

Gender Dimensions of the Grave Violations against Children in Armed Conflict

Launch of a Special Paper

5 May 2022

15:00 – 17:00 EST

Conference Room 8, United Nations Headquarters / virtual

1. Concept

The Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict (SRSG CAAC), the Permanent Mission of Malta and the Permanent Mission of the United Kingdom (UK) to the United Nations are hosting a high-level event to launch the *Paper on the gender dimensions of grave violations against children in armed conflict* developed by the Office of the SRSG CAAC in consultation with Country Task Forces on Monitoring and Reporting (CTFMRs) in some of the situations on the CAAC agenda, as well as child protection and gender experts.

Member States, representatives of UN entities and Civil Society Organizations will discuss the importance of analyzing the plight of boys and girls in armed conflict through a gender lens to be able to enhance prevention and response strategies for the protection of children in armed conflict. The event will also feature concrete examples from the field, as well as children's voices.

2. Background and Rationale

Armed conflicts have long-term, devastating impacts on children. Across conflict settings, children's exposure to grave violations is shaped not only by specific forms of victimization, but also by gender norms and other intersecting identity-based characteristics, including ethnicity, race, religion, caste, ability, economic status, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression. In situations of armed conflict, understanding how gender and age influences risk, vulnerability, and agency is essential for providing gender-responsive and age-sensitive prevention, protection, humanitarian assistance, and recovery.

The risks children face in conflict situations have changed as the CAAC mandate evolved over the past 25 years. Since the establishment of the Children and Armed Conflict mandate and backed by a strong normative framework of 13 resolutions and 13 Presidential Statements of the UN Security Council on

CAAC, the OSRSG CAAC, UNICEF, and the Department of Peace Operations alongside other partners implement a robust Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism (MRM) established by Security Council resolution 1612 (2005).

Strong and recurrent evidence across many contexts demonstrates that boys and girls experience conflict differently. Their vulnerabilities to specific conflict-related violence vary based on socio-cultural gender norms and practices, resulting in distinct impacts, hence requiring distinct protection and prevention responses. However, despite the mounting evidence on the gender dimensions of the impact of armed conflict on children, a systematic gender-sensitive approach in collecting MRM evidence across the board is still lacking, while it is essential to inform the UN Secretary-General's reports on CAAC for consideration by the UN Security Council as well as the appropriate responses by UN Members States, UN entities, and their partners.

It is therefore crucial to expand and systematise the collection of MRM evidence that differentiates the experiences of girls and boys, and to produce gender-sensitive analyses of grave violations against children in armed conflict so that gender-responsive interventions can be put in place for all conflict-affected children, including at the international policy and advocacy level, as well as to enhance accountability by ensuring a coordinated response.

The *Paper on the gender dimensions of grave violations against children in armed conflict* being launched today defines the type of analysis needed to understand the gendered aspect of grave violations against children, lists challenges faced by CTFMRs to conduct such analyses and proposes suggestions on how to overcome them. The paper also includes sets of guiding questions aimed to assist CTFMRs and their partners in integrating a gender perspective in their monitoring and reporting activities with a view to improving the analysis and response to grave violations against girls and boys in situations of armed conflict.

3. Objectives

This event will serve to launch the analytical paper developed by the OSRSG CAAC on the gender dimensions of grave violations against children in armed conflict, namely recruitment and use, killing and maiming, rape and other forms of sexual violence, attacks against schools and/or hospitals, abduction, and the denial of humanitarian access for children. It also includes references to the gender dimensions of other issues of concern monitored and reported in the framework of the Secretary-General reports on CAAC, specifically the deprivation of liberty of children for their actual or alleged association with parties to conflict and the military use of schools and hospitals.



Participants will hear firsthand the rich findings of the research conducted by the OSRSG CAAC in collaboration with CTFMRs operating in some of the situations on the CAAC agenda and other child protection and gender experts. Finally, participants will be given the floor to share their views and recommendations on how a stronger gender lens could be used to improve the prevention and response to grave violations against children in situations of armed conflict.

4. Format

Co-organised by OSRSG CAAC, Malta and the UK, this two-hour event will take place in a hybrid format at the United Nations Headquarters in Conference Room 8 and virtually, on WEBEX platform. The meeting will be held in English. Member States who wish to co-sponsor the event are invited to send an email on events.newyork@gov.mt.

Following a presentation of the paper by the SRSR CAAC and high-level panel interventions, Member States, Observers, and Civil Society Organisations wishing to participate and intervene should register through <https://forms.gle/RPxm5smFwW1denhP9>. Delegations are kindly requested to limit their statements to no more than 3 minutes. The WEBEX link will be sent to registered participants well before the event. Please note that only registered participants will receive a link to connect to the event. For those who have not registered, the event will be broadcasted on UNTV. For any queries, delegations are to email events.newyork@gov.mt.

5. Program

Welcome:

H. E. Mrs. Vanessa Frazier, Permanent Representative of Malta to the United Nations

H.E. Mr. James Roscoe, Ambassador, UN General Assembly, Permanent Mission of the United Kingdom to the United Nations

Opening Remarks:

Ms. Virginia Gamba, Special Representative to the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict

Panel Interventions:

Mr. Jean-Pierre Lacroix, Under-Secretary-General for Peace Operations

Ms. Sima Bahous, Executive Director, UN Women (TBC)

Ms. Janti Soeripto, Chief Executive Officer, Save the Children

Ms. Letitia Anderson, Team Leader, Programme and Communications, Office of Special Representative to the Secretary-General for Sexual Violence in Conflict

Video documentary:

Voices of Children prepared by Save the Children

Interventions from the floor

Member States, and other entities as relevant.

END