

Recommendations to the Security Council

SYRIA

The Secretary-General's (SG) second [report](#) on children and armed conflict in Syria was released on November 26. Covering from November 16, 2013 to June 30, 2018, the report covers violations that the SG has called "a blatant disregard for the life and fundamental rights of children." The Security Council Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict (SCWG-CAAC) is expected to begin conclusion negotiations soon. In December, the Security Council will receive regular briefings on the implementation of relevant resolutions on Syria, including most notably 2165 (2014), which first authorized cross-border humanitarian assistance, and is expected to negotiate a resolution renewing this cross-border authorization, per Resolution 2393 (2017). Six armed groups and the Government forces and pro-Government militias are currently listed in the annexes of the SG's annual report on children and armed conflict (CAC). In the country report, the United Nations verified 12,537 grave violations, with the killing and maiming of children most prevalent at 7,000 children. The actual scale of child casualties caused by the conflict is believed to be much higher. Indiscriminate attacks on [hospitals](#) and personnel are ongoing. Recruitment and use was the [second most prevalent](#) verified violation, with 82 percent of the 3,377 verified cases being children in a combat role (para. 14). The report also highlights trafficking and cross-border recruitment and use of children by foreign pro-Government militia and ISIL (para. 15). Indiscriminate air attacks by Government forces, as well as indiscriminate shelling and use of improvised explosive devices (IEDs) by armed groups, were the leading cause of death and maiming. On November 24, Government shelling near a school in Jarjanaz, [Idlib](#), killed 9 civilians, including 7 children and a teacher. Shelling by Government and non-State armed groups, as well as an alleged gas attack by the latter, hit civilians in [Aleppo](#) in late November. **The Security Council should:**

- **Echoing the SG's call** (S/2018/969, para. 58), **demand that all parties take concrete and effective measures to avoid and prevent child casualties, including by immediately ceasing to use indiscriminate or disproportionate means and methods of warfare;** as well as to stop unlawful attacks on schools, hospitals, and humanitarian actors, and the use of schools for military purposes;
- **Call for the immediate release of all children associated with armed forces and groups; and urge listed parties to develop action plans to end and prevent recruitment and use of children under 18; this includes the Government of Syria,** which despite national law No. 11 of 2013 prohibiting child recruitment and involvement in hostilities, and the development of a national work plan to prevent recruitment, **continued to recruit and use children throughout 2017;**
- **Call on the Government to allow sustained, rapid, and unimpeded humanitarian access to hard-to-reach and retaken areas, and displaced populations,** including by lifting any impediments that could delay, reduce, or prevent the delivery of assistance, without discrimination; and further, allow for civilians' freedom of movement; **as well as implementation of the Idlib demilitarized zone in line with international humanitarian law (IHL);**
- **Call for the acceleration of humanitarian mine action programming.**

KUWAIT AND SWEDEN ARE LEADING ON HUMANITARIAN ISSUES IN SYRIA.

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO (DRC)

The SCWG-CAAC adopted [conclusions](#) in August after receiving the SG's [sixth report](#) on children and armed conflict in the DRC in June. Fifteen armed groups are listed for grave violations against children, and the Armed Forces of the DRC (FARDC) are listed for rape and other forms of sexual violence. In December, the SG is expected to present his quarterly report on MONUSCO, and the Group of Experts will provide its mid-term report. The DRC's long-delayed presidential elections are scheduled for December 23. In October the Council [visited](#) the DRC, calling for the election to be credible and peaceful. Continued insecurity in the Northeast has further hampered the response to the second-largest [Ebola outbreak](#) and poses a serious risk to children.

The Council should:

- **Call on the Government to promptly investigate and ensure accountability for all grave child rights violations, including killing and maiming in the Kasais by national security forces,** and call on all parties to uphold their obligations under international law and put in place concrete measures to limit the impact of armed conflict on children;

Situations involving parties listed for grave violations against children:

[Afghanistan](#)
[Central African Republic](#)
[Colombia](#)
[Democratic Republic of the Congo](#)
[Iraq](#)
[Mali](#)
[Myanmar \(Burma\)](#)
[Nigeria](#)
[Philippines](#)
[Somalia](#)
[South Sudan](#)
[Sudan](#)
[Syrian Arab Republic](#)
[Yemen](#)

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Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) cont'd

- **Request MONUSCO to monitor potential hotspots for election-related violence, including in the pre- and post-electoral periods, including areas where children frequent such as schools;** additionally call on all parties to cease attacks on and military use of schools, and urge the Government to uphold its commitments under the [Safe Schools Declaration](#);
- **Call on all parties to allow the unimpeded delivery of humanitarian assistance,** including by removing administrative impediments, and cease attacks on aid workers;
- Urge the Government to **sustain the gains of its completed action plan on recruitment and use, and to implement fully and without delay its action plan on sexual violence;** furthermore support the **engagement of the Country Task Force on Monitoring and Reporting (CTFMR) with non-State armed groups, including to negotiate action plans;**
- **Express concern about detention and deprivation of liberty, including inhumane treatment and torture of children** for their alleged association with armed groups.

FRANCE IS THE LEAD COUNTRY ON THE DRC. KUWAIT CHAIRS THE 1533 SANCTIONS COMMITTEE.

Recommendations to the Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict

MYANMAR

The SCWG-CAAC is expected to begin conclusion negotiations on December 7. In December 2017, the Working Group received the SG's [fourth report](#) on children and armed conflict in Myanmar, covering the period from February 1, 2013, to June 30, 2017. The Working Group requested an [update](#) that included information on the violence in Rakhine State starting in August 2017, which was published on November 16, and covers from July 1, 2017 to August 31, 2018. In the SG's 2018 annual CAC report, eight parties, including Government forces (Tatmadaw), are listed for recruitment and use; additionally, the Tatmadaw is listed for killing and maiming and rape and other forms of sexual violence. Horrific abuses by the Tatmadaw are verified in both the SG's country-specific report on CAC and the Human Rights Council-appointed Fact-Finding Mission (FFM) report on Myanmar. The SG's update report documents 1,166 grave violations against children across all three northern townships of Rakhine State during the reporting period, with the vast majority recorded after August 25, 2017 (S/2018/956, para. 11). The report also states that it is likely that these numbers are a significant underrepresentation, due to the Government's access restrictions, as well as the fear of reprisals and stigma. The report specifically states that children were killed and injured during large-scale, widespread, systematic, and organized attacks on the Rohingya by Government forces, including the Tatmadaw and border guard police. The UN further documented the systematic round-up and gang-rape of women and girls in villages during large-scale massacres by soldiers, as well as the killing of girls by shooting or being burnt alive in locked houses after they were raped (para. 14). The remaining 129,000 Rohingya left in Myanmar are forced to live in camps for internally displaced persons (IDPs) in central Rakhine with severe movement restrictions. The SG has confirmed that conditions in Rakhine are not conducive for the voluntary, safe, dignified, and sustainable return of Rohingya refugees from Bangladesh (para. 5). In Kachin and northern Shan States, some 105,000 civilians are displaced, including approximately 48,000 children (para. 7). In its conclusions, the **Working Group should:**

- **Condemn in the strongest terms grave violations of children's rights committed in Kachin, Shan, and Rakhine States;**
- **Call upon all parties to grant the UN CTFMR full access to conflict-affected areas,** for the purposes of monitoring, reporting, and dialogue with parties to conflict;
- **Urge all parties to allow safe, unhindered humanitarian access to children and all civilians in need;**
- **Urge the Government to accelerate the age verification and release of children from State security forces, and ensure accountability for recruitment;** furthermore, **constructively engage with the UN to develop and sign action plans** to end and prevent killing and maiming and sexual violence;
- **Strongly encourage all parties to commit to protecting children, and incorporate inclusive and child protection-related provisions in any ceasefire or peace agreements;**
- **Call on the Government to develop a comprehensive, publicly-available, and time-bound action plan to implement the Rakhine Advisory Commission (RAC) recommendations;**
- **Urge the UNSC to refer the situation in Myanmar to the International Criminal Court (ICC).**

Presidency of the Security Council for December: Côte d'Ivoire

- Party to Geneva Convention I-IV, Additional Protocol I and II, Optional Protocol of the CRC, ILO Convention 182, and Rome Statute. Has endorsed the Paris Principles and the Paris Commitments, and the Safe Schools Declaration. Has not endorsed the Vancouver Principles.

NGO resources

- Conflict Armament Research, [Weapons Supplies Into South Sudan's Civil War](#), November 2018
- Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack, [Attacks on Education in Afghanistan: Briefing Paper](#), November 2018
- Amnesty International, [Myanmar: Further Information: Acquitted Former Child Soldier Remains Jailed: Aung Ko Htwe](#), November 2018
- Amnesty International, [Yemen: Eyewitness Describes Terrifying Scenes as Explosions Rock Hospital in Central Hodeidah](#), November 2018
- Norwegian Refugee Council, [No Peace in hard to reach areas in Colombia](#), November 2018
- Save the Children, [Generation of Children in Need of Mental Health Support in Yemen](#), October 2018

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Watchlist on Children and Armed Conflict is a global network of international human rights and humanitarian non-governmental organizations which strives to end violations against children in armed conflicts through local partnerships, reporting, and advocacy.

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