



Security Council

Seventy-ninth year

Provisional

9823rd meeting

Friday, 20 December 2024, 10 a.m.

New York

President: Mrs. Thomas-Greenfield (United States of America)

Members:

Algeria	Mrs. Remaoun Noureddine
China	Mr. Geng Shuang
Ecuador	Mrs. Barba Bustos
France	Mr. Dharmadhikari
Guyana	Mrs. Rodrigues-Birkett
Japan	Mr. Mikanagi
Malta	Mrs. Frazier
Mozambique	Mr. Afonso
Republic of Korea	Mr. Hwang
Russian Federation	Ms. Zabolotskaya
Sierra Leone	Mr. George
Slovenia	Ms. Jurečko
Switzerland	Mrs. Baeriswyl
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland . .	Mr. Kariuki

Agenda

Children and armed conflict

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The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Children and armed conflict

The President: In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representatives of Afghanistan, Albania, Andorra, Armenia, Australia, Austria, the Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burundi, Canada, Chile, Colombia, the Comoros, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Djibouti, the Dominican Republic, Egypt, El Salvador, Estonia, Fiji, Finland, Gabon, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea-Bissau, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, Ireland, Italy, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Latvia, Lebanon, Libya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malaysia, the Maldives, Mauritania, Mexico, the Federated States of Micronesia, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Myanmar, the Kingdom of the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Oman, Palau, Panama, Peru, the Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, the Republic of Moldova, Romania, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Suriname, Sweden, Tajikistan, Timor-Leste, Tonga, Tunisia, Ukraine, the United Arab Emirates, Uruguay, Viet Nam, Zambia and Zimbabwe to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2024/922, which contains the text of a draft resolution submitted by Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Armenia, Australia, Austria, the Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burundi, Canada, Chile, Colombia, the Comoros, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Djibouti, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Estonia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Latvia, Lebanon, Libya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Maldives, Malta,

Mauritania, Mexico, the Federated States of Micronesia, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Myanmar, the Kingdom of the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Oman, Palau, Panama, Peru, the Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, the Republic of Korea, the Republic of Moldova, Romania, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland, Tajikistan, Timor-Leste, Tonga, Tunisia, Ukraine, the United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United States of America, Uruguay, Viet Nam, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

The Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution before it.

I shall now give the floor to those members of the Council who wish to make statements before the voting.

Mrs. Frazier (Malta): I have the honour to introduce draft resolution S/2024/922 on children and armed conflict, which focuses on enhancing sustainable child protection capacity, including during United Nations peace operation transitions.

I would like to begin by thanking all Security Council members for their constructive engagement throughout the negotiations and extending our gratitude to the more than 100 sponsors for their steadfast support. Over the past two years as Chair of the Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict, Malta has placed the protection of children affected by armed conflict at the forefront of its agenda. We thank the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, UNICEF, civil society and other partners for their invaluable cooperation throughout that period. The draft resolution reaffirms our shared commitment and ongoing determination to address grave violations against children in conflict zones, while recognizing the vital need to sustain child protection efforts during United Nations peace operation transitions.

Such transitions are critical junctures that require careful planning in order to ensure continuity in the monitoring, verification and reporting of violations and abuses against children in situations of armed conflict. The draft resolution further reinforces the call for strengthened accountability to end impunity for violations against children. The text underscores the need for sustainable child protection capacities, including the timely recruitment and deployment

of child protection advisers, who play an essential role in integrating child protection as a cross-cutting issue within mission mandates, leading efforts in monitoring, prevention, reporting and engagement with parties to conflict. In addition, they must be properly trained and fully integrated into mission planning, particularly in transition contexts. The draft resolution calls on stakeholders to support national institutions and civil society networks in advocating for, protecting and reintegrating children affected by conflict, using tailored approaches to address the specific needs of girls and boys and ensuring sustained resources. Lastly, it highlights the importance of strengthening coordination among relevant stakeholders to maintain the continuity, effectiveness and sustainability of child protection activities. The text calls for a smooth and responsible handover of child protection responsibilities during transitions, including the transfer of core tasks to the United Nations country team.

Malta remains resolute in its commitment to safeguarding children in armed conflict and will ensure that the children and armed conflict agenda continues to be a cornerstone of our foreign policy even after our term on the Security Council ends. We trust that draft resolution S/2024/922 will serve as a call to action for countries and stakeholders to intensify their efforts towards a future in which no child endures the horrors of war.

The President: I shall now put the draft resolution to the vote.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Algeria, China, Ecuador, France, Guyana, Japan, Malta, Mozambique, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Sierra Leone, Slovenia, Switzerland, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

The President: The draft resolution received 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has been adopted unanimously as resolution 2764 (2024).

I shall now give the floor to those members of the Council who wish to make statements after the voting.

Mr. Mikanagi (Japan): I would like to thank Malta for submitting the very important resolution 2764 (2024) and for its valuable work as Chair of the Security Council's Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict. The resolution represents a critical

step in strengthening child protection frameworks in the transitional periods of United Nations peace operations. Japan therefore co-sponsored and voted in favour of it. United Nations peace operations remain important policy tools for maintaining peace and security in conflict areas. However, more action is needed to protect children in post-conflict settings, including in cases of transitions or the drawdowns of United Nations peace operations. Japan has advocated for the early development of transitional plans, and we reiterate the call for swift and strategic coordination among United Nations peace operations, UNICEF and other United Nations agencies and local governments to ensure that no child is left behind.

Japan supports the resolution's call for dedicated child protection capacities and reintegration assistance to end and prevent violations against children, and emphasizes the vital importance of education in post-conflict settings. Education is a prerequisite for lasting, sustainable peace and must be prioritized in stabilization plans and post-conflict measures, as the resolution notes. Ongoing conflicts around the world are causing unprecedented suffering among children. Japan welcomes resolution 2764 (2024) and we call on the entire international community to enhance efforts to protect the next generation from violence and thereby secure a peaceful future for all.

Mrs. Rodrigues-Birkett (Guyana): Guyana welcomes the adoption of resolution 2764 (2024) on ensuring sustainable child protection capacity, including during United Nations peace operation transitions, which we were pleased to vote for and co-sponsor. I thank the delegation of Malta for this valuable initiative, which places child protection at the heart of peace operations. Millions of children in our world today continue to be devastated by armed conflict. Recent data shows increases in the incidence of all six grave violations against children. The Security Council must therefore use all the tools at its disposal to improve the protection of children. As recognized by the resolution, United Nations peace operations play a vital role in the protection of children, in particular through the inclusion of dedicated child protection advisers to ensure child protection in mission operations. They also monitor, verify and report on grave violations and abuses against children.

We have seen examples of how increased child protection capacity in countries has led to improvements in the lives of children. We have also seen how

abrupt closures of United Nations missions without proper planning, capacity-building and resources for sustainable child protection have had negative impacts. Among other critical provisions, resolution 2764 (2024) addresses the coordination of functions among key United Nations entities and Governments or authorities and the smooth and responsible transfer of mission responsibilities for child protection during transitions. With some United Nations peacekeeping operations and special political missions ready to transition over the coming months, it is essential to focus on the continuity and sustainability of child protection programmes conducted by both United Nations country teams and national authorities. In conclusion, the Council must continue to prioritize the inclusion of child protection provisions and capacities in the mandates of United Nations peacekeeping operations and special political missions. I also reiterate Guyana's firm belief that the peaceful resolution of conflicts remains the best protection for children.

Ms. Zabolotskaya (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We would like to thank Mrs. Vanessa Frazier and the experts of her delegation for coordinating the negotiations on resolution 2764 (2024). Thanks to their constructive approach, we managed to achieve Security Council unity on this important mandate — children and armed conflict — which in recent times has regrettably been politicized. We note the balanced and concise resolution we adopted today on children and armed conflict in the context of transitions following the drawdown of United Nations peacekeeping missions. We note the importance of the emphasis that the resolution places on coordinating and cooperating with the Governments and authorities concerned, in the context of the transfer of the child protection component during the withdrawal of United Nations peacekeeping missions. We believe it is worth mentioning the relevant efforts of the African Union (AU) and its effective work to promote the child protection component in its peace operations. We support the AU's work in that area. Last but not least, it is significant under current conditions to renew the request for the Secretary-General to ensure that the information communicated by the Organization concerning violations against children is accurate, objective, reliable and verifiable.

Mr. Hwang (Republic of Korea): I welcome the unanimous adoption of resolution 2764 (2024) on children and armed conflict, with a focus on ensuring child protection capacities in United Nations peace

operations. I thank the delegation of Malta for its dedicated efforts in that regard. Today's adoption of the fourteenth resolution related to children and armed conflict, with more than 100 co-sponsors, including my own country, demonstrates the strong global commitment to strengthening the children and armed conflict framework that has been developed over the past 25 years. It also represents a milestone in global efforts to bridge the gap in child protection capacities, particularly during the transition and withdrawal phases of United Nations peace operations. That was one of the key topics at the most recent annual open debate on children and armed conflict, held during the Republic of Korea's Security Council presidency in June (see S/PV.9669). At that time, many States Members of the United Nations emphasized the importance of preserving the child protection capacity among United Nations agencies, funds and programmes, particularly as we are witnessing a rapidly increasing number of grave violations against children in armed conflicts around the world.

I would also like to take this opportunity to urge all States Members of the United Nations and other parties to cooperate faithfully with United Nations agencies in carrying out the Security Council mandate on children and armed conflict, in particular with regard to the monitoring and reporting mechanism and developing and implementing concrete time-bound action plans to prevent and end grave violations against children.

Mr. Kariuki (United Kingdom): The United Kingdom was pleased to co-sponsor resolution 2764 (2024) addressing the challenges that have an impact on children affected by armed conflict in the context of transitions in United Nations peace operations. We thank Malta for its leadership on the resolution and for advancing the children and armed conflict agenda as Chair of the Working Group. The adoption of the resolution is timely, given the ongoing transitions of the United Nations Transitional Assistance Mission in Somalia and the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The United Kingdom remains deeply concerned that instances of the six grave violations against children have risen to shocking levels in recent years. Both the Council and the wider United Nations system should do more to protect children, who are uniquely vulnerable and often the primary victims of conflict. It is therefore important that the United Nations maintain child protection capabilities in peace operations, including

during mission transitions or withdrawals. We welcome the resolution's focus on the crucial role of dedicated child protection advisers in United Nations missions and the importance of ensuring greater coordination on child protection across the United Nations system. We also recognize the importance of an effective monitoring and reporting mechanism, which is vital for ensuring accountability and improving protection for children. The United Kingdom reiterates its strong support for the children and armed conflict mandate and the need to ensure that children have access to safe education and benefit from unhindered humanitarian access.

Mr. George (Sierra Leone): Sierra Leone co-sponsored and voted in favour of resolution 2764 (2024) and welcomes its unanimous adoption. More than 470 million children are affected by armed conflict globally, with approximately 30 million of them displaced, many of them exploited or separated from their families and many more of them facing inadequate care and protection, even when conflicts are considered to be over. While we affirm that the protection of children remains the primary responsibility of States, we recognize the critical role of peace operations and other programmatic interventions in the protection of civilians and post-conflict stabilization. It is in that spirit that we hope that the resolution will ensure the prioritization of child protection capacity and mechanisms in the differentiated context of United Nations mission transitions. We close by expressing our profound gratitude to Malta, Chair of the Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict, and Ecuador, Vice-Chair of the Working Group, for their commendable leadership on this subject. It is our sincere hope that the members of the Security Council will continue to come together to act in the best interest of children with respect to various conflict situations, including those not on the Council's agenda.

Mrs. Barba Bustos (Ecuador) (*spoke in Spanish*): Ecuador is grateful for and commends the dedicated work of the Chair of the Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict in facilitating the adoption of resolution 2764 (2024).

The resolution recognizes the need to strengthen the efforts made by Member States, United Nations agencies, funds, programmes and peace operations, and regional and subregional organizations to ensure the protection of children affected by armed conflict, to facilitate their families' access to transparent

accountability systems and to implement early-warning mechanisms that promote prevention and non-repetition.

It has been an honour for Ecuador to serve as co-Chair of the Working Group with Malta. Leadership of the Working Group over the past two years has resulted in the adoption of nine consensus-based outcome documents on the situation of children in Afghanistan, Colombia, the Philippines, Iraq, Nigeria, Mali, the Central African Republic, Somalia and South Sudan. The conclusions constitute road maps to guide the work of States and the international community. Overall, they illustrate how inequality, social, gender and intergenerational injustice, lack of opportunity and institutional weakness, among other factors, pave the way for conflict and place children and young people in vulnerable circumstances. Ecuador hopes that the Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict will continue to coordinate efforts with the Special Representative, the monitoring and reporting mechanism and United Nations staff on the ground in their work of compiling, classifying and raising awareness of grave violations against children, among other efforts to establish prevention and protection measures vis-à-vis children.

Mrs. Remaoun Noureddine (Algeria): Today, we have adopted a resolution on children and armed conflict with the aim of ensuring sustainable child protection during United Nations peace operations transitions (resolution 2764 (2024)). My delegation co-sponsored the timely resolution, and we would like to thank Malta and, in particular, Ambassador Vanessa Frazier, for their leadership in bringing this critical issue before the Council and the wider United Nations membership.

In the context of the ongoing scourge of conflict in many parts of the world, it is crucial to prioritize the protection of children. They embody the seeds of hope for a better future, and we must nurture their development and ensure their safety and well-being. In a statement on children in the Gaza Strip published on 14 December, the Executive Director of UNICEF declared that

"In the last 14 months, more than 14,500 children have reportedly been killed, and virtually all 1.1 million children in Gaza are in urgent need of protection and mental health support. Famine

continues to loom in the north and humanitarian access remains severely restricted.”

That is a stark reminder of the grave violations committed against Palestinian children by the Israeli occupying Power. Tragically, those harrowing figures are not unique to Gaza. Children across conflict zones worldwide face unimaginable suffering. The resolution constitutes an important step towards ensuring the protection of children in conflict zones. My delegation welcomes its adoption and reaffirms its unwavering commitment to supporting all efforts to safeguard children, including in armed conflict.

The President: I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of the United States of America.

I want to thank Malta for acting as penholder on this resolution (resolution 2764 (2024)) and for its leadership as Chair of the Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict. We appreciate and support all its efforts to elevate, enhance and better integrate the children and armed conflict agenda item into the work of the Council.

The children and armed conflict mandate is about safeguarding the most vulnerable victims of war: children. At its core, the mandate seeks to create a world in which children live free from the horrors of war and strives to ensure their access to essential humanitarian assistance in times of crisis. Of course, all around the world, children live under the scourge of war. And all around the world, children needlessly suffer from hunger, displacement and other crises.

Therefore, this resolution serves as a poignant reminder of the urgency and necessity of strengthening the international community’s child protection capacities, of the crucial need of all States to respect international law, and of those named in the annual report on children and armed conflict (S/2024/384) to enter into action plans with the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict and address the concerns raised. Children around the world deserve to feel safe, to pursue their education and to have a bright future. Let us work more expeditiously to make those principles a reality.

The meeting rose at 10.30 a.m.