



Statement of Ireland

46th session of the Human Rights Council

Item 3: Interactive Dialogue with the Special Representative of the Secretary General on Children and Armed Conflict.

8 March 2021

Ireland aligns with the statement of the EU.

We warmly welcome the SRSG on Children and Armed Conflict and we thank her for her report. We fully support your work and appreciate the excellent cooperation with your office.

Children remain at the frontline of armed conflicts across the world with over 25,000 grave violations against children verified in 19 situations in 2019. These violations, including the denial of humanitarian access and attacks against schools, medical facilities and personnel, are completely unacceptable. The recruitment and use of child soldiers continues unabated and is a matter of grave concern.

Ireland shares the SRSG's concern about the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on children affected by conflict. Her report identifies a number of worrying trends, compounded by the pandemic including the closure of schools, the reduced presence of humanitarian actors and the reduction of family incomes. These developments may increase the risks of the recruitment of children and other grave violations against children by armed groups.

Ireland remains deeply committed to the protection of the rights of the child and their right to education, both in times of stability and of conflict with a particular focus on improving access to quality education for girls, in a safe environment, and education in emergencies.

SRSG, Ireland is actively engaging as member of the Security Council Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict. What measures can be taken to strengthen the implementation of the Working Group's conclusions?