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Promotion and protection of the rights of children

**Security Council
Seventy-eighth year**

**Identical letters dated 30 March 2023 from the Permanent
Representative of Malta to the United Nations addressed to the
Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council**

I have the honour to submit herewith a non-paper, compiled as a courtesy by the Permanent Mission of Malta to the United Nations, which provides a summary of the proposals and ideas expressed by participants during the Security Council briefing on the theme “Children and armed conflict: prevention of grave violations”, convened on 13 February 2023 by Malta, which held the Presidency of the Security Council (see annex).

Its purpose is to identify ideas and proposals to strengthen the prevention of grave violations against children in armed conflict and operationalize Security Council resolution [2427 \(2018\)](#). The non-paper does not represent an endorsement of its content by Malta or any other Member State or participant.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the seventy-seventh session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 64, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Vanessa **Frazier**
Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary
Permanent Representative of Malta to the United Nations



Annex to the identical letters dated 30 March 2023 from the Permanent Representative of Malta to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

Non-paper providing a summary of proposals to strengthen the prevention of grave violations against children in armed conflict and operationalize Security Council resolution [2427 \(2018\)](#)

On 13 February 2023, Malta, which held the Presidency of the Security Council, organized a briefing on the theme “Children and armed conflict: prevention of grave violations”.

It was noted that, despite progress achieved throughout the past years, grave violations against children continue to be committed at an alarming scale, and prevention efforts remain essential. Security Council resolution [2427 \(2018\)](#) laid out a framework for integrating the children and armed conflict agenda into any strategy for resolving conflict and sustaining peace, as well as preventing violations and abuses against children.

The purpose of the briefing was therefore to discuss concrete ways of strengthening prevention within the children and armed conflict agenda and to fully operationalize resolution [2427 \(2018\)](#).

The briefing was chaired by the Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Malta to the United Nations and President of the Security Council, Vanessa Frazier. The briefers were the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, Virginia Gamba, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children, Najat Maalla M’jid, and an 18-year-old youth briefer from Cameroon, Ms. Divina.

This non-paper has been compiled as a courtesy by the Permanent Mission of Malta and constitutes a summary of the different ideas and proposals expressed by the participants during the briefing. It does not represent an endorsement of the proposals and their content by Malta or any other Member State or participant.

The following summarized ideas were highlighted by participants for their potential key role in preventing conflict and violations and abuses against children and can be used for further consideration by the Council:

- Build on conflict prevention and resolution strategies, through practicing preventive diplomacy such as good offices and mediation between parties, as well as through forming partnerships between the United Nations, regional organizations, Member States and civil society organizations to consolidate efforts
- Invest in integrated, cross-sectoral, national protection systems as mechanisms to support children and prevent violations and abuses when conflict erupts
- Acknowledge education as a pillar of prevention by empowering the future generation, promoting mutual understanding and dialogue, providing an alternate pathway for children, reducing the risk of recruitment and re-recruitment into armed groups and investing in equal access to quality education in line with international humanitarian law, the Safe Schools Declaration and the Paris Principles and Commitments, paying particular attention to girls’ access to education

- Strengthen synergies within the United Nations system, regional organizations and Member States to develop joint prevention strategies and approaches and a coordinated mapping of vulnerabilities on the ground, and further develop joint strategies and coordination mechanisms to prevent cross-border recruitment and trafficking
- Ensure adequate child protection capacity in United Nations peace operations and political missions by including child protection capacity in all relevant mandates and integrating child protection into activities and policies of those missions while ensuring adequate resources for child safety personnel
- Give full attention to the nexus between peace and development, bearing in mind that security, peace and development are mutually reinforcing and contribute to addressing root causes of conflict including poverty, inequality and other socioeconomic factors
- Implement increased cooperation between the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council and the Peacebuilding Commission to prevent and respond to violations through a comprehensive approach
- Establish rapidly deployable child protection capacity to respond to situations quickly and support prevention efforts, including preventing the recruitment of children by armed groups or ensuring their rehabilitation and reintegration into their communities
- Recognize that the rehabilitation and reintegration of children associated with armed groups are crucial to maintaining peace; ensure rehabilitation and reintegration programmes are gender-sensitive and involve children in their design so they adequately respond to children's needs; and exchange best practices on rehabilitation and reintegration programmes to ensure they best protect and assist children
- Use and support United Nations early warning and monitoring efforts proactively to prevent conflict and divisions in society, including through greater coordination and cooperation; and ensure more systematic reporting on early warning indicators of grave violations against children in armed conflict, assess the implications of such violations for regional peace and stability, incorporate a solid gender-perspective in monitoring and reporting efforts, to also take into account that girls and boys are likely to suffer in different ways, and urge increased cooperation with civil society organizations to bolster the early detection of risk factors
- Improve cross-border monitoring and reporting to prevent child trafficking and cross-border abduction to protect all children, in particular those who are unaccompanied or separated from their families and caregivers, and to repatriate and reintegrate children captured or released in countries other than those of origin, bearing in mind the best interest of the child as the primary consideration, and increase synergies among the United Nations, regional organizations and Member States, through the development and implementation of joint strategies and coordination mechanisms that enhance information exchange and cooperation
- Facilitate the inclusion of children's perspectives and initiatives in all policies and programmes at the local, regional and international levels to better understand their context and needs and to close the cycle of violence; promote children's participation in discussions, political transition, and peace negotiation processes without discrimination and with a gender-sensitive approach; and remove technical and financial barriers to youth participation

through creating an enabling environment and sufficient funds for children and young people to be able to participate

- Make full use of the Security Council's Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict, as it facilitates more effective protection of children in the most acute large-scale armed conflicts and has a range of tools at its disposal
- Engage constructively with the work of the Working Group and approach deliberations in a balanced and non-politicized manner
- Promote coordinated mine clearance efforts to ensure children have a safe place to return to after conflict and to reduce instances of killing and maiming of children
- Commit to holding perpetrators of violations accountable by strengthening existing accountability resources, including through the International Criminal Court, to complement domestic efforts and fight against impunity, including for sexual and gender-based violence committed against children
- Ratify all relevant international legal instruments to strengthen the protection of children and guard against their participation in armed conflict, including the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict, and regional instruments such as the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, endorse the Safe Schools Declaration, the Paris Principles and Commitments and the Vancouver Principles and promote the special rights and protections afforded to children, as to all persons under 18 years of age, in line with the Convention on the Rights of the Child
- Support the continued coordinated approach between the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children and the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict, to strengthen prevention, to respond to violations, to address risk factors and drivers of the continuum of violence and to close the conflict loop
