



Security Council

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Letter dated 19 April 2021 from the President of the Security Council addressed to the Secretary-General

In my capacity as President of the Security Council, I am forwarding to you a letter dated 15 April 2021 (see annex) from the Chair of the Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict established by Security Council resolution [1612 \(2005\)](#), based on the Working Group's conclusions adopted on 10 December 2020 ([S/AC.51/2020/10](#)).

(Signed) **Dang Dinh Quy**
President of the Security Council



Annex

During a closed videoconference meeting held on 6 November 2020, the Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict examined the seventh report of the Secretary-General on children and armed conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (S/2020/1030), covering the period from 1 January 2018 to 31 March 2020, which was introduced by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict. The Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to the United Nations also addressed the Working Group. The Working Group adopted its conclusions on children and armed conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (S/AC.51/2020/10) on 10 December 2020.

In follow up to the recommendations of the Working Group and subject to and consistent with applicable international law and relevant Security Council resolutions, including resolutions 1612 (2005), 1882 (2009), 1998 (2011), 2068 (2012), 2143 (2014), 2225 (2015) and 2427 (2018), I am entrusted, in my capacity as Chair of the Working Group, to:

(a) Request you to ensure that the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and other relevant United Nations agencies continue and strengthen their efforts to support, in line with their respective mandates, the Congolese authorities in fighting impunity, including through the strengthening of the criminal justice system, in implementing the standard operating procedures for age assessment in the national armed and security forces to prevent the recruitment and use of children in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, in mainstreaming the specific needs of children affected by armed conflict and the protection of their rights into all disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes, including through the development of a gender- and age-sensitive disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process, and in security sector reform, in providing long-term rehabilitation and reintegration programmes and opportunities to children formerly associated with national armed forces and non-State armed groups and training of the national armed and security forces on the protection of children, in bolstering the education and health system and in establishing standard operating procedures for the handover of children formerly associated with national armed forces and groups and for the protection of children in the course of military operations, and to give full attention to violations and abuses against children in the application of the human rights due diligence policy on United Nations support for non-United Nations security forces;

(b) Further request you to ensure that the United Nations country task force on monitoring and reporting continues its advocacy for the release and reintegration of children associated with non-State armed groups and national armed forces and of children detained on charges related to their alleged or actual association with non-State armed groups and on national security grounds, and prioritizes its efforts to ensure that all aspects of the action plan, including those relating to sexual violence and other grave violations against children by the national armed and security forces, signed on 4 October 2012 by the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, are fully implemented, and to engage with non-State armed groups, with a view to developing action plans to end and prevent the recruitment and use of children, killing and maiming, and attacks on schools and hospitals, in violation of applicable international law, as well as rape and other forms of sexual violence against children and to address other violations and abuses committed against children, secure concrete commitments and advocate appropriate response mechanisms, in the Democratic Republic of the Congo;

(c) Request you to ensure the effectiveness of the monitoring and reporting mechanism on children and armed conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and of the dedicated child protection component of MONUSCO, including in the context of the discussions on the drawdown, by ensuring that sufficient child protection capacities are available, in line with the Mission's mandate, recognizing the security and logistical constraints on monitoring and reporting activities;

(d) Note the various measures taken by MONUSCO and troop- and police-contributing countries to combat sexual exploitation and abuse, which have led to a reduction in reported cases, while expressing grave concern that sexual exploitation and abuse of children by peacekeepers continued to be a protection concern, call for the continued implementation by United Nations peacekeeping operations of the Secretary-General's zero-tolerance policy on sexual exploitation and abuse, as well as ensuring full compliance of their personnel with the United Nations code of conduct, and reiterate its request that you continue to take all necessary measures in this regard and keep the Security Council informed;

(e) Request you to ensure that, in the context of the development of a MONUSCO exit strategy, decision-making on child protection capacity takes into account objective and measurable progress on child protection, that any drawdown ensures the preservation and adequate funding of child protection functions, as mandated, including the management of the monitoring and reporting mechanism database, and to further ensure that the need for and the number and roles of child protection advisers are systematically assessed during the discussions on the future United Nations presence.

(Signed) Mona Juul

Chair

Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict
