

Event Concept Note

UN General Assembly 74th Session: How are We Going to Stop the War on Children?

DATE AND TIME: Monday, September 23, 2019, 3:30-5pm

LOCATION: Conference Room 3, UN Headquarters

Co-Sponsored by the Governments of Belgium, Cote d'Ivoire, France, Germany, Indonesia, South Africa, the European Union and Save the Children

The UN, through its Security Council Children and Armed Conflict Agenda, systematically reports violations against children's rights in situations of conflict. Twenty-three years since Graça Machel detailed the impact of armed conflict on children in the first ever study commissioned by the UN on this topic, children continue to be recruited and used by armed groups, killed and maimed, sexually exploited, abducted, and denied humanitarian aid, with their schools and hospitals attacked. With 420 million currently living in situations of conflict, there is an urgent need to intensify global action to stop what appears to be a war on children. The year 2019 symbolically marks the 100th anniversary of Save the Children, an international organization founded to respond to the plight of children affected by war. The time has come to accelerate action.

Event Description

An official side event of the UN General Assembly's 74th Session, the high-level event provides a platform for the Heads of State and Governments to share their solutions for ending the grave violations against children in conflict. This includes concrete and practical measures they are taking, and are going to take, to stop the recruitment and use of children, killing and maiming, rape and other forms of sexual violence, abduction, attacks on schools and hospitals, and denial of humanitarian aid to children. With highest possible representation, both conflict-affected and non-conflict affected States are invited to participate.

Governments in particular are in a powerful position as the main duty bearers with specific responsibilities towards children's fundamental rights and protections. The event provides a global platform for governments to highlight existing policies regarding the obligations of States to respect, protect and fulfill children's rights in situations of conflict, as well as to recommit to upholding these rights and protections.

Possible Actions

Governments will concretely announce what they will do to stop the war on children, including what they would do to:

- 1) To uphold international rules-based order;
- 2) Hold perpetrators of violations to account; and
- 3) Provide practical action to protect children in conflict and rebuild their lives.

Program and Speakers

Keynote by:

- **Ms. Nadia Murad**, Nobel Laureate (confirmed)

Statements by:

- **Her Majesty Queen Mathilde**, Queen of the Belgians (confirmed)
- **His Excellency Emmanuel Macron**, President of France (to be confirmed)
- **Her Excellency Retno Marsudi**, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Indonesia (confirmed)
- **Her Excellency Lindiwe Sisulu**, Minister of International Relations and Cooperation of South Africa (to be confirmed)
- **His Excellency Gerd Müller**, Federal Minister for Economic Cooperation and Development of Germany (confirmed)
- **Mr. Christos Stylianides**, Commissioner, Humanitarian Aid and Crisis Management, European Union (confirmed)

Interactive session with:

- **Ms. Virginia Gamba**, Special Representative to the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict (confirmed)
- **Ms. Henrietta Fore**, Executive Director of UNICEF (to be confirmed)
- **Mr. Jean-Pierre Lacroix**, Under-Secretary-General, United Nations Department of Peace Operations (to be confirmed)
- **Ms. Michelle Bachelet**, High Commissioner for Human Rights (to be confirmed)

Interventions by:

- Member States and partners to outline concrete actions they are taking in order to stop the war on children (2 minutes each)

Note regarding interventions: the co-organizers will try to accommodate as many governments and partners who are interested in intervening as possible, but if time does not allow for all to intervene, priority will be given according to the following criteria: concrete announcement of actions, pledges or commitments; stakeholder diversity; geographical diversity; and protocol.