

**Security Council**

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Letter dated 20 December 2019 from the Chair of the Security Council Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to transmit herewith the report of the Security Council Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict established pursuant to resolution [1612 \(2005\)](#), containing an account of the Working Group's activities from 1 January to 31 December 2019. The report, which was approved by the Working Group, is being submitted in accordance with the note by the President of the Security Council of 29 March 1995 ([S/1995/234](#)).

I should be grateful if the present letter and the report were brought to the attention of the members of the Security Council and issued as a document of the Council.

(*Signed*) **Marc Pecsteen de Buytswerve**

Chair

Security Council Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict



Report of the Security Council Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict

I. Introduction

1. The present report of the Security Council Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict covers the period from 1 January to 31 December 2019.
2. During the reporting period, the Bureau of the Working Group consisted of Marc Pecsteen de Buytswerve (Belgium) as Chair and the representative of Côte d'Ivoire as Vice Chair.

II. Background

3. On 26 July 2005, the Security Council adopted resolution [1612 \(2005\)](#), on children and armed conflict. In paragraph 8 of that resolution, the Council decided to establish a working group to review the reports of the monitoring and reporting mechanism on children and armed conflict, to review progress in the development and implementation of the action plans to halt recruitment and use of children in violation of international obligations and to consider other relevant information presented to it. The Council also decided that the working group should:

(a) Make recommendations to the Council on possible measures to promote the protection of children affected by armed conflict, including through recommendations on appropriate mandates for peacekeeping missions and recommendations with respect to the parties to the conflict;

(b) Address requests, as appropriate, to other bodies within the United Nations system for action to support the implementation of the resolution in accordance with their respective mandates.

4. On 2 May 2006, the Working Group adopted its terms of reference, which were subsequently published as a document of the Security Council ([S/AC.51/2007/1](#)). On 8 September 2006, the Working Group adopted a list of options for possible actions, which is referred to as the "toolkit" ([S/AC.51/2007/2](#)).

5. Pursuant to resolution [1612 \(2005\)](#), the Chair of the Working Group has submitted periodic reports to the Security Council on developments in relation to the Working Group since 2006.

6. On 9 July 2018, the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution [2427 \(2018\)](#), which provided a comprehensive framework for mainstreaming protection, rights, well-being and the empowerment of children throughout the conflict cycle and emphasized the importance of the children and armed conflict agenda to conflict prevention and peacekeeping. In the same resolution, the Council welcomed the launching by the Secretary-General of a process to compile practical guidance on the integration of child protection issues into peace processes.

III. Summary of the activities of the Working Group

7. During the reporting period, the Working Group held 12 formal meetings, on 14 January, 8 February, 15 March, 21 May, 14 June, 9, 30 and 31 July, 16 September, 14 October and 8 and 15 November, and met 27 times in informal consultations, in addition to conducting its work through written procedures and informal meetings.

8. At its 77th meeting, held on 14 January, the Working Group discussed the second report of the Secretary-General on children and armed conflict in the Syrian Arab Republic ([S/2018/969](#)), covering the period from 16 November 2013 to 30 June 2018. The Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict introduced the report, recalling the main conclusions, after which the Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations presented the views of his Government on the report. In addition, a representative of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) presented the global horizontal note by the Secretary-General covering the period from July to September 2018.
9. At its 78th meeting, held on 8 February, the Working Group heard a briefing via videoconference on the situation of children and armed conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo by the Co-Chairs of the country task force on monitoring and reporting.
10. At the 79th meeting, held on 15 March, a representative of UNICEF presented the global horizontal note by the Secretary-General covering the period from October to December 2018.
11. At its 80th meeting, held on 21 May, the Working Group heard a briefing via videoconference on the situation of children and armed conflict in Mali by the Co-Chairs of the country task force on monitoring and reporting.
12. At its 81st meeting, held on 14 June, the Working Group discussed the second report of the Secretary-General on children and armed conflict in Yemen ([S/2019/453](#)), covering the period from 1 April 2013 to 31 December 2018. The Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict introduced the report, after which the Deputy Permanent Representative of Yemen to the United Nations presented the views of his Government on the report. In addition, a representative of UNICEF presented the global horizontal note by the Secretary-General covering the period from January to March 2019.
13. At its 82nd meeting, held on 9 July, the Working Group adopted conclusions on children and armed conflict in the Syrian Arab Republic.
14. At its 83rd meeting, held on 30 July, the Working Group adopted conclusions on children and armed conflict in Myanmar.
15. At its 84th meeting, held on 31 July, the Working Group heard a briefing via videoconference on the situation of children and armed conflict in Nigeria by the Co-Chairs of the country task force on monitoring and reporting.
16. At the 85th meeting, held on 16 September, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict introduced the fourth report of the Secretary-General on children and armed conflict in Afghanistan ([S/2019/727](#)), covering the period from 1 January 2015 to 31 December 2018. The Permanent Representative of Afghanistan to the United Nations made a statement. In addition, a representative of UNICEF presented the global horizontal note by the Secretary-General covering the period from April to June 2019.
17. At its 86th meeting, held on 14 October, the Working Group heard a briefing via videoconference on the situation of children and armed conflict in the Sudan by the Co-Chairs of the country task force on monitoring and reporting.
18. At the 87th meeting, held on 8 November, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict introduced the fourth report of the Secretary-General on children and armed conflict in the Central African Republic ([S/2019/852](#)), covering the period from January 2016 to June 2019. The Permanent Representative of the Central African Republic to the United Nations made a statement.

19. At its 88th meeting, held on 15 November, the Working Group heard a briefing via teleconference on the situation of children and armed conflict in the Philippines by the Co-Chairs of the country task force on monitoring and reporting.

20. Pursuant to the adoption of the aforementioned conclusions, the Working Group also released two public statements as Security Council press releases, containing messages addressed to all parties to the armed conflict in the Syrian Arab Republic that are mentioned in the report of the Secretary-General and to community and religious leaders in the Syrian Arab Republic (on 9 July 2019) and to all parties to the armed conflict in Myanmar as described in the report of the Secretary-General, to the Government of Myanmar, to armed groups and to community and religious leaders in Myanmar (on 30 July 2019).

21. In 2019, in direct relation to the conclusions adopted by the Working Group, the Working Group sent 34 communications to 25 Member States and other stakeholders.

22. On 20 November 2019, the Working Group held an informal meeting with the Child Protection Advisers of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali, the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia, the United Nations Mission in South Sudan, the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic, the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur, the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan and the United Nations Support Mission in Libya at the Permanent Mission of Belgium.

23. From 8 to 11 December 2019, the Working Group visited Mali. The delegation was composed of 11 members of the Security Council: Belgium (Chair of the Working Group), China, Dominican Republic, France, Germany, Kuwait, Poland, Russian Federation, South Africa, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and United States of America. The goals of the visit were to: (a) follow up on the conclusions on children and armed conflict in Mali adopted by the Working Group in May 2018; (b) engage with the Government on challenges and opportunities to advance the children and armed conflict agenda in Mali (legislative reform, detention of children, accountability, etc.); (c) assess progress on the implementation of the action plan signed by the Coordination des mouvements de l'Azawad in March 2017; (d) assess progress on engagement with other armed groups; and (e) gain a better understanding of the challenges and opportunities for children affected by armed conflict in Mali in order for the Working Group to take appropriate action. The delegation visited Bamako and Mopti and met senior United Nations and government officials, the parliament, the United Nations country task force on monitoring and reporting, the High Islamic Council, representatives of international and local non-governmental organizations working in the child protection sector, a representative of the Group of Five for the Sahel, representatives of armed groups and the local Group of Friends on Children and Armed Conflict. The Working Group also met internally displaced persons in Mopti.