

Forum: 3rd committee of the General Assembly – Social, Humanitarian and Cultural Committee (SOCHUM)

Issue: Research report for the question of protecting children in active war zones

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1) Introduction

In situations of war it is often the children who are affected the most and bear the scars throughout their life cycle. To protect children from the impact of armed conflict, the United Nations created the mandate of the Special Representative of the Secretary General in 1996. Since then the protection, rights and wellbeing of children affected by armed conflicts have come to occupy an important priority in the political agenda of the international community and a considerable body of international norms and standards has progressively evolved providing a framework for their protection. This compendium brings together relevant treaties and instruments on the protection of children affected by armed conflict rendering easier dissemination as well as providing the reference point for a more systematic monitoring and reporting. I am pleased with the close collaboration of my Office with the Austrian Foreign Ministry as the Chair of the Human Security Network in producing this compendium. I am confident that it would be a valuable tool for practitioners, policy makers, academics, researchers and all those involved in the protection of children affected by armed conflict.

2) Definition of key terms

Child: The term child includes all people under the age of 18 years old

Children rights: Children rights include their right to association with both parents human identity as well as the basic needs for physical protection, food, universal state-paid education, health care, and criminal laws appropriate for the age and development of the child, equal protection of the child's civil rights, and freedom from discrimination on the basis of the child's race, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, religion, disability, color, ethnicity, or other characteristics.

Active war zone: An area marked by extreme violence.

ICRC: The International Red Cross

Rape: A forced sexual interaction

The Syrian civil war: The Syrian civil war started in 2011 and deals with the question of who should lead the country's government.

Iraq war: Started in 2003 with the American invasion of Iraq (48 other nations followed America in the invasion).

The Afghan war: Started 2001 with the American invasion of Afghanistan as a reaction to the 9/11 terror attack.

3) Key issues & history

Human rights of children have become universal standards over the last years. On the 12th of February 2003, we celebrated the first anniversary of the entry into force of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict, a cornerstone of international action for the protection of human rights of children. Implementation, though, still needs improvement in many respects.

The Afghan war is - among others - the deadliest war in the past year. More than 111.000 Afghans, including civilians, soldiers and militants, are estimated to have been killed in the conflict. The war was launched by the United States as an "operation enduring freedom" in 2001. The number of civilian deaths has reached a record high, as a consequence of the decade long war. Especially the number of deaths of children grew fast, primarily reasoned Taliban's use of homemade bombs, which is the primary source to the increasing death rate. Child casualties increased by 9% to 436, compared with the same period last year, and 1,141 children were wounded. The issue regarding the Afghan war, is chosen as a key issue, due to the violation of the children's rights. Children are left disabled, orphaned and psychologically traumatized.

Furthermore, the Iraq-war is a key issue, when speaking of protecting children in active war-zones.

4) Major parties involved

United States of America: United States of America is a fighter for children in war zones. But many times, has the American military been accused for breaking children's rights and unknowingly killing children in the heat of an attack.

Syria: The civil war in Syria has led to many children losing their childhood to become child-soldiers. The government is officially for protecting the children in active war zones. But there are many problems with this in the country.

Afghanistan: Afghanistan is for children rights and the protection of children in active war zones. The country has suffered many child casualties and especially the problem of active war getting closer to civil-cities is a struggle in Afghanistan.

Iraq: Iraq wants to secure all children in active war zones. Has expressed its concern for their own children that have been traumatized and abused in the Iraq war. Iraq wants help from The UN to stop terror groups from abusing and violating children.

France: France is a nation fighting for children's rights and security in active war zones. The nation is a signatory of many resolutions in the question of securing children in active war zones.

Russia: Supporting all resolutions made in the question of securing children in active war zones.

UNICEF: Money for securing the children's rights are the only way. Securing a 'normal life' with school and war-free-zones are important.

5) Timeline and evaluation of previous attempts

Security council holds its first meeting upon the question of securing children in active war zones.

Security council resolution 1999 (see 2nd link)

Security council resolution 2000 (see 2nd link)

The Afghan war starts 2001

Security council resolution 2001 (see 2nd link)

The Iraq war starts 2003

Security council resolution 2003 (see 2nd link)

The Syrian civil war starts 2011

GA3 open debate on the subject 2015 (see link 10)

UNICEF declares that nearly a quarter of children lives in disaster or war zones.

6) Possible solutions

-Schools and education

-Funds made in the UN-Forum

- Protecting child-systems
- UN peacekeeping missions
- Sanctions for nations/groups exploiting children

7) Appendices and bibliography

- 1)<https://childrenandarmedconflict.un.org/protecting-children-in-armed-conflict-voices-from-the-field/>
- 2)<https://www.unicef.org/emergencies/files/HSNBook.pdf>
- 3)<https://www.unicef.org/sowc96/1cinwar.htm>
- 4)[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Civilian_casualties_in_the_war_in_Afghanistan_\(2001%E2%80%93present\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Civilian_casualties_in_the_war_in_Afghanistan_(2001%E2%80%93present))
- 5)<https://childrenandarmedconflict.un.org/press-release/29Jun98/>
- 6)<http://www.dw.com/en/unicef-2015-report-millions-of-children-caught-in-the-middle-of-conflict/a-18554668>
- 7)<http://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/en/french-foreign-policy/human-rights/children-s-rights/>
- 8)<https://www.newsdeeply.com/syria/articles/2016/06/28/children-are-fighting-on-all-sides-of-syrias-war>
- 9)<https://www.un.org/press/en/2016/sc12470.doc.htm>
- 10)<https://www.un.org/press/en/2015/gashc4135.doc.htm>
- 11)https://childrenandarmedconflict.un.org/publications/MachelStudy-10YearStrategicReview_en.pdf

12)<https://www.telesurtv.net/english/news/UN-Nearly-a-Quarter-of-Children-Live-in-War-and-Disaster-Zones-20161209-0016.html>

13)<http://www.ipsnews.net/2015/08/u-n-remains-helpless-watching-rising-deaths-of-children-in-war-zones/>