

MEETING REPORT

CHILDREN'S CONSULTATION WITH THE EUROPEAN UNION ON THE UN HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL RESOLUTION ON CHILDREN IN ARMED CONFLICT

On the 13th December 2025, **24** children aged between **12** and **17** from **10** countries gathered for an online consultation with the representative of the European Union.

The goal was to explore how armed conflict affects children's access to their rights, the extent to which children are heard during times of war, and key recommendations that should be included in the next Human Rights Council resolution drafted by the the European Union as one of the penholders.

You can read more about the Human Rights Council and the Annual day on the rights of the child 2026 [HERE](#).



Afghanistan	Mexico
Colombia	Myanmar
Democratic Republic of Congo	Palestine
	Sudan
	Ukraine
Lebanon	Uganda

This resolution will be adopted in March 2026, at the same time when the Human Rights Council will dedicate a full day discussion to the topic 'children in armed conflict' (called Annual Day on the Rights of the Child).

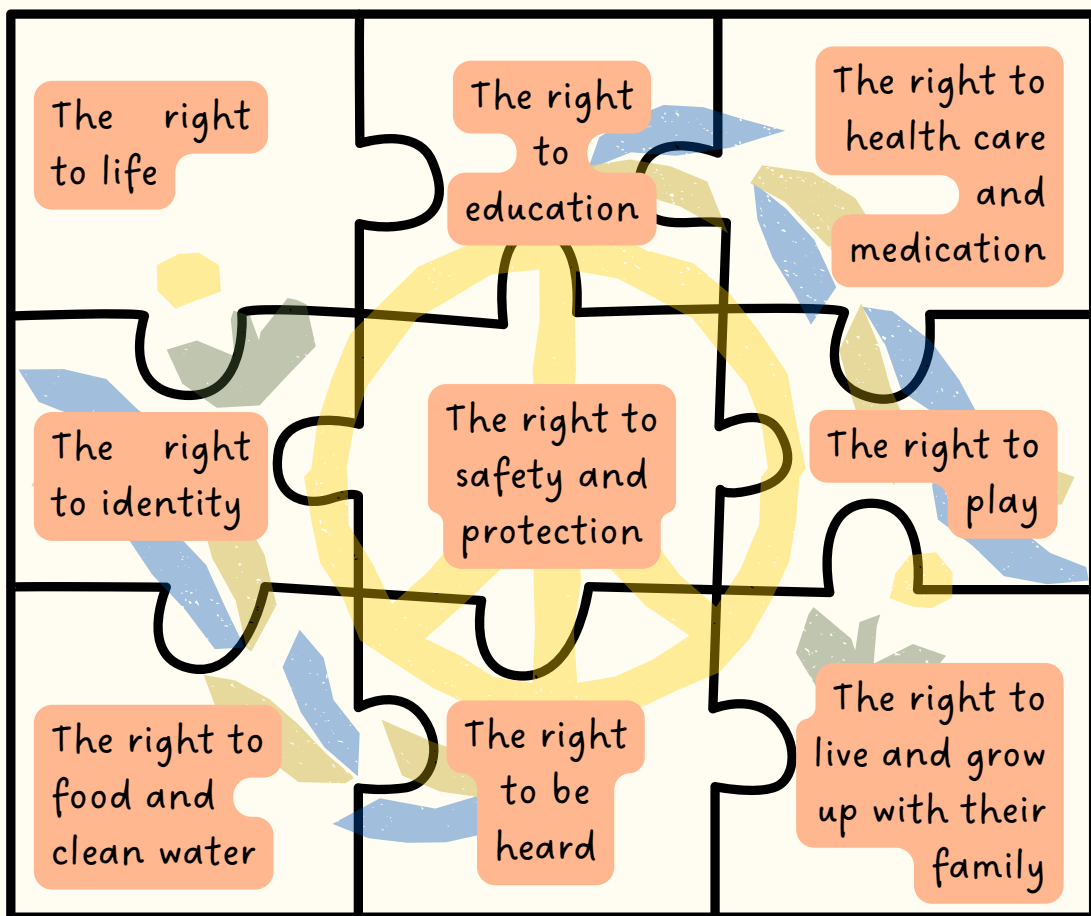
This report shares a summary of the answers that children gave to three main questions and it includes quotes from them.

1

OF ALL CHILDREN'S RIGHTS, WHICH ONES ARE DIFFICULT TO ACCESS WHEN THERE IS WAR?

During the meeting, all rights were mentioned as being affected during armed conflict. Participants highlighted that children are the most vulnerable and impacted group in such a context.

The most affected rights include:



“ There are no children's rights that are not violated in war.
Child from Ukraine ”

“ We are denied of all of our lives even our smiles and happiness.
Child from Palestine ”

2

DO YOU THINK CHILDREN ARE HEARD AND CAN PARTICIPATE IN TIMES OF WAR?



The general consensus was that children are rarely heard or meaningfully included in decisions during war or armed conflict.



Decisions affecting children's lives are mostly made by adults, governments, or humanitarian actors without consulting children often times.



Children are often not considered children during wars or adults don't care about children's perspectives and think it's not important.

“

Children are expected to stay silent.
Child from Lebanon

”

“

They are not asked like children don't know what is happening in the world...
Child from Sudan

”

“

Adults take decisions without us but we are living the consequences of the war directly.
Child from Colombia

”

“

Adults do not take action based on what they heard from children.
Child from Sudan

”



Participants noted that when safe and child-friendly mechanisms exist, such as advisory teams, community groups, or digital platforms, children can provide valuable insights and solutions based on their lived experiences. However, it is clear that conflict environments limit safe spaces for children to express their views.

“Children are the ones who will rebuild the country.
Child from Ukraine”

“Some countries simply cannot provide safe platforms for children to participate.
Child from Palestine”



Fear, trauma, displacement, and lack of access to platforms further silence children's voices.



In some cases, children who dare to speak up or stand for their rights are arrested or sued and violated against, which makes more children silenced.

“If a child share something on social media they can get arrested and detained for years..
Child from Palestine”

“Children are afraid to speak up because they don't feel safe.
Child from Palestine”

3

WHAT SHOULD THE HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL RESOLUTION RECOMMEND TO STATES?



ENSURE CONTINUOUS ACCESS TO EDUCATION IN CONFLICT SETTINGS

States should protect schools from military use, invest in alternative and remote learning, and ensure that displaced and refugee children can continue their education without discrimination.

“

Build safe learning spaces, even temporary ones, support teachers so they can continue teaching and provide school materials for children who lost everything.

Child from Sudan

”

”

Guarantee education and emotional support, even in emergencies, so that children do not fall behind in their studies and have help managing the emotional impact.

Child from Colombia

“

Children without IDs and passports lack access services like education. There should be special procedures and verification systems in place so they can get papers and equivalents of school records.

Child from Sudan

”

“





GUARANTEE CHILD PARTICIPATION IN DECISION-MAKING AND THE PROTECTION OF CHILD HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS

States should create safe, inclusive, and child in-friendly spaces that allow children affected by conflict to express their views and contribute to policies, peace processes, and humanitarian responses. They should make sure that children who stand up for human rights are not harassed, prosecuted or harmed in any ways.

“

Create safe spaces where children can share their ideas and make sure adults understand that children's opinions matter. Let children be part of peace-building and community decisions.

Child from Sudan

”

“

Create advisory groups of children at different levels and create spaces for participation.

Child from Ukraine

”

“

Listen to children and ensure that they can participate in decisions that concern them.

Child from the Democratic Republic of Congo

”





ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE AND MEDICATIONS

Children should access medication, doctors, and proper treatment, even during times of war. This means making sure they get the help and care they need to recover from what happened during the conflict.

“

Provide psychological support for children and set up specialized centers in every city.

Child from Ukraine

”



ACCESS TO CLEAN WATER, FOOD AND WARM CLOTHES

Children should have access to clean water to drink, as dirty water causes different kinds of illnesses. Proper food and nutrition should be available for children. Warm clothes are essential during cold weather and every child deserves to live a normal life.

“

I recommend that States remove barriers that block humanitarian organizations from reaching children—especially food, medicine, and psychological support.

Child from Sudan

”





PROVIDE SUPPORT AND PROTECTION FOR ALL CHILDREN

Children and their families need support and protection. This should be provided without any ground of discrimination. At the same time, vulnerable children's specific needs have to be considered and fulfilled even in times of a conflict.

“

As a child from the care system, I would like states to support family-based care and not return to institutions. Secondly, caregivers should be supported so they can properly care for children.

Child from Ukraine

”

“

Children with disabilities and orphans need support too.

Child from Sudan

”



“

Respect every individual human being.

Child from Palestine

”



STRENGTHEN PROTECTION AND ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES

States must prevent recruitment and use of children in armed conflict, provide rehabilitation and psychosocial support. They should ensure accountability for violations against children. No child should be harassed or abused in any way. No child should be used for military service or as a human shield.

When a child is detained, they lose more than their freedom — they lose their childhood. ... We need a recommendation for the protection of prisoners' children, their release and provision of psychological support to them.

Child from Palestine

Protect children at all times, ensuring safe places where they can stay away from the conflict. Child from Colombia

“

“

Stop the wars and violence. Child from Palestine

”



“

People should learn to
respect children's
rights.

Child from Sudan

”

“

States should invest in
our dreams, in our
futures.

Child from Afghanistan

”

“

And we dream of
peace.

Child from Palestine

”



This meeting report was prepared by the rapporteur Tahera, who is member of the Children's Advisory Team of Child Rights Connect with support from the Secretariat of Child Rights Connect.

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