



Sudan: UN Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict Welcomes the Release of 21 Children

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New York – The Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, Leila Zerrougui, welcomes the release of 21 children detained by Sudanese authorities for their association with armed groups.

The boys had been captured during military operations in Darfur and were detained in Khartoum, in some cases since April 2015. The Special Representative met the children in March 2016 and advocated for their release.

“I am pleased to see that the children will receive assistance through a reintegration program and that they have also received a Presidential pardon,” declared Leila Zerrougui. “That will allow the boys to be reunited with their families as soon as possible.”

In March, Sudan signed an Action Plan with the United Nations to end and prevent the recruitment and use of children by its national security forces. The Action Plan, a milestone for the campaign ‘Children, not Soldiers’, details measures to end and prevent underage recruitment, including strengthening age verification mechanisms and ensuring accountability for child recruiters.

“When they signed the Action Plan, Sudanese officials expressed their intention to act quickly and I am pleased to see results already,” said the Special Representative. “This release is the result of good cooperation between the Government of Sudan and the United Nations in the country acting together to protect children. I look forward to supporting their efforts on the Action Plan implementation and on ensuring that children detained for these reasons in the future are treated primarily as victims, with detention considered only as a last resort and for the shortest period of time.”

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