

FORUM: United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF)

QUESTION OF: The situation of engaging children in armed conflicts

SUBMITTED BY: Canada

COSUBMITTERS: United States of America, The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, The Republic of France, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, The Kingdom of Norway, The Commonwealth of Australia

Signatories: Federative Republic of Brazil, The Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, The Republic of Turkey, Federal Republic of Germany

UNITED NATIONS CHILDREN'S FUND,

Deeply concerned by the fact that in 2018 alone 12.000 children were killed or maimed in armed conflicts according to a UN report regarding child soldiers,

Alarmed by the number of child soldiers has increased by 159% within the past five years,

Keeping in mind that child soldiers aren’t the only children involved in armed conflicts,

Having studied that girls are involved in armed conflicts for different reasons apart from participating in combat, such as, but not limited to, sexual exploitation, forced marriage and/or enslavement,

Noting that most of the instances of child involvement in armed conflicts take place in the Middle East, Somalia, South Sudan, DR Congo, Syria, Iraq, Myanmar, Colombia and the Central African Republic, with about 2.500 cases in Somalia alone,

Aware of the fact that between 2013-2018, 29.128 cases of child recruitment were noted, spread over 17 countries,

Noting with regret that many of these children, if they return to their families, will have to deal severe traumas consisting of mental and physical scarring,

Observing that for many children the right for education is violated due to being recruited into armed conflicts,

Fully alarmed by the fact that many children who were involved in armed conflicts against their will, who are the victims of their situations, face repercussions for their alleged involvement in armed conflicts; in Syria and Iraq the average age for these children to lose their liberty lies beneath the age of 5,

Deeply disturbed by the knowledge that in 2017, seven state armed forces and 56 non-state armed groups were recruiting and using children in armed conflicts,

Taking into account that while most cases of children involved in armed conflicts take place in non-western nations, but this cannot be said for all instances,

Fully believing that the issue of involving child soldiers into armed conflict is not unsolvable and with cooperation of the right countries we can make better opportunities and possibilities for all the children around the world,

1. Expresses its appreciation for NGO-initiatives for helping these children in a time of need, such as, but not limited to,
 - a. War child,
 - b. Child Soldiers International,
 - c. The Borgen Project,
 - d. Amnesty International,
 - e. Children as Peacebuilders,
 - f. World Vision,
 - g. The Rebound Project;
2. Encourages all member states to raise the age limit for considering child involvement in armed conflicts a war crime to 18 years old instead of 15 years old in order to,
 - a. Stop the recruitment of children under the age of 18 into these armed conflicts,
 - b. Encourage children to finish (at least) the basis of their education,
 - c. Educate children on the dangers of getting involved in armed conflicts and thus reducing the small number of children that join armed forces on their own behalf;
3. Calls upon all member states to support any and all local initiatives concerning the protection of children who are likely to be recruited into armed conflicts because these children face the danger of being ostracised by their communities upon returning;
4. Recommends the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) to establish an organization which shall be referred to as “United Nations Committee of Protection of Underage Victims of Sexual Exploitation (UNCPUVSE)” in

order to protect the victims of sexual exploitation in armed conflicts who are not able to protect themselves against possible wrath of their communities, which will:

- a. Consist of all member states of the UNGA who are in any way shape or form involved in this problem, such as, but not limited to;
 - i. All nations in which child soldiers are active,
 - ii. All nations who have been frontrunners in combating this problem,
 - b. Provides precise information to the local or international organisations who are willing to help these children recover from their experiences to go on with their lives in a normal manner, such as, but not limited to,
 - i. Help these children in getting a divorce when their marriage was conducted on one of the following terms
 1. The marriage was forced,
 2. The child in question was underage at the time of the wedding,
 - ii. Give assistance in getting these children back on their own feet, in either one of these forms;
 1. The family of the child can be located and is willing to take the child back into their household without regard to the past sexual exploitation,
 2. The child will be helped in getting a place to live in either a UN Shelter or on their own accord, where they are able to get support from the UNCPUVSE,
 - iii. Assistance in assembling a support group for these children, with those who have been in the same circumstances, where they can get group therapy sessions, but where there is a possibility of getting private therapy sessions may the need arise,
 - iv. Aid these children in furthering their education by making sure that they get at least the basic education for their respective countries, but are able to continue their education afterwards with support from the organization;
5. Draws the attention to the often overlooked involvement of children in armed conflict that should nevertheless be stopped,
- a. Non-violent involvement, such as, but not limited to,
 - i. Cooks,
 - ii. Spies,
 - iii. Messengers,
 - iv. Sex slaves,
 - v. Porters,
 - vi. Ammunition carrier,

- b. Violent involvement, such as, but not limited to,
 - i. Suicide bombers,
 - ii. Torturer,
 - iii. Kidnapper,

- 6. Notes that for the last decades, many girls associated with armed groups have been overlooked by the aid organisations when they were eligible for help because they don't fit the stereotype of a child soldier. This should be changed by:
 - a. Further educating the involved NGOs on this problem,
 - b. Giving these overlooked girls as much education on their situation as possible,
 - c. Informing the local communities that these girls are and should be associated with these armed conflicts and child soldiers;

- 7. Strongly recommends the member states to establish annual seminars for their gouvernements and (independant) armed forces with the help of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in order to prevent any more violations of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) committed by those who involve children in armed conflicts. This shall be done by the means of, but not limited to:
 - a. Protecting shelters where ex-child soldiers or any other children involved with armed conflicts can flee to if the chance and / or need arises,
 - b. Ensuring the safety of any child that may be at risk,
 - c. Emphasising the importance to families of not getting their child involved in these situations,
 - d. Directing operations to get children out of these situations if possible,
 - e. Endorsing the regulations of the ICRC and UNCRC, which are two crucial organisations aimed at protecting the rights of children;

- 8. Strongly recommends the member states to support local or international initiatives that support refugees by giving them education, opportunities and basic human needs to limit the reasons refugees seek to join armed groups to gain these resources;

- 9. Establishing financial aid from developed countries to LEDC's (less economically developed countries) such as, but not limited to,
 - a. Financial programs to reintegrate former child soldiers into society by,
 - i. Payment for psychological treatment,
 - ii. Medical support,

- iii. Financial protection of the children's families;
10. Reinforcing the recruitment laws by,
- a. Establishing and enforcing 18 as the minimum age of recruitment
 - i. With the possibility of getting help from the U.S.A. army in case of dire need for extra armed forces,
 - ii. Stronger punishments for armed groups or nations using child soldiers under the age of 18 by,
 - 1. Financial embargo's,
 - 2. Longer penalties for members of armed groups recruiting child soldiers;
11. Urges all nations to sign the Paris Principles and Commitment to ensure,
- a. Unlawful recruitment of children is banned worldwide;
12. Promotes the reintegration of former child soldiers into society by,
- a. Providing adequate resources,
 - b. Provide immediate and long-term support for these children's needs;
13. Establishes the creation of long-term support programs that will support these children after the age of 18 by,
- a. Guarantying financial support for these children until their reintegration has been successfully been finished by,
 - i. Providing financial aid to complete their educational studies until their satisfaction,
 - ii. Providing sufficient health programs for these children by,
 - 1. Financing medical treatment for all their battle injuries, both physical and mental,
 - 2. Establishing healthcare services;
14. Promoting the talking to groups know of terrorist activity by,
- a. Allowing the use of hacking programs to determine future terrorist attacks,
 - b. Approves of letting these terrorist groups join in on conversations about children in armed conflicts,
 - c. Creates programs that help to prevent
15. Calls upon all member states to give humanitarian aid if the conflict is solved;