



Council of the European Union  
General Secretariat

**Brussels, 15 July 2025**

**WK 9906/2025 INIT**

**LIMITE**

**COHOM**

*This is a paper intended for a specific community of recipients. Handling and further distribution are under the sole responsibility of community members.*

## **MEETING DOCUMENT**

From:	EEAS
To:	Working Party on Human Rights
Subject:	EU list of priority countries on Children and Armed Conflict – 2025-2026

## EU list of priority countries on Children and Armed Conflict – 2025-2026

According to the EU Guidelines on Children and Armed Conflict (doc. 11296/24)<sup>1</sup>, adopted by the Foreign Affairs Council on 24 June 2024, the Council working party on Human Rights (COHOM) is requested to review, update and publish on a regular basis the EU list of priority countries on CAAC based on information from relevant sources, including the UN Secretary-General's report and briefings.

The EU lists countries on whose territory grave violations against children are committed, basing itself, as per previous agreement noted above, on the findings of the UN Secretary General's Annual Report on Children and Armed Conflict.

The latest such report was published on 17 June 2025 (A/79/878-S/2025/247, see Annex for details). On 16 July COHOM is due to hold a discussion on the UN annual report on CAAC with the Office of the UN SRSG on CAAC in Brussels.

**On this basis, COHOM proposes the following updated list of EU priority countries on CAAC for the year 2025-2026**, reflecting the 2025 report's removal of Iraq, Pakistan, and the Philippines from the CAAC agenda due to a sustained decrease in grave violations and the adoption of preventive measures by their governments in cooperation with the United Nations:

- |   |                        |
|---|------------------------|
| • Afghanistan                           | • Mali                 |
| • Burkina Faso                          | • Mozambique           |
| • Cameroon                              | • Myanmar              |
| • Chad                                  | • Niger                |
| • Central African Republic              | • Nigeria              |
| • Colombia                              | • Somalia              |
| • Democratic Republic of Congo          | • South Sudan          |
| • Ethiopia                              | • Sudan                |
| • Haiti                                 | • Syrian Arab Republic |
| • Israel/Occupied Palestinian Territory | • Ukraine              |
| • Lebanon                               | • Yemen                |
| • Libya                                 |                        |

**In line with the updated EU Guidelines on Children and Armed Conflict, COHOM further recalls the need for:**

- **EU Heads of Mission, CSDP Heads of Missions and Military Commanders in priority countries** to include analysis of conflict's impact on children in their regular reports, ensuring integration of CAAC in local EU Human Rights and Democracy country strategies and fostering regular coordination on the ground with EU Delegations, EU Member States missions, CSDP missions and operations, UN Resident Co-ordinators and their Country Teams, UN Country Task Forces on Monitoring and Reporting (CTFMR) or their equivalents, other donors, NGOs and the private sector.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.eeas.europa.eu/sites/default/files/documents/2024/EEAS-EU-Guidelines-CAAC.pdf>

- **European Commission** to ensure that adequate financial resources for the protection of children affected by armed conflict are allocated in priority countries, including to support the functioning of the monitoring and reporting mechanisms on the ground, and that EU-funded actions are in line with the Guidelines
- **Member States** to contribute information on relevant bilateral projects and diplomatic engagements related to CAAC, including in coordination on the ground in priority countries.
- **Relevant geographic Working Groups** to formulate recommendations for action in their respective priority country situations.
- **Geographic EUSRs and the EUSR for Human Rights** to take on specific actions and outreach on issues related to children and armed conflict in priority countries covered by their mandates.

## 1. Findings of the latest UN Secretary-General's Annual Report on Children and Armed Conflict

The most recent report (A/79/878-S/2025/247), published in June 2025, documents an unprecedented 25% increase in grave violations against children in armed conflict compared to 2023, totalling 41,370 verified violations (36,221 committed in 2024, 5,149 committed earlier but verified in 2024). Violations affected 22,495 children (14,383 boys, 7,320 girls, 792 sex unknown) across 23 situations and one regional monitoring arrangement (Lake Chad Basin). Non-State armed groups were responsible for nearly 50% of violations, while government forces were the primary perpetrators of killing and maiming, attacks on schools and hospitals, and denial of humanitarian access. The report notes a 17% increase in children subjected to multiple violations (3,137 in 2024 vs. 2,684 in 2023), particularly through abduction, recruitment, and sexual violence. In 2024, 16,482 children formerly associated with armed forces or groups received protection or reintegration support.

### Key Findings:

- Killing and Maiming: 11,967 children (4,676 killed, 7,291 maimed), often due to explosive ordnance, mines, improvised explosive devices, and crossfire.
- Denial of Humanitarian Access: 7,906 incidents, with attacks on aid convoys, personnel, and bureaucratic barriers leaving children without healthcare, education, or necessities.
- Recruitment and Use: 7,402 children recruited and used by armed groups or forces.
- Abduction: 4,573 children abducted, often for recruitment or sexual slavery.
- Sexual Violence: 35% increase, including a rise in gang rape as a deliberate tactic of warfare, vastly underreported due to stigma and lack of services.
- Attacks on Schools and Hospitals: Significant increase, heightening children's vulnerability.
- Detention: 3,018 children detained for actual or alleged association with armed groups or for national security reasons.

The highest numbers of violations were verified in:

- Israel/Occupied Palestinian Territory (8,554 violations, including 7,774 attributed to Israeli armed forces across the Occupied Palestinian Territory, Lebanon, and Syria).
- Democratic Republic of Congo (4,043 violations).
- Somalia (2,568 violations).
- Nigeria (2,436 violations).
- Haiti (2,269 violations).

Sharpest percentage increases in violations:

- Lebanon (545%).
- Mozambique (525%).
- Haiti (490%).
- Ethiopia (235%).
- Ukraine (105%).

**The 2025 report introduces the following changes compared to the 2024 report:**

- **Newly listed parties:**

- *Central African Republic*: Azande Ani Kpi Gbe (recruitment and use of children).
- *Colombia*: Clan del Golfo (Autodefensas Gaitanistas de Colombia) (recruitment and use of children).
- *Democratic Republic of Congo*: Mai-Mai Kashumba (recruitment and use of children).
- *Haiti*: Viv Ansanm coalition (recruitment and use, killing and maiming, rape and other sexual violence, attacks on schools and hospitals).
- **Additional violations added to existing listed parties:**
  - *Democratic Republic of Congo*: Coopérative pour le développement du Congo (CODECO) (recruitment and use of children) and Mai-Mai Zaïre (recruitment and use of children).
  - *Sudan*: Rapid Support Forces (abduction of children).
- **Delisted parties:**
  - *Somalia*:
    - Somali National Army (delisted for recruitment and use, conditional on continued action plan implementation; remains listed for killing/maiming, sexual violence, denial of humanitarian access).
    - Somali Police Force (delisted for recruitment and use, conditional; remains listed for killing/maiming, sexual violence, denial of humanitarian access).
  - *Yemen*:
    - Security Belt Forces (delisted for recruitment and use, conditional on 2014 action plan).
    - Houthis (Ansar Allah) (delisted for attacks on schools and hospitals, conditional; remains listed for recruitment and use, killing and maiming).
- **Changes in situations:**
  - *Ukraine*: Elevated to Annex I, Section A, reflecting regular Security Council discussions.
  - *Iraq, Pakistan, Philippines*: Removed from the 2026 report due to decreased violations and preventive measures, with a caveat for potential re-inclusion if violations increase.

### 3. Situations of concern without listed parties in the 2025 Report

The following situations are monitored as concerns without listed parties in Annex I or II:

- Ethiopia (235% increase in violations).
- Lebanon (545% increase in violations).
- Libya.
- Mozambique (525% increase in violations).

## 2. Parties to conflict listed in the 2024 Secretary-General's annual report on Children and Armed Conflict

Situation of situation	Parties listed in the Annex	Grave Violations <sup>2</sup>	Action Plan <sup>3</sup>
Afghanistan	Hizb-i Islami Gulbuddin	a,b	
	Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant-Khorasan	a,b,d	
	Taliban forces and affiliated groups, including the Haqqani Network	a,b,d,e	
Burkina Faso	Islamic State in the Greater Sahara	b,e	
	Jama'a Nusrat ul-Islam wa al-Muslimin	a,b,d,e	
Central African Republic	Azande Ani Kpi Gbe ( <i>newly listed</i> )	a	
	Local militias known as the anti-balaka	a,b,c	
	Lord's Resistance Army	a,b,c,e	
	Front populaire pour la renaissance de la Centrafrique,	a,b,c,d	July 2019
	Mouvement patriotique pour la Centrafrique	a,b,c,d	June 2018
	Union pour la paix en Centrafrique	a,b,c,d	August 2019
Colombia	Clan del Golfo (Autodefensas Gaitanistas de Colombia ( <i>newly listed</i> ))	a	
	Ejército de Liberación Nacional	a	
	Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia-Ejército del Pueblo (FARC-EP) dissident groups	a	

<sup>2</sup> a recruits and uses children

b kills and maims children

c commits rape and other forms of sexual violence against children

d engages in attacks on schools and/or hospitals

e abducts children

<sup>3</sup> concluded an action plan, joint commitment or similar measure with the United

Nations in line with Security Council resolutions 1539 (2004) and 1612 (2005). An action plan is a written, signed commitment between the United Nations and those parties who are listed as having committed grave violations against children in the Secretary-General's Annual Report on Children and Armed Conflict. Each action plan is designed to address a specific party's situation, and outlines concrete, time-bound steps that lead to compliance with international law. A party to conflict shall be eligible for delisting upon UN verification that all activities have been successfully implemented.

Democratic Republic of Congo	Alliance des patriotes pour un Congo libre et souverain	a,e	
	Allied Democratic Forces	a,b,c,d,e	
	Coopérative pour le développement du Congo (CODECO)	b,c,d,e a ( <i>newly added</i> )	
	Forces démocratiques de libération du Rwanda-Forces combattantes abacunguzi	a,c,d,e	
	Alliance des force de résistance congolaise	a	
	Force de résistance patriotique de l'Ituri	a,c,d,e	
	Lord's Resistance Army	a,b,c,e	
	Mai-Mai Apa la Pale	a,c,e	
	Mai-Mai Mazembe	a,b,e	Yes
	Mai-Mai Kashumba ( <i>newly listed</i> )	a	
	Mai-Mai Simba	a,c	
	Mai-Mai Zaïre	b a ( <i>newly added</i> )	
	Mouvement du 23 mars	a,b,c,d,e	
	Nduma défense du Congo-Rénové	a,b,c	
	Nyatura	a,c,e	
	Raia Mutomboki	a,c,e	Yes
	Twigwaneho	a	
	Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo	c	Oct 2012 (a,c)
Haiti	Viv Ansanm coalition ( <i>newly listed</i> )	a,b,c,d	
Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territory ( <i>newly added</i> )	Palestinian Islamic Jihad's Al-Quds Brigades	b,e	

	Hamas' Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades and affiliated factions	b,e	
	Israeli armed and security forces ( <i>newly listed</i> )	b,d	
Lake Chad Basin (Cameroon, Chad, Niger, Nigeria)	Islamic State West Africa Province	a,b,c,d,e	
	Boko Haram (Jama'atu Ahlis Sunna Lidda'awati Wal-Jihad)	a,b,c,d,e	
Mali	Jama'a Nusrat ul-Islam wa al-Muslimin, including Ansar Eddine	a,b,c	
	Mouvement national de libération de l'Azawad, part of the Coordination des mouvements de l'Azawad	a,c	March 2016
	Platform, including affiliated groups	a	August 2021
Myanmar	Myanmar armed forces	a,b,c,d,e	June 2012 (a)
	United Wa State Army	a	
	Democratic Karen Benevolent Army	a	November 2020
	Kachin Independence Army	a	
	Karen National Liberation Army	a	
	Karen National Union/Karen National Liberation Army Peace Council	a	
	Karenni Army	a	
	Shan State Army	a	
Somalia	Ahl al-Sunna wal-Jama'a	a	
	Al-Shabaab	a,b,c,d,e	
	Somali National Army	b,c	July 2012 (a) – both delisted for recruitment and use – continued implementation August 2012 (b) Roadmap to expedite implementation Oct 2019
	Somali Police Force	b,c	



South Sudan	South Sudan People's Defence Forces	a,b,c,e	February 2020
	Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army in Opposition – pro-Machar	a,b,e	
Sudan	Justice and Equality Movement	a	September 2012
	Rapid Support Forces	a,b,c,d, e ( <i>newly added</i> )	
	Sudanese Armed Forces	b,d	
	Sudan Liberation Army-Abdul Wahid	a	
	Sudan Liberation Army-Minni Minawi	a	11 June 2007
	Sudan People's Liberation Movement-North Abdelaziz al-Hilu faction	a	23 November 2016 (not renounced by either faction following the split)
	Sudan People's Liberation Movement-North Malik Agar faction	a	
	Third Front-Tamazuj	a	
Syrian Arab Republic	Da'esh	a,b,c,d,e	
	Government forces, including the National Defence Forces and pro-government militias	a,b,c,d	
	Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham	a,b	
	Kurdish People's Protection Units and Women's Protection Units (YPG/YPJ)	a	June 2019
	Opposition Syrian National Army, including Ahrar al-Sham and Army of Islam	a,b	June 2024
Ukraine	Russian armed forces and affiliated armed groups	b,d	
	Russian authorities located in territories of Ukraine temporarily controlled or occupied by the Russian Federation	e	
Yemen	Al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula	a	

	Houthis (Ansar Allah)	a,b	April 2022
	Pro-government militias, including the Salafists and popular committees	a	