

Germany

Statement by Ambassador Jürgen Schulz at the Informal Meeting of the General Assembly on Children and Armed Conflict

Feb 8, 2017

Mr. President,

Over the last two decades, we have come a long way in establishing and improving the international framework for the protection of children in conflicts. We have created mechanisms and tools to prevent violations against children in war. We have made progress in developing a mindset that children must be treated as victims, not perpetrators.

At the same time, violations committed against children in conflicts from Syria to Somalia remind us that the CAAC agenda has not diminished in relevancy. For Germany, the protection of children remains both a matter of urgency and key priority. During our tenure as Chair of the Security Council working group on children and armed conflict in 2011, we initiated Security Council resolution 1998 on attacks against schools and hospitals and have backed its implementation ever since. And we continue to support the CAAC agenda outside New York, for example as a member of local “Groups of Friends” on Children and Armed Conflict. Germany is proud to have assumed the chairmanship of the newly-established Group of Friends in Afghanistan last year.

This anniversary is a moment to take stock and look forward. I would like to share three thoughts on the future of the CAAC agenda:

1. First, we need to further step up the implementation of the CAAC agenda through country-specific actions and initiatives. This means, for instance, that language on the protection of children receives a firm place in specific UN mandates, not just cross-cutting thematic resolutions. It is a step in the right direction that the new UNAMI mandate now includes specific language on child protection in Iraq.
2. Second, we need to further broaden our approach to the protection of children in conflicts. We see that girls and boys are not used only directly as military actors by parties to conflict, but for instance, also as sex slaves. Being a child soldier does not necessarily mean fighting on the front line. Beyond the immediate protection of children, we need to focus our efforts on improving reintegration.
3. Finally, we need to use occasions like today to have a discussion on the possible next steps in advancing the protection of children in conflicts. From our perspective, it is crucial that civil society organizations contribute to this discussion with their vast expertise and experience.

Germany will continue to facilitate and participate in this discussion. From April 20-21, Germany will again host a workshop on the CAAC and Women, Peace and Security agendas. The workshop will provide a platform to exchange lessons learned and good practices. It

aims to identify strategies and approaches of how to strengthen the implementation of the CAAC agenda with the help of international and regional organizations such as UN, AU, EU, OSCE, Arab League and NATO.

Mr. President,

We encourage the UN system to continue treating the CAAC agenda as a high priority. The implementation of the CAAC agenda remains a cross-cutting task for the entire UN system, not just the Security Council. In particular, we commend the work of the office of the UNSG CAAC in mainstreaming the protection of children across the UN and will continue to fully support its mandate.

Over the last twenty years, we have achieved significant progress in expanding and promoting the CAAC agenda. Now, we need to focus on closing normative gaps and make rapid strides towards implementation. Germany will remain a strong partner in this endeavor.

Thank you, Mr. President.

You can read this statement online at http://www.new-york-un.diplo.de/Vertretung/newyorkvn/en/_pr/speeches-statements/2017/20170208-schulz-caac.html?archive=3759636