

WE ARE CHILDREN NOT SOLDIERS

Yemen

The Government of Yemen signed an **Action Plan** with the United Nations to end and prevent the recruitment of children by **Yemeni Armed Forces** on **14 May 2014**

Yemen has been engulfed in an intensifying conflict with dreadful consequences for the country's boys and girls. The children of Yemen face a desperate situation.

In 2015, the United Nations verified a dramatic increase in grave violations against children committed by all parties to the conflict. Child recruitment by armed groups and militias increased five times, with over 760 cases verified.

According to UN verified figures, there were close to 2,000 child casualties in 2015, a six-fold increase compared to the previous year. The majority of child casualties were caused by airstrikes and ground fighting in civilian areas.

Attacks on schools and hospitals doubled, bringing the total number to over 100. The majority of attacks caused the partial or total destruction of schools and health facilities, killing and maiming doctors and teachers, and depriving thousands of children of their fundamental rights to education and health.

This year, the United Nations continues to document grave violations against children.

Progress in the implementation of the Action Plan

The implementation of the Action Plan stalled since the escalation of the conflict following the takeover of Sana'a by the Houthis in September 2014 and the beginning of air strikes by the coalition led by Saudi Arabia in March 2015.

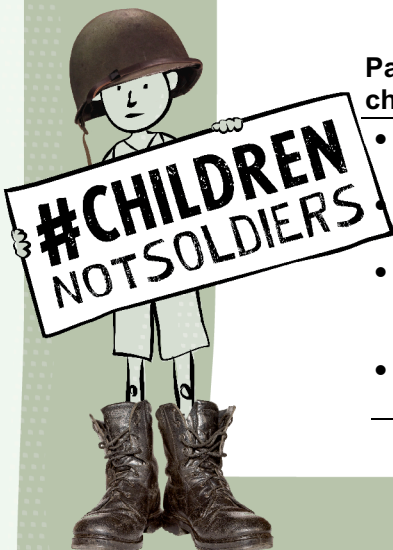
The way forward to protect the children of Yemen

Advocacy with all parties to end violations against children remains essential. A negotiated political settlement to the conflict, which addresses the legitimate concerns of all parties, remains the only viable solution. It is our hope that the **protection of children**, in particular those who have been recruited and used by parties to conflict, will be taken into account and addressed in peace negotiations. Sustained, unhindered and safe humanitarian access to all people in need is also necessary to alleviate the impact of the conflict on the civilian population.

Parties to conflict listed in the annual report of the Secretary-General on children and armed conflict

- *Houthis/Ansar Allah (recruitment and use of children, killing and maiming, attacks on schools and hospitals)*
- *Al-Qaida in the Arab Peninsula /Ansar al-Sharia (recruitment and use of children)*
- *Government forces, including the Yemeni Armed Forces, the First Armoured Division, the Military Police, the special security forces and Republican Guards (recruitment and use of children)*
- *Pro-Government militias, including the Salafists and Popular committees (recruitment and use of children)*

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