Zaitseve (Donetska NGCA)," April 16, 2018, <https://reliefweb.int/report/ukraine/education-cluster-incident-report-school-bus-more-30-children-evacuated-during> (accessed May 5, 2019).

⁷¹ UNICEF and Education Cluster, "Education Cluster Incident Report: 4 verified cases of school damages in Ukraine in the last week of May 18, 2018," May 18, 2018, <https://reliefweb.int/report/ukraine/education-cluster-incident-report-4-verified-cases-school-damages-ukraine-last-week> (accessed May 5, 2019).

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Ibid.

- On May 16, 2018, the Sakhanka (NGCA) school lunchroom sustained damage because of shelling. There were children in the lunchroom at that time, but no one was injured.⁷⁴
- On May 17, 2018, school #11 in Svitlodarsk (GCA) was damaged by artillery shelling that landed in the schoolyard. There were 370 children in the school at the time.⁷⁵
- On September 11, 2018, a secondary school in the Zolote-5 settlement (Luhanska Oblast, NGCA) was shelled during classes. Some 100 students and teachers were evacuated to nearby bomb shelters.⁷⁶

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ OCHA Humanitarian Response, "Ukraine: Humanitarian Snapshot (as of 19 October 2018)," October 19, 2018, <https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/en/operations/ukraine/infographic/ukraine-humanitarian-snapshot-19-october-2018> (accessed May 5, 2019).