

WE ARE CHILDREN NOT SOLDIERS

South Sudan

The Government of the Republic of South Sudan signed an **Action Plan** with the United Nations to end and prevent the recruitment and use of by the **Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA)** on **13 March 2012**. The Government formally recommitted to the Action Plan on **24 June 2014** with the additional commitment to end all grave violations against children. The Government of South Sudan launched the campaign **Children, Not Soldiers** nationally on 29 October 2014.

The **SPLA in Opposition** signed an **Action Plan** with the United Nations to end and prevent the recruitment and use of children in December 2015.

The children of South Sudan continue to suffer the consequences of a brutal conflict. The peace agreement, signed in August 2015, calls for the end of all grave violations against children, the **immediate and unconditional release of all children recruited by parties to the conflict** and the screening of troops. Despite their repeated commitments to end grave violations against children, the Government and the opposition have failed to make tangible progress to protect boys and girls. The United Nations continues to verify reports of grave violations against children committed by all parties to the conflict. The recruitment and use of children remains the most widely reported violation and the United Nations estimates that several thousand children are currently in the ranks of the SPLA, SPLA/iO and other armed groups.

In 2015, **1,755 children were released** from the South Sudan Democratic Movement/Army- Cobra Faction. The children received support from the UN and were reunified with their families. The reintegration into their communities continues to be followed up and supported by the UN and its partners, but there are reports that some of the children have been re-recruited.

Progress in the implementation of the Action Plan

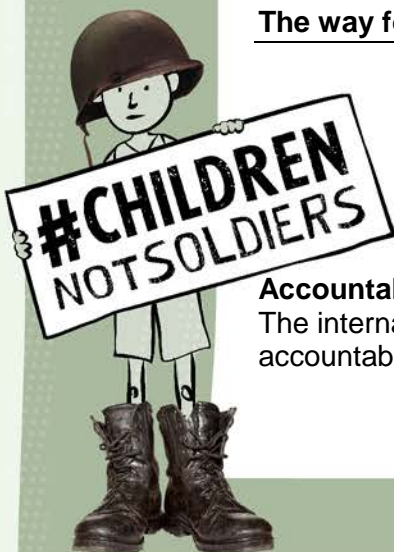
The implementation of the Action Plans with the SPLA and SPLA-iO has been hampered by conflict.

The way forward to protect the children of South Sudan:

Advocacy from partners, Regional organizations and Member States with influence on the parties to conflict is needed to **end grave violations against children, begin the release of thousands of child soldiers**, and implement child protection provisions included in the **Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan**.

Accountability

The international community should use all avenues and tools available to ensure accountability for those who commit grave violations against children.



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Implementation of the Action Plans

Both parties (SPLA and SPLA-in Opposition) must honour their commitments with the United Nations, immediately end the recruitment and use of children, end all other grave child rights violations and implement their respective Action Plans.

The Government of South Sudan is encouraged to **ratify the Optional Protocol** to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict.

Prepare for the reintegration of thousands of children

Support from the international community is required to prepare for the possible release of thousands of children from the ranks of all parties to conflict and to facilitate their reintegration. Family tracing, reunification and the social and economic reintegration of children will be long-term challenges in South Sudan. Resources will be needed to set up sustainable reintegration services, in communities with very little or no services.

Birth registration Access to birth registration services should be expanded throughout the country, with a specific focus on registering adolescent boys, the most vulnerable to recruitment.



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

- Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) (Recruitment and use of children, killing and maiming of children)
- SPLA in Opposition (Recruitment and use of children, killing and maiming of children)
- White Army (Recruitment and use of children)

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CHILDREN AND ARMED CONFLICT

