

ETMUN

Unraveling the Domino Effect



Committee: The Third General Assembly

Topic: Tackling the Protection of Children and their Rights in Warzones

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Letter from the President:

Dear Delegates of General Assembly 3

News desensitizes us as humans to lots of things: War, death, starvation and pain. This desensitization has led us to a false sense of global peace, equality and a mirage of no conflict.

Whether you like it or not you and I have been tricked again and again by this false persona of global peace. In reality peace has never been global rather since the beginning of civilization, it has been constricted to certain areas and as of now it is constricted to the West. In this committee I aim to showcase some of the most pressing issues in the modern world specifically aiming for the most prevalent issues in Asia and Africa.

Starting off with Children in war zones which face dangers of enslavement and recruitment for military purposes. Through this we are presented with a rising number of child soldiers in conflict ridden areas. This not only puts kids in dire danger but also sets back nations development and tears apart communities.

Continuing into the issue of Gender Equality in the economic sphere, this issue is present all around the world, but we will be focused on Asia and Africa where this is another obstacle in reaching overall gender equality.

Our world is torn apart by these challenges that necessitate our collective attention and action. Global peace and equality are at stake. Your role as a delegate in this committee is multifaceted, you represent the interests, policies and perspectives of your respective nations while aiming to engage in diplomacy and to create meaningful resolutions scoped at solving the conflicts presented. Let's make this conference one of the most enjoyable and most bountiful in ideas and debate.

Best Regards,

Suhayb Qasem

President of General Assembly 3

General Overview:

Children in war zones face significant threats to their safety, well-being, and fundamental rights. They are often subject to various forms of violence, exploitation, recruitment as child soldiers, and psychological trauma. The issue not only involves immediate physical danger but also the long-term impact on their lives and their communities.

The origin and history of this issue can be traced back across different conflicts worldwide. Children have historically been among the most vulnerable in times of war and conflict. The current situation reflects ongoing challenges, despite international efforts. While progress has been made in some regions through interventions like protective measures, education, and rehabilitation, the issue remains significant in many conflict zones. The situation's severity varies from region to region, with ongoing problems in areas such as Syria, Yemen, South Sudan, and Afghanistan. The following points emphasize the need of tackling this vital issue:

Humanitarian Priority

Children in conflict zones face significant abuses of their rights, including bodily and psychological damage, as well as a lack of access to basic services such as education and healthcare. It is critical to safeguard children's safety and well-being from the catastrophic repercussions of armed conflict.

Obligations Legal and Ethical

The legal basis for the protection of children in armed conflict is established by international legal treaties such as the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the 1977 Additional Protocols to the Geneva Conventions. Upholding these legal criteria reflects the ethical obligation to preserve children's rights and shield them from the horrors of war.

Long-Term Effects

War's influence on children can have long-term consequences, altering their physical and mental development as well as their future possibilities. Addressing child safety in conflict zones is critical for reducing the long-term effects of war and encouraging their recovery and rehabilitation.

Stability and peace

Integrating child protection into conflict prevention and peace processes is critical to establishing long-term peace and stability. Addressing the needs of children affected by armed conflict has the ability to produce the political will required to settle or minimize conflicts, eventually contributing to the larger objective of peacebuilding.

Preventive Actions

Efforts to safeguard children in conflict zones include primary, secondary, and tertiary preventative efforts to alleviate children's suffering. Implementing international humanitarian law, giving particular regard for children fleeing war zones, and providing assistance to unaccompanied minors are all vital preventive measures.

Major Parties Involved:

- **Countries:** Various nations with involvement in conflicts where children are affected some include:
 - Afghanistan
 - Democratic Republic of Congo
 - Syria
 - Yemen
 - Somalia
 - Mali
 - Nigeria
 - Cameroon
 - Sudan
 - Central African Republic
- **United Nations:** Through its agencies, the UN has been actively engaged in addressing the issue, implementing measures for child protection in conflict zones. The United Nations (UN) has integrated child protection into the mandates of peacekeeping operations, ensuring that personnel involved in these activities receive appropriate training on the protection, rights, and welfare of children. The Security Council has addressed this issue since the late 1990s, requesting the Secretary-General to ensure that

personnel involved in UN peacemaking, peacekeeping, and peace-building activities have appropriate training on the protection, rights, and welfare of children. Additionally, UNICEF is a leading organization in addressing the protection of children in conflict zones. It provides evidence-based interventions and response services in more than 140 countries, helping to save and protect child victims of war and violence UNICEF is meeting the urgent needs of children impacted by wars in Sudan, Syria, Ukraine, and Yemen, among other countries.

- **Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs):** Entities such as Save the Children, UNICEF, and Human Rights Watch are heavily involved in providing aid, protection, and advocating for the rights of children in conflict zones. Save the Children is another organization that works to protect children in conflict zones. Its report "Stop the War on Children: The Forgotten Ones" studied data from the 2022 report of the United Nations Secretary-General on children and armed conflict, as well as the Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO) of children living in conflict zones to rank the 10 worst conflict-affected countries in which to be a child. Save the Children's report highlights the grave violations against children in conflict zones and calls for urgent action to protect children from the devastating consequences of war. In conclusion, several organizations, including UNICEF, the UN, and Save the Children, are actively engaged in addressing the protection of children in war zones. Their efforts are crucial in mitigating the impact of armed conflict on children and promoting their safety and well-being.

Timeline of Key Events:

- ❖ **1977:** The 1977 Additional Protocols to the Geneva Conventions codified the concept of "special protection" of children under international humanitarian law and introduced the legal standard that children under the age of fifteen should not be recruited or be allowed to take part in hostilities.
- ❖ **1999:** The UN Security Council adopts Resolution 1261 focusing on children affected by armed conflict.
- ❖ **2007:** The Paris Principles and Guidelines on Children Associated with Armed Forces or Armed Groups are established.

- ❖ **2015:** The 'Children, Not Soldiers' campaign is launched, aiming to end the recruitment and use of children in government security forces by 2016.
- ❖ **2019:** Over 20 million children have been displaced by war within and outside their countries, highlighting the scale of the issue
- ❖ **2022:** The United Nations Secretary-General's report on children and armed conflict, as well as the Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO), studied data to rank the 10 worst conflict-affected countries in which to be a child, shedding light on the severity of the impact of war on children.

Previous Attempts to Resolve the Issue:

Numerous attempts have been made by the United Nations, various countries, and international organizations to address this issue. The implementation of resolutions, guidelines, and campaigns aimed at protecting children in conflict zones has shown some success in specific regions.

However, the impact has been limited due to challenges in enforcement, access to conflict areas, and the complex nature of armed conflicts. Some are like the ones below:

The UNICEF Change Agenda

UNICEF has created a change agenda for children in armed conflict, emphasizing the possibilities of bringing about change in this vital sector. The agenda asks for measures to safeguard children in conflict zones, to defend children's rights, and to hold those who violate children's rights responsible.

Child Protection Integrated into Peace Processes

Child protection problems have been integrated into conflict prevention and peace procedures. Recognizing the need of including child safety into peace processes, conversations have centered on establishing the political will required to end or minimize conflicts and build contact with conflict parties.

Initiatives of the United Nations and Peacekeeping Operations

The United Nations has incorporated child protection into the missions of peacekeeping operations, ensuring that personnel participating in these activities get sufficient training on child protection, rights, and welfare. The UN has also emphasized the need to include child protection and welfare on peace agendas, as well as working to stop the recruitment and use of children in conflict.

Efforts of the International Community

The international community has collaborated with conflict parties to avoid breaches of children's rights and to develop programs aimed at improving the future of children impacted by armed conflicts. Efforts have also been undertaken to reintegrate youngsters from armed organizations into their families and cultures.

Possible Solutions:

- 1) **Calls for** strengthening and enforcing existing international laws and resolutions focused on protecting children in armed conflicts.
 - a) Holding countries/ leaders who cause danger to children in war-zones accountable by enforcing strict laws which call for punishing them.
 - i) Sending leaders in charge of war-crimes against children to a hearing at the International Criminal Court so they can get appropriate punishment for the war-crimes they committed.
- 2) **Encourages** increasing humanitarian aid and support to local organizations working directly with affected children.
 - a) This includes sending humanitarian aid via local organizations based on the country providing aid, this aid will include.
 - i) Medical supplies, sanitation, food, water, etc...
- 3) **Recommends** empowering and involving local communities in creating safe environments for children during conflicts.
 - a) This involves providing shelter for children in dangerous warzones.

- i) Children can be placed in refugee camps, or other ‘safe zones’ within their country in order to ensure protection amidst war.

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