

28. Children and armed conflict

During the period under review, the Security Council held one high-level meeting and adopted one resolution in connection with the item entitled “Children and armed conflict”. More information on the meeting, including on participants, speakers and outcomes, is given in table 1.

Further to the concept note circulated by Sweden,⁴⁵⁸ the Council held a high-level open debate on 9 July 2018 under the sub-item entitled “Protecting children today prevents conflicts tomorrow”.⁴⁵⁹ At the meeting, the Council heard briefings by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, the Executive Director of the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) and a civil society representative from Colombia.⁴⁶⁰

The Special Representative of the Secretary-General provided an overview of the trends regarding children and armed conflict, as presented in the report of the Secretary-General for 2017,⁴⁶¹ and expressed profound shock at the over 21,000 violations against children perpetrated by armed groups, Government forces and unknown armed actors. Noting the examples of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Iraq, Myanmar and Somalia, she highlighted a sharp rise in the number of abductions, an elevated number of children killed or injured, the use of children in suicide attacks, the targeting of schools and hospitals, denials of access and attacks on humanitarian convoys, and the unlawful detention of children allegedly associated with armed groups. In terms of positive developments, the Special Representative highlighted, *inter alia*, the progress in the adoption and implementation of action plans for the protection of children in the Central African Republic, Mali, Nigeria and the Sudan, and the advances in that context attained through the peace process in Colombia. Emphasizing the important connection between child protection and any strategy to reach and sustain peace, she also noted the work of her Office pursuant to the presidential statement of 31 October 2017⁴⁶² to compile good practices and guidance on the integration of child protection into peace processes.⁴⁶³

In her remarks, the Executive Director of UNICEF highlighted the short- and longer-term threats

facing children in the context of armed conflict and called for zero tolerance of all violations against children. She stressed the importance of fully reintegrating children into their communities through quality education, training and psychosocial support and upholding their rights as a fundamental part of any peace process.⁴⁶⁴ The civil society representative described her experience as a child soldier recruited by the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia – People’s Army (FARC-EP) and spoke to Council members on behalf of the Group of Young Consultants on Childhood, Adolescence and Armed Conflict. In her remarks, she made a series of recommendations on how to address the root causes that compelled children to join armed groups, on ensuring that children were consulted in the process of reintegration, on tackling the specific issues affecting girls in the reintegration process and on acknowledging children as victims who were entitled to reparations.⁴⁶⁵

During their deliberations, Council members and other speakers expressed concern over the increased number of violations against children in 2017 and underlined the responsibility of the international community to respond to those developments. They also acknowledged the positive developments, including the release of over 10,000 children by armed forces and groups and the signing of new national action plans. Many speakers noted that the primary responsibility for the protection of children lay with Member States and called upon those that had not done so to commit to the relevant international instruments. They also stressed the importance of ending impunity and ensuring accountability. Speakers emphasized the need for peace operations to prioritize and have the resources necessary to monitor child protection issues, including through support for child protection advisers, and called for the provision of timely, objective and accurate information to the Council on violations and abuses against children, including through the monitoring and reporting mechanism on grave violations against children in situations of armed conflict.

At the outset of the high-level open debate, the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution [2427 \(2018\)](#). In the resolution, the Council called upon States and the United Nations to mainstream child protection into all relevant activities in conflict prevention, conflict and post-conflict situations with the aim of sustaining peace and preventing conflict.⁴⁶⁶

⁴⁵⁸ [S/2018/625](#), annex.

⁴⁵⁹ For more information on the format of meetings, see part II, sect. I.

⁴⁶⁰ [S/PV.8305](#).

⁴⁶¹ [S/2018/465](#).

⁴⁶² [S/PRST/2017/21](#).

⁴⁶³ [S/PV.8305](#), pp. 2–4.

⁴⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 4–6.

⁴⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 6–8.

⁴⁶⁶ Resolution [2427 \(2018\)](#), para. 3.

The Council expressed its commitment to consider and use the tools of the United Nations system to ensure that early warning of potential conflicts translated into early, concrete preventive action, including towards the goal of protecting children, while acknowledging that serious abuses and violations against children could be an early indication of a descent into conflict or an escalation of conflict.⁴⁶⁷ The Council called upon Member States and United Nations entities, including the Peacebuilding Commission, to ensure that the views of children were taken into account in programming activities throughout the conflict cycle.⁴⁶⁸ The Council expressed deep concern at the military use of schools in contravention of applicable international law, and urged all parties to armed conflict to respect the civilian character of schools, encouraged Member States to take concrete measures to deter the use of schools by armed forces and non-State armed groups, urged Member States to ensure that attacks on schools were investigated and that those responsible were prosecuted, and called on the United Nations country-level task forces to enhance the monitoring and reporting on the military use of schools.⁴⁶⁹ The Council also urged concerned Member States to mainstream child protection and ensure that the specific needs of girls and boys were fully taken into account at all stages of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration processes, including through the development of a gender- and age-sensitive

process.⁴⁷⁰ The Council further encouraged Member States to focus on long-term and sustainable reintegration opportunities for children, including access to health care, psychosocial support and education programmes, as well as raising awareness within communities.⁴⁷¹ In addition, the Council reiterated its request to the Secretary-General to ensure that, in all of his reports on country-specific situations, the matter of children and armed conflict was included as a specific aspect of the report.⁴⁷²

In 2018, the Council addressed the children and armed conflict agenda in a number of its country- and region-specific decisions, as well as in decisions relating to thematic items; selected provisions of those decisions are listed in table 2. The Council, *inter alia*: (a) condemned and demanded the cessation of and accountability for violations and abuses against children, and demanded compliance with international instruments; (b) urged the implementation of action plans and programmes on children and armed conflict; (c) underscored the importance of taking into account child protection concerns in the demobilization, disarmament and reintegration processes and security sector reform; (d) requested monitoring, analysis and reporting on child protection concerns; (e) called for the introduction of protection of children as a cross-cutting issue in the United Nations system; and (f) imposed or called for the imposition of measures against perpetrators of violations and abuses against children.

⁴⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, paras. 7–8.

⁴⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, para. 23.

⁴⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, para. 16.

⁴⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, para. 24.

⁴⁷¹ *Ibid.*, para. 26.

⁴⁷² *Ibid.*, para. 38.

Table 1
Meetings: children and armed conflict

<i>Meeting record and date</i>	<i>Sub-item</i>	<i>Other documents</i>	<i>Rule 37 invitations</i>	<i>Rule 39 and other invitations</i>	<i>Speakers</i>	<i>Decision and vote (for-against-abstaining)</i>
S/PV.8305 9 July 2018	Protecting children today prevents conflicts tomorrow Report of the Secretary-General on children and armed conflict (S/2018/465) Letter dated 21 June 2018 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of	Draft resolution submitted by 98 Member States ^a (S/2018/667)	110 Member States ^b	Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, Executive Director of the United Nations Children's Fund, civil society representative, Head of the Delegation of the European Union to the	All Council members, ^c 73 invitees under rule 37, ^d all other invitees ^e	Resolution 2427 (2018) 15-0-0

Repertoire of the Practice of the Security Council, 2018

<i>Meeting record and date</i>	<i>Sub-item</i>	<i>Other documents</i>	<i>Rule 37 invitations</i>	<i>Rule 39 and other invitations</i>	<i>Speakers</i>	<i>Decision and vote (for-against-abstaining)</i>
	the Permanent Mission of Sweden to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2018/625)				United Nations, Permanent Observer of the observer State of the Holy See to the United Nations, Permanent Observer of the observer State of Palestine to the United Nations	

^a Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Bulgaria, Canada, Central African Republic, Chile, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guyana, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Latvia, Lebanon, Liberia, Libya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mexico, Monaco, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Palau, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Rwanda, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Somalia, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Timor-Leste, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom, United States, Uruguay, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) and Zimbabwe.

^b Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Central African Republic, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, Estonia, Fiji, Finland, Gabon, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guyana, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Latvia, Lebanon, Liberia, Libya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mexico, Monaco, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Netherlands, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Palau, Panama, Philippines, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Rwanda, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Somalia, South Africa, Spain, Sudan, Switzerland, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Timor-Leste, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, Tanzania (United Republic of), Uruguay, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam, Yemen and Zimbabwe.

^c Sweden (President of the Security Council) was represented by its Prime Minister; and the Netherlands was represented by the Prime Minister of Aruba.

^d Afghanistan, Algeria, Andorra, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, Estonia, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Haiti, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Liberia, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Maldives, Malta, Mexico, Montenegro, Morocco, Myanmar, Nigeria, Norway, Pakistan, Panama, Philippines, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Romania, Rwanda, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sudan, Switzerland, Thailand, Turkey, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam and Yemen. Ireland was represented by its Minister for Children and Youth Affairs; Luxembourg was represented by its Minister for Foreign and European Affairs; and Ukraine was represented by its Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs. The representative of Argentina spoke on behalf of the signatories of the Safe Schools Declaration; the representative of Canada spoke on behalf of the Group of Friends of Children and Armed Conflict; the representative of Estonia spoke also on behalf of Latvia and Lithuania; the representative of Norway spoke on behalf of the five Nordic countries; and the representative of Viet Nam spoke on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations.

^e The Head of the Delegation of the European Union spoke on behalf of the European Union and its member States, as well as Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Montenegro, the Republic of Moldova, Serbia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Ukraine.

Table 2
Provisions relevant to children and armed conflict, by theme and agenda item

	<i>Agenda item</i>	<i>Decision</i>	<i>Paragraph</i>
Condemnation of and demand for cessation of and accountability for violations and abuses against children and compliance with international instruments			
Country- and region-specific	The situation in Burundi	S/PRST/2018/7	tenth, eleventh
	Central African region	S/PRST/2018/17	tenth
	The situation in the Central African Republic	Resolution 2448 (2018)	7, 29, 32
	The situation concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo	Resolution 2409 (2018)	19, 20
	The situation in Mali	Resolution 2423 (2018)	63
	The situation in the Middle East	S/PRST/2018/5	third
	The situation in Somalia	Resolution 2408 (2018)	17, 24, 27
		S/PRST/2018/13	twelfth
		Resolution 2431 (2018)	34, 36, 52, 54
		Resolution 2442 (2018)	24
Thematic	Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan	Resolution 2406 (2018)	25
		Resolution 2416 (2018)	25
		Resolution 2429 (2018)	38, 44
		Resolution 2445 (2018)	26
	Children and armed conflict	Resolution 2427 (2018)	1, 12, 13, 15, 16 (a) and (c), 18, 20, 30, 31
Action plans and programmes on children and armed conflict			
Country- and region-specific	The situation in Afghanistan	Resolution 2405 (2018)	33
	The situation concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo	Resolution 2409 (2018)	17, 37 (i) (b)
	The situation in Somalia	Resolution 2431 (2018)	29, 54
	Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan	Resolution 2406 (2018)	25
		Resolution 2429 (2018)	38, 38 (b)
Thematic	Children and armed conflict	Resolution 2427 (2018)	10, 11, 23, 26, 37

	<i>Agenda item</i>	<i>Decision</i>	<i>Paragraph</i>
Child protection in disarmament, demobilization and reintegration and security sector reform			
Country- and region-specific	The situation in Afghanistan	Resolution 2405 (2018)	19
	The situation in the Central African Republic	Resolution 2448 (2018)	16, 30, 40 (c) (i), 56
	The situation concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo	Resolution 2409 (2018)	26, 37 (i) (c)–(d), 37 (ii) (b), 38
	The situation concerning Iraq	Resolution 2421 (2018)	2 (f)
	The situation in Mali	Resolution 2423 (2018)	38 (a) (ii)
	Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan	S/PRST/2018/4	eighth
	Peace consolidation in West Africa	S/PRST/2018/3	twelfth
Thematic	Children and armed conflict	Resolution 2427 (2018)	21, 22, 24, 25, 26, 28, 37
Monitoring and analysis of and reporting on violations against children			
Country- and region-specific	The situation in the Central African Republic	Resolution 2448 (2018)	39, 40 (d) (ii)
	The situation concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo	Resolution 2409 (2018)	36 (i) (b), 59 (i)
	The situation in Mali	Resolution 2423 (2018)	38 (e) (ii)
	Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan	Resolution 2406 (2018)	7 (c) (ii)
		Resolution 2416 (2018)	26
		Resolution 2428 (2018)	22
		Resolution 2429 (2018)	7 (ii), 11 (i), 38 (a), 56 (i) and (vii)
	Resolution 2445 (2018)	27	
Thematic	Children and armed conflict	Resolution 2427 (2018)	3, 5, 8, 16 (d), 22, 23, 35, 38
Introduction of child protection as a cross-cutting issue in the United Nations system, including through the deployment of child protection advisers in United Nations peace operations			
Country- and region-specific	The situation in Afghanistan	Resolution 2405 (2018)	33
	The situation in the Central African Republic	Resolution 2399 (2018)	39
		Resolution 2448 (2018)	39 (a) (iii), 56

**Part I. Consideration of questions under the responsibility of
the Security Council for the maintenance of
international peace and security**

<i>Agenda item</i>	<i>Decision</i>	<i>Paragraph</i>
The situation concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo	Resolution 2409 (2018)	38
The situation concerning Iraq	Resolution 2421 (2018)	2 (f)
The situation in Mali	Resolution 2423 (2018)	38 (d) (iii), 63, 66
Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan	Resolution 2406 (2018)	7 (a) (i), (vi)–(vii)
	Resolution 2416 (2018)	28
	Resolution 2429 (2018)	19 (iii), 38 (b)
	Resolution 2445 (2018)	29
Thematic Children and armed conflict	Resolution 2427 (2018)	8, 10, 22, 23, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38
Protection of civilians in armed conflict	S/PRST/2018/18	First
Maintenance of international peace and security	S/PRST/2018/1	Twenty-third
United Nations peacekeeping operations	S/PRST/2018/10	Eighteenth
	Resolution 2436 (2018)	7
Measures against the perpetrators of violations and abuses against children		
Country- and region-specific The situation in the Central African Republic	Resolution 2399 (2018)	21 (d)
Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan	Resolution 2428 (2018)	14 (d) and (f)
Thematic Children and armed conflict	Resolution 2427 (2018)	32

29. Protection of civilians in armed conflict

During 2018, the Security Council held three meetings to consider the protection of civilians in armed conflict, including one high-level meeting, which took the form of an open debate.⁴⁷³ The Council adopted one resolution and one presidential statement under this item. More information on the meetings, including on participants, speakers and outcomes, is given in table 1.

Further to a concept note circulated by Poland,⁴⁷⁴ the Council held a ministerial-level open debate on 22 May 2018, with the purpose of advancing the

protection of civilians at all levels and encouraging efforts to enhance respect for international humanitarian law and human rights law, as well as to develop and implement policies and strategies to avoid civilian harm in the conduct of hostilities, including in the context of the “global effort” called for by the Secretary-General in his report of May 2017.⁴⁷⁵ At the meeting, the Council heard briefings from the Secretary-General, the Director General of the International Committee of the Red Cross and the Secretary-General of the Iraqi Al-Amal Association. The Secretary-General gave a briefing to the Council first, and stated that the most effective way

⁴⁷³ For more information on the format of meetings, see part II, sect. I.

⁴⁷⁴ [S/2018/444](#), annex.

⁴⁷⁵ [S/2017/414](#).