

A World Fit for Children

Edits Prepared by the Caucus on Children in Armed Conflict

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Revision of the section on *Protection from armed conflict* under Paragraph 39 (changed text is underlined):

Protection from armed conflict and its impacts

- Strengthen the protection of children affected by armed conflict and foreign occupation, including through the systematic documentation of and reporting on violations of their rights, consideration of the reports by the Security Council and establishing a right of petition procedure.
- Ensure that issues pertaining to the rights and protection of children are fully reflected in the agendas of peace processes and in ensuing peace agreements, and are incorporated into United Nations peace operations, and establish a United Nations InterAgency Working Group to evaluate the lessons learned and determine how to best move forward on these issues.
- End the use of child soldiers, ensure that children and adolescents do not take part in hostilities, and develop and provide adequate resources for appropriate demobilization, reintegration and rehabilitation programmes.
- Exclude war crimes against children from amnesty provisions and legislation, and ensure that whenever post-conflict truth and justice seeking mechanisms are established, serious abuses of and by children are addressed.
- Provide appropriate training and education in child rights and protection to all civilian, military and police personnel involved in peacekeeping operations.
- Curb the illicit flow of small arms, eliminate threats posed by landmines, unexploded ordnance and other war material that victimize children, and engage with the private sector to ensure that funds and facilities are not used by armed groups that target children.
- Protect the rights of and assist refugee children and adolescents, including those who are seeking asylum and the internally displaced; and provide support for survival, voluntary repatriation, right of return, local integration and resettlement.
- Recognize and respond to the specific protection needs of girls, with emphasis on prevention and treatment for victims of sexual and gender-based violence.
- Ensure safe and unhindered access and respect children's right to humanitarian assistance, including education, reunification and support for families, community-based psychological and social assistance, and assistance for disabled children.
- Ensure targeted attention to the rights and capacities of adolescents, including appropriate protection, education, health services, HIV/AIDS prevention and care, alternatives for livelihood and opportunities for constructive participation in peace-building.
- Implement practical and comprehensive conflict prevention measures, including child protection networks, early warning and rapid response systems, alternatives for adolescents at risk and the promotion of conflict resolution skills.

- Assess and monitor the impact of sanctions on children, and ensure humanitarian exemptions that are child-focused and formulated with clear guidelines for their application, in order to address possible adverse effects of the sanctions.

Revisions to conflict related statements in the draft outcome document (underlined words/statements are additions to the existing text):

I. Declaration

Paragraph 6:

- **Protect children from war.** Children must be protected from the horrors of armed conflict and receive assistance to deal with its impact.

Paragraph 10:

Yet much more needs to be done. The resources that were promised at the Summit at both the national and international levels have yet to fully materialize. Critical challenges remain; more than 10 million children die each year although most of those deaths could be prevented; 100 million children are still out of school, 60 per cent of them girls; 150 million children suffer from malnutrition; 300,000 are being used as child soldiers, and HIV/AIDS is spreading with catastrophic speed. There is persistent poverty, exclusion and discrimination, and inadequate investment in social services. The childhood of millions continues to be devastated by hazardous and exploitative labour; the sale and trafficking of children and women; the impact of armed conflict; and other forms of abuse, exploitation and violence.

III. Plan of Action

A. Creating a world fit for children

Paragraph 18b:

We commit to the peaceful resolution of conflict so that armed conflicts become obsolete. Only then will children be spared the ravages of war. We rededicate ourselves to fulfil the pledge of the United Nations Charter that 'We, the peoples of the United Nations determined to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war...'

Paragraph 21:

The achievement of goals for children, particularly for girls, will be advanced if women fully enjoy all human rights and fundamental freedoms, are empowered to participate fully and equally in all spheres of society and are protected from all forms of violence, abuse and discrimination. We recognize the inextricable link between the human rights of children and the human rights of women, and will work for the full implementation of the human rights of women as the foundation for realizing children's human rights. We are determined to provide special attention to the needs of the girl child in order to promote and protect her right to be free from coercion and from harmful practices and sexual exploitation. We will promote full gender equality and equal access to services, such as education, nutrition, health care, including sexual and reproductive health care, and will mainstream a gender perspective in all development policies and programmes.

Partnerships and participation

Paragraph 29:

- People who work directly with children have great responsibilities. It is important to enhance their status, morale and professionalism and provide them with training and support.

B. Goals, strategies and actions

1. Promoting healthy lives

Paragraph 33:

- Eliminate gender discrimination in quality and delivery of all health services.
- Ensure appropriate and adequate mental health and psychosocial services for children and adolescents who are affected by violence, displacement and war.
- Strengthen health and education systems and expand the social security systems to increase access to integrated and effective health, nutrition and childcare in families, communities, schools and primary health-care facilities, without interruption during armed conflict.

2. Providing quality education

Paragraph 36:

- Provide age-appropriate education and training opportunities to adolescents to help them acquire sustainable livelihoods, especially those in crisis.
- Make education the fourth pillar of humanitarian response and end targeting of schools in conflict situations.

3. Protecting against abuse, exploitation and violence

Paragraph 37:

Social and economic pressures, armed conflict and forced displacement are undermining the crucial role of parents, families, caregivers and communities in ensuring that children grow up in a safe, stable and nurturing environment. During the 1990s, more than two million children died as a result of armed conflict; more than three times that number were permanently disabled or seriously injured; and at the end of the decade, some 20 million children were internally displaced or driven from their countries as refugees. More than 100 million children are trapped in the worst forms of child labour. Millions of children are victims of trafficking and sexual exploitation. Domestic violence against women and children is a serious problem in all parts of the world.

Paragraph 38:

- (b) Protect children from the impact of armed conflict and forced displacement by ensuring compliance with international humanitarian and human rights law;

Paragraph 39: Under **General protection:**

- Develop systems to ensure the registration of every child at or shortly after birth, and fulfil his or her right to acquire and maintain a name and nationality.
- Strengthen national and international institutions to investigate and trace missing persons for the purpose of reuniting separated families, with a special focus on children.