

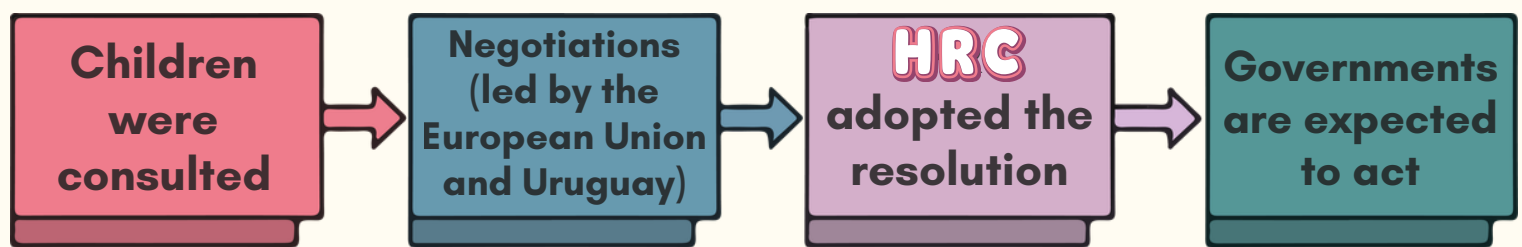
GUIDE TO THE HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL RESOLUTION ON THE RIGHTS OF CHILDREN AFFECTED BY ARMED CONFLICT

The words in blue are explained
in the glossary at the end!

In December 2025, children from different countries shared their ideas about how governments and the **United Nations** can better protect the rights of children affected by armed conflict. See the meeting report!

Many of these ideas helped shape a new resolution adopted by the United Nations **Human Rights Council** (**HRC**) in March 2026!

HOW THIS **RESOLUTION** WORKED?



This guide shows:

- 1 What the **resolution** says and what governments should do: main messages and actions.
- 2 How can you use the **resolution**?
- 3 How children's recommendations influenced the **resolution**?

Tip: Find the full text of the HRC resolution on "Rights of the child: realizing the rights of the child affected by armed conflict" here.

1 WHAT THE RESOLUTION SAYS AND WHAT GOVERNMENTS SHOULD DO: MAIN MESSAGES AND ACTIONS

The **HRC** resolution reaffirms that children affected by armed conflict are entitled to enjoy all their human rights. It calls on governments and others to take action before, during and after armed conflict to respect, protect and fulfil these rights.

 Every child affected by armed conflict is entitled to enjoy all their human rights.

Armed conflict does not remove
↳ children's rights.

→ What should happen?

Governments should respect, protect and fulfil children's rights and take measures to protect children throughout the **conflict cycle**.

 Children have the right to be heard and to participate throughout the **conflict cycle**.

Children should be able to participate meaningfully in decisions that affect them, including in conflict prevention, peace processes, justice, accountability, **reintegration** and post-conflict recovery.

↳ What should happen?

Governments should create safe opportunities for children to influence decisions and actions throughout the **conflict cycle**.

The words in blue are explained in the glossary at the end!

 Violations of children's rights in armed conflict must end.

Children must be protected from all forms of violence and from 6 **grave violations against children**.

↳ What should happen?

All parties to a **conflict** should take action to prevent and stop violations, protect civilians and civilian objects, ensure that children can access humanitarian assistance and treat children recruited or used by **armed forces or non-State armed groups** primarily as victims.

Children under 18 should not be recruited or used in armed conflict, so they should be treated as victims and given protection, care and support to recover and return to their families and communities, rather than being punished for taking part.

 Action must be taken to prevent violations.

Risks to their rights should be identified and addressed before violations happen.

↳ What should happen?

Governments should strengthen early prevention efforts and reduce risks to children.



Children have the right to education, healthcare and other essential services throughout armed conflict.



Children should have access to quality education, healthcare, including mental health and psychosocial support, and other essential services. Schools and hospitals should be protected.



What should happen?



Governments should protect schools and hospitals, ensure children can continue learning and access essential services, and provide **rehabilitation and reintegration** support to help children recover and rebuild their lives.



Protecting children's rights requires everyone to work together.



What should happen?

Governments, the United Nations, humanitarian and development organizations, civil society and communities should cooperate to protect and promote children's rights.



Violations against children must not go unpunished.

Children who suffer violations have the right to justice and support.



What should happen?

Governments should investigate violations, hold those responsible accountable, and ensure children can access justice and appropriate support.



Children must be protected from risks linked to the digital environment and new technologies.



What should happen?

Governments should prevent the online recruitment and exploitation of children, strengthen digital literacy, protect children online from harmful and deceptive online content, and address the risks that new technologies used in armed conflict may pose to children's rights.



Every child has different experiences and needs.

The **resolution** highlights the particular risks faced by girls, including conflict-related sexual violence, sexual exploitation, abuse and forced marriage, while recognizing that boys also face particular harms. It also calls for approaches that are gender-, age- and disability-responsive.



What should happen?

Support and protection measures should respond to the specific situations of girls, boys, children with disabilities and children in different vulnerable situations.



2 HOW CAN YOU USE THE RESOLUTION?

The **HRC** resolution is more than just a United Nations document. It is a tool that you can use to help protect the rights of children affected by armed conflict and encourage governments to turn their promises into action.

 Speak up for children's rights: You can use the resolution to explain what children affected by armed conflict need and why these rights matter. It can support campaigns, meetings, school activities, discussions with decision-makers or awareness-raising in your community.

 Talk to governments and keep checking progress: Governments agreed on this resolution because they believe children affected by armed conflict should enjoy all their rights. You can ask your government:

-  What are you doing to protect children affected by armed conflict?
-  How are you making sure children can go to school, access healthcare and stay safe?
-  How are children's views being included in decisions that affect them?



The resolution applies to ALL COUNTRIES! Many countries also chose to **co-sponsor** this resolution. This is a formal way of showing additional support for its messages and the actions it calls for. Check if your country is on the list of **co-sponsors** (find it on the next page!), if it is, you have an additional reason to ask your government to take action!

If you live in a country affected by armed conflict, you can also use the resolution when speaking with OTHER governments (especially if they **co-sponsored**), the United Nations and humanitarian organizations to remind them of the commitments in the resolution to protect children's rights!

 Work together: Share the **resolution** with children's groups, youth organisations, teachers, community leaders, civil society organisations and **United Nations** staff. Working together can help make sure the promises in the resolution become reality.

Remember!



Children's ideas helped shape this resolution. Children's voice can also help **make sure it is put into action:** Keep speaking up, asking questions and working with others to help protect the rights of children affected by armed conflict.

"A resolution is not the end of the journey. It is a promise. By using it, you can help turn that promise into real change for children."

 list of countries that co-sponsored the resolution:

 Albania,  Andorra,  Antigua and Barbuda,  Armenia,  Australia,  Austria,  Azerbaijan,  Bahamas,  Barbados,  Belgium,  Belize,  Benin,  Bolivia (Plurinational State of),  Botswana,  Brazil,  Bulgaria,  Canada,  Chile,  Colombia,  Croatia,  Cuba,  Cyprus,  Czechia,  Democratic Republic of the Congo,  Denmark,  Dominica,  Dominican Republic,  Ecuador,  El Salvador,  Estonia,  Finland,  France,  Georgia,  Germany,  Greece,  Grenada,  Guatemala,  Guyana,  Haiti,  Hungary,  Iceland,  Ireland,  Italy,  Jamaica,  Kazakhstan,  Kyrgyzstan,  Latvia,  Liechtenstein,  Lithuania,  Luxembourg,  Malawi,  Maldives,  Malta,  Mexico,  Monaco,  Montenegro,  Morocco,  Nepal,  Netherlands (Kingdom of the),  New Zealand,  Nicaragua,  North Macedonia,  Norway,  Panama,  Peru,  Philippines,  Poland,  Portugal,  Republic of Korea,  Republic of Moldova,  Romania,  Saint Kitts and Nevis,  Saint Lucia,  Saint Vincent and the Grenadines,  San Marino,  Serbia,  Sierra Leone,  Slovakia,  Slovenia,  Spain,  State of Palestine,  Suriname,  Sweden,  Switzerland,  Thailand,  Trinidad and Tobago,  Ukraine,  United Kingdom,  Uruguay,  Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of).

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HOW CHILDREN'S RECOMMENDATIONS INFLUENCED THE RESOLUTION?

Children's voices made a difference!

- For the first time ever, children were directly consulted before drafting the HRC biennial resolution on the rights of the child.
- The EU and Uruguay, as drafters of the resolution, committed to integrating children's recommendations. Find the RECOMMENDATIONS in this REPORT!
- Their recommendations are reflected in the final resolution.

In the following pages, you will see HOW:



YOUR RECOMMENDATIONS



EQUAL ACCESS TO EDUCATION

Shown in orange — what children asked for.



HOW IT WAS INTEGRATED

The star rating (★★★★★) shows how closely the recommendation was reflected in the resolution.



IN THE RESOLUTION

Text in quotation marks (" ") shows where and how the recommendation appears in the final resolution.

- PP = Preambular Paragraph — the introduction/context of the resolution.
- OP = Operative Paragraph — the main text, including actions and commitments for governments.

“

"...taking into account girls' equal access to education and addressing gender-based discrimination..." (OP 13)

”



1. ENSURE CONTINUOUS ACCESS TO EDUCATION IN CONFLICT SETTINGS ★★★★★

In **orange**, you'll see what children asked for; in quotation marks (" "), you'll see the text from the resolution that reflects their recommendations.



PROTECT THE RIGHT TO EDUCATION

“

"...safeguard, protect, respect, fulfil and promote the right to education, including in situations of armed conflict..." (OP 13)

”



EQUAL ACCESS TO EDUCATION

“

"...taking into account girls' equal access to education and addressing gender-based discrimination..." (OP 13)

”



CONTINUE LEARNING DURING CONFLICT

“

"...ensure the continuation of education for all children affected by armed conflict..." (OP 13)

"...through safe and appropriate alternative education modalities, distance or remote learning solutions when feasible, catch-up programmes, measures to recognize children's existing education credentials, ensuring relevant education personnel and access to necessary learning materials..." (OP 13)

”



2. GUARANTEE CHILD PARTICIPATION IN DECISION-MAKING AND THE PROTECTION OF CHILD HUMAN RIGHTS DEFENDERS ★★★★★☆

In **orange**, you'll see what children asked for; in quotation marks (" "), you'll see the text from the resolution that reflects their recommendations.

PARTICIPATE THROUGHOUT THE CONFLICT CYCLE

“

"...ensuring their meaningful participation throughout all stages in the **conflict cycle**..." (PP)

"...ensure the meaningful participation of children affected by armed conflict in the design, implementation, follow-up and evaluation of policies and programmes throughout the conflict cycle..." (OP 23)

”



SHAPE DECISIONS

“

"...including conflict prevention, peace and post-conflict processes, including protection, justice, accountability, reparation and recovery..." "...in a manner that is ethical, meaningful and safe." (OP 23)

"...developed with respect for the views, and the safe, meaningful participation, of affected children and their communities..." (PP)

”





3. ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE AND MEDICATIONS ★★★★★



ACCESS TO HEALTHCARE AND SUPPORT

"...gender-, age-, and disability-responsive, survivor-centred support services, including mental health and psychosocial support, access to health services, including sexual and reproductive healthcare services, education, social protection and reintegration programmes..." (OP 3)

"...quality, sustained and community-based mental health and psychosocial support programmes, safe and child-sensitive counselling..." (OP 22)



PROTECT HEALTHCARE DURING ARMED CONFLICT

"...underscoring the special protection afforded... hospitals and humanitarian and medical personnel and transports..." (PP)

"...respect and protect humanitarian personnel and assets..." (OP 15)



In **orange**, you'll see what children asked for; in quotation marks (" "), you'll see the text from the resolution that reflects their recommendations.



4. ACCESS TO CLEAN WATER, FOOD AND WARM CLOTHES ★★★★★☆



ACCESS TO HUMANITARIAN ORGANIZATIONS

"...enable the rapid and unimpeded delivery of humanitarian assistance, ...in particular food and medicine and other essential supplies... to facilitate humanitarian operations, including medical evacuations..." (OP14)

"...refrain from actions that compromise principled humanitarian action..." (OP15)



ACCESS TO CLEAN WATER, FOOD AND NUTRITION, CLOTHES



"condemning attacks against civilian objects, (...) hospitals and water and sanitation infrastructure, as well as their use for military purposes..." (PP)



5. PROVIDE SUPPORT AND PROTECTION FOR ALL CHILDREN ★★★★★

In **orange**, you'll see what children asked for; in quotation marks (" "), you'll see the text from the resolution that reflects their recommendations.

PAY SPECIAL ATTENTION TO CHILDREN IN VULNERABLE SITUATIONS

“

"...Recognizing the heightened vulnerability of children belonging to national or ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities, Indigenous Peoples, children of African descent, displaced children and other children in vulnerable and marginalized situations..." (PP)

"...Recognizing further the heightened vulnerability of children with disabilities..." (PP)

"...gender-, age- and disability-responsive..." (PP and OP 22)

”

PROTECT EVERY CHILD WITHOUT DISCRIMINATION

“

"...child protection considerations are relevant throughout all phases of the **conflict cycle**..." (PP)

”



“

SUPPORT FAMILIES AND FAMILY-BASED CARE

"...while avoiding institutionalization." (PP)

"...prioritize the prompt identification, family tracing and safe reunification of unaccompanied and separated children..." (OP 25)

"...ensure interim care arrangements that are child-rights based, protection-oriented and in line with international standards, pending family tracing and reunification..." (OP 25)

”





6. STRENGTHEN PROTECTION AND ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES ★★★★★

In **orange**, you'll see what children asked for; in quotation marks (" "), you'll see the text from the resolution that reflects their recommendations.

🛡️ PREVENT VIOLATIONS AGAINST CHILDREN

"...take concrete measures to ensure compliance with international law, including through criminalization as offences punishable in national legislation, training, effective investigations of alleged violations, and the prosecution of those responsible for violations..." (OP 5 (d))

"...immediately end and prevent the recruitment and use of children in armed conflict..." (OP 8)



🤝 TREAT RECRUITED CHILDREN AS VICTIMS

"...recognize children allegedly or formerly associated with armed forces or non-State armed groups, including those designated as terrorist groups by the United Nations, primarily as victims, ..." (OP 8)

"...gender-, age- and disability-responsive community-based programmes for the demobilization, **reintegration**, **rehabilitation**, physical and psychological recovery, and social reintegration of children formerly associated with armed forces and armed groups," (OP 8)

⚖️ ENSURE JUSTICE AND ACCOUNTABILITY

"...ensure that children that are victims of violations or abuses of international human rights law and violations of international humanitarian law have full access to justice..."
"...including through prompt, independent and impartial investigations into violations, and access to effective and prompt remedies and reparation..." (OP 20)



GLOSSARY: WORDS YOU MAY WANT TO CHECK



Armed forces, Non-State armed groups, Parties to a conflict

Armed forces are formally the military of a government, non-State armed groups are armed groups that are not part of a government. Both can be parties to a conflict when they are fighting parties to an armed conflict.



Civilians and civilian objects:

Civilians are people who are not fighting in a war, and civilian objects are places and things that are not used for fighting, such as homes, schools and hospitals.



Conflict cycle

The different stages connected to armed conflict: before conflict begins, during conflict, and after conflict when communities work towards peace and recovery.



Co-sponsor

A country that publicly supports a resolution and helps show that it agrees with its messages and goals.



Grave violations against children

The most serious harms against children during armed conflict, including killing and maiming, recruitment or use of children in fighting, sexual violence, attacks on schools and hospitals, abduction, and preventing humanitarian help from reaching children.



Human Rights Council (HRC)

A United Nations body where countries discuss human rights and agree on actions to protect people's rights around the world.



Rehabilitation and reintegration

Support that helps children recover, rebuild their lives and safely return to their families, communities or society after experiencing harm.



Resolution

A formal decision agreed by countries at the United Nations. It sets out commitments and actions that countries agree to support.



United Nations (UN)

An international organization where countries work together to promote peace, protect human rights and address global challenges.