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Children and armed conflict

Report of the Secretary-General

I. Introduction

1. The present report, which covers the period from January to December 2011, is submitted pursuant to Security Council resolution 1998 (2011), by which the Council requested me to submit a report on the implementation of its resolutions 1261 (1999), 1314 (2000), 1379 (2001), 1460 (2003), 1539 (2004), 1612 (2005), 1882 (2009) and 1998 (2011), as well as its presidential statements on children and armed conflict.

2. The present report provides information on grave violations committed against children, in particular the recruitment and use of children, sexual violence against children, the killing and maiming of children, the abduction of children, attacks on schools and hospitals, and the denial of humanitarian access to children by parties to conflict in contravention of applicable international law (see sect. II). The report also describes progress made by parties to conflict on dialogue and action plans to halt the recruitment and use of children, sexual violence against children and the killing and maiming of children, as well as on the release of children associated with armed forces and armed groups (see sect. III). The report furthermore includes updates on the implementation of specific requests by the Security Council in follow-up of resolution 1998 (2011) (see sect. IV). The report concludes by outlining a series of recommendations (see sect. V). The present report covers 23 country situations, of which 16 are on the agenda of the Security Council and 7 are not on the agenda or related to other country situations. Two new country situations are added to the report (Libya and the Syrian Arab Republic), while two others have been removed (Haiti and Burundi).

3. By paragraph 3 of its resolution 1998 (2011), the Security Council requests that the present report include in the annexes those parties to conflict that engage in recurrent attacks on schools and/or hospitals, or in recurrent attacks or threats of attack against protected persons in relation to schools and/or hospitals, in addition to parties that engage in the recruitment and use of children, sexual violence against children, and the killing or maiming of children in contravention of international law.

4. The preparation of the present report involved broad consultations within the United Nations, in particular with the Task Force on Children and Armed Conflict at Headquarters, the country task forces on monitoring and reporting, peacekeeping and political missions and United Nations country teams, as well as with concerned Member States and non-governmental organizations. The Office of my Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict also works closely at Headquarters with all relevant United Nations departments and agencies as well as special representatives.

5. References to reports, cases and incidents in the present report refer to information that is gathered, vetted and verified for accuracy. In situations where the ability to obtain or independently verify information received is hampered by factors such as insecurity or access restrictions, it is qualified as such.

6. Pursuant to Security Council resolution 1612 (2005), in identifying the situations that fall within the scope of her mandate, my Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict is guided by the criteria for determining the existence of an armed conflict found in international humanitarian law and international jurisprudence. In the performance of her mandate, my Special Representative has adopted a pragmatic and cooperative approach to this issue, with a humanitarian emphasis, aimed at ensuring broad and effective protection for children exposed to and affected by conflict in situations of concern. Reference to a situation is not a legal determination, and reference to a non-State party does not affect its legal status.¹

II. Information on grave violations committed against children in armed conflict and response

A. Information on grave violations committed against children in situations on the agenda of the Security Council

Afghanistan

7. In 2011, 316 cases of underage recruitment were reported in Afghanistan, of which the majority was attributed to armed groups notably the Taliban forces, including the Tora Bora Front, the Jamat Sunat al-Dawa Salafia and the Latif Mansur Network, as well as the Haqqani network and the Hezb-e-Islami. Children were recruited and used by armed groups to conduct suicide attacks and plant improvised explosive devices, as well as for transporting goods. In 2011, 11 children, including one 8-year-old girl, were killed while conducting suicide attacks. Some children unknowingly carried explosive packages. At least 20 reports of cross-border recruitment of Afghan children to Pakistan by armed groups, including the Taliban, were received. The boys were reportedly taken to Pakistan for training, and returned to Afghanistan to conduct military operations.

8. Although there has been notable progress on implementation of the Action Plan, the use of children by units of the Afghan National Police and the Afghan

¹ See, for example, common article 2 of the 1949 Geneva Conventions; article 1 of Additional Protocol II of 1977 thereto; International Committee of the Red Cross, J. Pictet (ed.), *Commentary on the Geneva Conventions of 1949* (1958); and *Prosecutor v. Duško Tadić*, Case No. IT-94, International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia Appeals Chamber (2 October 1995).

National Army at checkpoints, including as messengers and tea boys, in contravention of Afghan law, remains to be fully addressed. Children were also recruited, mostly in the eastern and southern regions, into the Afghan Local Police, including through intimidation.

9. Verification of all reports of recruitment and use of children remained a serious challenge owing to the ongoing conflict and security constraints.

10. In 2011, 204 incidents of detention of children (all boys, including one 10-year-old) for alleged support to armed groups were documented. In several instances, children were initially detained by the International Military Forces, transferred to the National Directorate for Security, and subsequently to the juvenile rehabilitation centres. While the exact number of children held in International Military Forces detention facilities is unknown, concerns remain about the duration of detention and the handover to national authorities, particularly those held at the Parwan detention facility.

11. Through direct interviews with underage detainees, the United Nations documented incidents of ill-treatment during detention, including beatings, electrical shocks and threats of sexual violence. For example, the United Nations received one verified report of a 16-year-old boy, arrested and detained by the International Military Forces for alleged association with the Taliban, and transferred to a National Directorate for Security detention facility in Kandahar province, where he was raped in January 2011. There were no reports of abuse of children in detention by the International Military Forces.

12. The country task forces on monitoring and reporting documented that a total number of 1,325 children were killed or injured during the reporting period. Thirty per cent of child casualties were caused by improvised explosive devices placed by armed groups, killing 123 children and injuring 262. These incidents also include the use of suicide attacks. On 2 December 2011, for instance, a suicide attack in Mohammad Agha district, Logar province, resulted in the injuring of at least 28 children. In another attack, on 6 December 2011, the Lashkar i Jhangvi-Al-Alami, a Pakistan-based armed group, killed at least 10 children and injured at least 12 in an attack on a religious ceremony in Kabul. Children also continued to be victims of rocket, artillery and mortar attacks. The majority of incidents were attributed to the Taliban forces, including Tora Bora Front, Jamat Sanat al-Dawa Salafia, the Latif Mansur network, the Haqqani network and Hezb-i-Islami, killing 43 children and injuring 159. A total of 129 children were killed or injured in crossfire between the Afghan National Army and armed groups.

13. The number of child casualties attributed to airstrikes conducted by pro-Government forces, including the Afghan National Security Forces and the International Military Forces, doubled compared with the last reporting period, with 110 children killed and 68 injured in 2011.

14. Furthermore, 431 child casualties were caused by mines and explosive remnants of war from previous decades of conflict. The eastern region was the most affected and the majority of casualties were boys between the ages of 8 and 15 years.

15. Reports of sexual violence against girls and boys by armed elements continued to be received in 2011. Four incidents involving Afghan National Police elements were reported, including two verified cases. In one case of an attempted rape of a 9-year-old girl, the Afghan National Police officer was sentenced to six years'

imprisonment by the regional military prosecutor. Of 76 interviewed boys detained in juvenile rehabilitation centres on national security-related charges, 10 reported sexual violence or threats of sexual violence upon their arrest. Reports also continued to be received of sexual abuse of boys by elements of armed groups.

16. During the reporting period, the country task forces on monitoring and reporting documented 185 incidents of attacks on schools and hospitals in the central, northern, south-eastern and eastern regions, including improvised explosive device and suicide attacks (51), burning of schools (35), intimidation of educational personnel (34), forced closures of schools (32), killing of educational personnel (25), abduction of educational personnel (7) and looting (1). Of these reported incidents, the majority was attributed to armed groups, including the Taliban, opposed to girls' education. It should be noted that in 2011 the Taliban reportedly issued a directive forbidding attacks on schools and teachers. Although this could not be confirmed by the United Nations, accounts suggested that Taliban members at the provincial level publicly denounced attacks against schools. In addition, 31 incidents of military use of schools were documented during the reporting period, of which 20 cases were attributed to armed groups and 11 cases to pro-Government forces.

17. The United Nations also received reports of 58 incidents of attacks against health facilities and personnel. Incidents attributed to unidentified armed groups included killings, abduction, suicide attacks, intimidation and the use of an ambulance in a suicide attack.

18. During the reporting period, 31 incidents of abduction of children by armed groups were documented. All cases involved boys and were motivated by recruitment, kidnap-for-ransom, retaliation and intimidation for suspected association with pro-Government forces. Five of these incidents indicated a link to armed groups located in Pakistan, and involved the movement of children across the Afghanistan-Pakistan border.

Central African Republic

19. The recruitment and use of children by the armed groups the Convention des patriotes pour la justice et la paix (CPJP) and the Union des forces démocratiques pour le rassemblement (UFDR) continued to be reported, especially in the north of the country. Children were seen fighting in the ranks of CPJP and UFDR during armed clashes in September and October 2011 in Vakaga and Haute-Kotto provinces. Children were also reportedly seen in the ranks of the Mouvement des libérateurs centrafricains pour la justice (MLCJ) in Birao (Vakaga prefecture), and in the ranks of the Front démocratique du peuple centrafricain (FDPC) in Kabo (Nana-Gribizi prefecture). According to information received, a small number of children continued to be present in the ranks of the Armée populaire pour la restauration de la république et la démocratie (APRD). The Chadian Front patriotique pour le redressement (FPR) also recruited children in 2011. Of the 1,700 FPR combatants reportedly active in 2011, 15 per cent were estimated to be children, including children from neighbouring countries.

20. During the reporting period, attacks on towns and villages, as well as armed clashes by CPJP, UFDR and the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) predominantly in the north-east and south-east of the country, resulted in the killing of civilians,

including children. Of a total of 88 children killed in 2011 (63 boys and 25 girls), 63 were killed in armed confrontations between CPJP and UFDR.

21. Incidents of rape and other grave sexual violence, although underreported, continued to be of concern in 2011. For example, on 21 February, CPJP rebels attacked two villages in Haute-Kotto province and raped a 13-year-old girl.

22. Attacks on schools and the use of schools by armed groups continued to have a negative impact on the education system in the Central African Republic. During the reporting period, 12 schools were used, attacked or destroyed during confrontations between CPJP and UFDR, as well as during FPR attacks, affecting a total of 1,500 children. In the town of Bria (Haute-Kotto prefecture), teachers were directly targeted and assaulted by different armed groups because the schools were located in areas controlled by rival armed groups.

23. Humanitarian access continued to be limited in the north and south-east of the country, especially in Bamingui-Bangoran, Haute-Kotto, Mbomou and Haut-Mbomou, Nana-Gribizi and Vakaga prefectures, owing to the activities of local (CPJP and UFDR) and foreign (FPR) armed groups. It is estimated that during the reporting period, some 40,000 children in affected areas were deprived of humanitarian assistance owing to widespread insecurity in these provinces. Humanitarian access was complicated by lack of clarity in the chain of command, in particular with FDPC in Kabo (Ouham prefecture).

Chad

24. A general improvement in the security situation in the country in 2011, as well as the demobilization and reintegration of the Armée nationale tchadienne during the second half of 2011, contributed to a significant decrease in the number of reported cases of child recruitment in Chad. The presence of children was not registered during the restructuring operations of the Armée nationale tchadienne, which were monitored by the regional delegation of the Ministry of Social Action and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) in Moussoro. Although the Armée nationale tchadienne has stopped recruiting children as a matter of policy, concerns exist that a small number of children may still be associated with it. Five Sudanese refugee minors are still alleged to be serving in the Armée nationale tchadienne in different locations. The Government denies any possibility of participation of refugee children in the Armée nationale tchadienne.

25. The presence of the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) in refugee camps in eastern Chad has significantly decreased, and no new cases of child recruitment by JEM were reported in 2011. Potential attempts of re-recruitment of Sudanese refugee children by armed forces or armed groups cannot, however, be excluded and requires monitoring by the country task forces on monitoring and reporting. Children also allegedly remain associated with the Front démocratique populaire (FDP), whose forces are deployed in the border area between Chad, the Central African Republic and the Sudan.

26. During 2011, and since the creation of the joint Chad/Sudan monitoring force, there has been a significant decrease in security incidents. The Government of Chad has assumed full responsibility for the protection of humanitarian workers and finalized a joint United Nations-Government protection of civilians strategy. The Détachement intégré de sécurité (DIS) has expanded its operational area from the

east of the country to provide coverage in the southern and south-eastern part. Nevertheless, United Nations system agencies and partners were obliged to use armed escorts for their movements in eastern and southern Chad.

Côte d'Ivoire

27. The post-election crisis in early 2011 was directly associated with a rise in the commission of grave violations against children. The end of hostilities led to a subsequent decrease in the number of violations registered. However, some violations against children continued to be committed after the end of fighting, particularly in the west.

28. Cases of child recruitment and use were documented during the reporting period, and peaked during the post-election crisis. During the run up to the 2010 election, a worrying trend of involvement of children in campaigning activities and political demonstrations had been observed, which exposed them to violence and culminated in public statements and recruitment drives targeted at youth. Subsequently, between January and May 2011, many youths joined various armed groups, including the Jeunes patriotes and the Commando Invisible.

29. Thirty-seven cases of recruitment and use were verified by the country task forces on monitoring and reporting, although the total is believed to be higher. Children and youth participated in self-defence groups instituted by supporters of both sides. Children were seen manning checkpoints in collaboration with the Jeunes patriotes and elements of the Forces républicaines de Côte d'Ivoire (FRCI) in the period covering January to April 2011. The majority of children associated with armed groups during the crisis have been released, although their formal reintegration remains a challenge in the absence of a national disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme during the reporting period. Since the end of hostilities in May 2011, no new cases of recruitment and use of children were reported.

30. The killing and maiming of children in crossfire and shelling peaked during the period between January and May 2011, mainly in Abidjan and in the west. A total of 42 cases of children killed and 66 of children maimed by armed elements were registered by the United Nations in 2011, although the number of actual cases is likely to be higher. In Abidjan, some cases were attributed to elements of the Forces de défense et de sécurité (FDS). Cases of maiming of children by explosive remnants of war have also been reported.

31. The prevalence of rape and other forms of sexual violence against children continued to be of great concern. A total of 271 cases of sexual violence were registered by the country task forces on monitoring and reporting, affecting 265 girls and 6 boys. Of these cases, 24 per cent were perpetrated by armed groups. For example, on 28 March 2011, a 16-year-old girl was gang-raped at gunpoint in her home by three FRCI elements in the Carrefour neighbourhood of Duekoue. The situation was particularly serious in the west where armed groups continued to enjoy freedom of movement and impunity. Victims are generally reluctant to file a complaint for fear of stigmatization and/or retaliation.²

² For information on parties in Côte d'Ivoire listed as responsible for patterns of rape and other forms of sexual violence during the reporting period, see the report of the Secretary-General on conflict-related sexual violence (S/2012/33).

32. During the reporting period, a total of 477 schools were reported as being damaged, looted and/or used by armed groups, depriving an estimated 67,500 children of education. Of these cases, 23 schools were used, 3 of them as storage for weapons and 4 as collective graves. In addition, seven medical facilities were attacked. These incidents were mostly attributed to FRCI, especially in the west of the country. In addition, one case of military use of schools in the Yopougon neighbourhood of Abidjan by Liberian mercenaries and pro-Gbagbo elements, including the Jeunes patriotes, was reported.

33. In August, the Government ratified the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict. The Government has also drafted a national strategy for the fight against gender-based violence. The document is still pending approval by the Ministry of Family, Women and Children.

Democratic Republic of the Congo

34. Child protection actors documented 272 cases of recruitment and use of children (259 boys and 13 girls) during the reporting period. Of these, 266 cases reportedly occurred in North and South Kivu, four in Orientale Province and two in Maniema. The Forces armées de la République démocratique du Congo (FARDC) was allegedly responsible for the largest number, followed by Mai-Mai groups and the Forces démocratiques de libération du Rwanda (FDLR). Other alleged perpetrators include the Ugandan armed group the Allied Democratic Forces/National Liberation Army of Uganda (ADF/NALU) and the Forces républicaines fédéralistes (FRF). Other cases of child recruitment were attributed to new local defence groups and non-integrated units of the Congrès national pour la défense du peuple (CNDP). Most children were used as escorts, cooks and/or porters. A majority of the children were between the ages of 11 and 17 years at the time of recruitment; 12 children were under age 10.

35. Ten cases of killing and 14 cases of maiming of children were documented in 2011. Most were allegedly perpetrated by FARDC (six cases of killing and nine cases of maiming). Three cases of maiming were attributed to the Police nationale congolaise, one case of killing to a Mai-Mai group, and the remaining cases were attributed to unidentified armed elements.

36. Sexual violence against children was committed by all parties and continued to be a serious concern in 2011. The majority of documented cases were perpetrated by Government security forces. A total of 108 cases of rape (including 3 cases against boys) were documented. Of these, 86 cases occurred in North and South Kivu and 22 in Orientale Province. Sixty-seven cases were attributed to FARDC, 17 to various Mai-Mai groups, 10 to the Police nationale congolaise, 4 to FDLR and 2 to the Front de résistance patriotique en Ituri/Front populaire pour la justice au Congo (FRPI/FPJC). Twelve cases of rape against children allegedly occurred during mass rape incidents in Mutongo/Walikale, North Kivu, between 8 and 10 and 22 and 23 June 2011. The perpetrators were allegedly affiliated to the Alliance des patriotes pour un Congo libre et souverain (APCLS). Most of the child victims were between the ages of 8 and 17 years; five victims were under the age of 6.³

³ For information on parties in the Democratic Republic of the Congo listed as responsible for patterns of rape and other forms of sexual violence during the reporting period, see the report of the Secretary-General on conflict-related sexual violence (S/2012/33).

37. The number of attacks against schools and health centres increased in 2011, with 53 incidents against schools and health centres taking place in the Kivus and Orientale Province, compared with 23 incidents in 2010. FDLR was responsible for 21 cases of destruction and looting of schools and health centres in 2011. Mai-Mai groups were responsible for six cases and ADF/NALU for one case. FARDC was responsible for several incidents, mainly involving looting, and in two cases the use of schools.

38. Humanitarian access continued to be hampered in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo throughout 2011. For instance, five humanitarian workers were killed during an attack allegedly carried out by Mai-Mai elements in South Kivu in October. Cases of kidnappings of humanitarian workers were also reported. Goma, Masisi and Rutshuru territories in North Kivu and Bukavu, and Uvira territory in South Kivu, were the most affected. The security vacuum that followed the temporary redeployment of FARDC in the context of the regimentation process was exploited by armed groups, including FDLR and various Mai-Mai groups, to re-establish their position in vacated areas, preventing humanitarian access.

39. Three years after the adoption of the Child Protection Law in January 2009 and the criminalization of child recruitment, no perpetrators of recruitment and use of children were prosecuted and convicted, despite the fact that many of them — including at the senior level — were clearly identified. Perpetrators such as Bosco Ntaganda, Innocent Zimurinda and Baudoin Ngaruye, remain in the FARDC command structure, and some, such as Biyoyo Josue, have received promotions. Others who have been tried and sentenced remain at large. For example, Mai-Mai chief Kyungu Mutanga, alias Gedeon, sentenced to death in March 2009 for crimes against humanity and for recruitment and use of children, escaped from prison in September 2011 and resumed activities in North Katanga. Despite advocacy efforts, no action was taken by the FARDC “Amani Leo” hierarchy in South Kivu to investigate the looting of 10 schools by FARDC elements between August and September 2011.

40. A positive development was the arrest and prosecution of FARDC and Police nationale congolaise suspects who allegedly perpetrated acts of sexual violence against children: 44 FARDC and Police nationale congolaise elements allegedly involved in 77 cases of rape perpetrated in 2011 were arrested, and 18 were tried. Two were acquitted owing to a lack of evidence and 16 were imprisoned and obliged to pay financial compensation to the victims.

Iraq

41. In the reporting period, armed groups, including Al-Qaida in Iraq and Islamic State of Iraq (ISI), continued to carry out violent attacks targeting security forces, Government buildings and civilians. The most affected governorates were Baghdad, Kirkuk, Ninewa, Diyala, Anbar and Salahaddin. From January to December, a total of 341 incidents affecting children were reported, of which 117 were verified by the country task forces on monitoring and reporting.

42. Throughout 2011, armed groups such as Al-Qaida in Iraq and ISI, continued to recruit, train and use children to take part in hostilities. The exact number of children recruited and used by armed groups remains difficult to ascertain owing to the security context. However, incidents were documented in Anbar, Babil, Baghdad, Diyala, Kirkuk, Ninewa and Wassit. Children were used to spy and scout,

transport military supplies and equipment, videotape attacks for propaganda purposes, plant improvised explosive devices and actively engage in attacks against security forces and civilians. Children were also reportedly seen manning checkpoints of the Awakening Councils, mainly in Diyala, Babil, Salahaddin and Anbar. It should be noted that the Al-Qaida in Iraq's youth wing "Birds of Paradise", listed in my previous report for recruitment and use of children, was no longer active in the current reporting period.

43. During the reporting period, 294 children, including an unknown number of girls, were indicted or convicted of terrorism-related charges under article 4 of the Anti-Terrorism Act (2005). The last three months of 2011 saw a spike in the percentage of children charged with alleged association with armed groups with terrorism-related offences held in pretrial detention facilities.

44. At least 146 children were reportedly killed and 265 injured as a result of the continued violence in 2011. The majority of these incidents took place in the governorates of Baghdad, Ninewa, Kirkuk and Salahaddin. Verification of incidents remained limited owing to the security risk associated with independent monitoring.

45. The killing and maiming of children was attributable mainly to indiscriminate attacks, including suicide attacks, as well as targeted executions and crossfire incidents. In the reporting period, there was also an emerging practice of complex attacks in Iraq. In 2011, 20 of these attacks (14 between October and December 2011 alone) killed at least 20 children and injured 33 others.

46. Armed groups, including Al-Qaida in Iraq and ISI, caused the large majority of casualties. ISI, for example, claimed responsibility for the bombing on 25 July 2011 near a restaurant in Kirkuk that killed and injured 14 people, including five girls and four boys. Al-Qaida in Iraq claimed responsibility for a series of coordinated attacks in Baghdad on 22 December 2011, including a vehicle-borne improvised explosive device that targeted a Government building in Rufasa district that claimed the lives of 7 children and injured another 28.

47. The reporting period saw a significant increase in the number of children abducted, with 27 cases of abduction of boys and 10 cases of abduction of girls documented. Although the motives of most incidents could not be ascertained, a strong nexus between the cases of abduction of children and the funding of non-State armed group activities in Iraq was suspected. For instance, in Kirkuk, an 11-year-old boy was abducted near his house in June 2011 by perpetrators claiming to be members of ISI. The boy was later released after the payment of a ransom.

48. Access to school and health services was also impacted by improvised explosive devices planted in or in the vicinity of schools and medical facilities, indiscriminate firing and targeted attacks against education and health personnel. Fifty-four incidents affecting schools and 40 incidents affecting hospitals were reported in 2011, which in both cases represents an increase compared with 2010. Twenty-seven education personnel and 17 medical workers were killed or injured in different incidents that included direct shooting and improvised explosive devices, mostly in Baghdad, Kirkuk, Ninewa, Salahaddin and Anbar. Other incidents related to the abduction of medical staff and attacks against health facilities or civilian ambulances. Armed groups, including Al-Qaida in Iraq and ISI, were responsible in all reported cases.

49. In 2011, sustained efforts were made by the United Nations to encourage the Government of Iraq to put in place a mechanism to address the issues affecting children in the context of the armed conflict. Following a meeting held in January between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the co-chairs of the country task forces on monitoring and reporting, the Ministry of Human Rights committed to establishing an interministerial committee composed of representatives of the Ministries of the Interior, Defence, Education and Labour and Social Affairs and, on 19 October 2011, the Ministry requested the Council of Ministers to approve the establishment of that committee. As at 31 December 2011, no progress was noted.

Lebanon

50. The situation in Lebanon has been included in my previous annual reports. Despite the general calm along the Blue Line since the cessation of hostilities in 2006, occasional incidents of violence affected children, including the killing and maiming of children in sporadic incidents of violence. On 15 May 2011, Palestinian demonstrators moved towards the Blue Line in southern Lebanon, prompting an armed response by the Israeli security forces in the area of Maroun al-Ras. This resulted in seven civilian casualties, including two boys, aged 16 and 17 years, and the injuring of 111 persons, including four boys and two girls as young as 6 years old.

51. In relation to the situation in the Syrian Arab Republic, Lebanon witnessed an influx of over 6,200 Syrian refugees, half of whom were children, between April and December 2011. Increased military manoeuvres on the Syrian side of the border and the planting of landmines along the Lebanese border have made entry into Lebanon through unofficial crossing points increasingly risky and contributed to unease among displaced populations and host communities. Two Lebanese boys, aged 14 and 16 years, were wounded by gunfire originating from the Syrian side in the northern area of Wadi Khaled. One Lebanese child aged 13 years, was also maimed by a landmine planted along the Lebanese border on the Syrian side.

52. In the Ain El Helweh camp, Sidon district, at least two separate violent clashes between political factions occurred in 2011 killing one child and causing serious injuries to two other children. These incidents also led to a disruption of schooling.

Libya

53. Since the conflict began in mid-February 2011, the United Nations has received numerous reports of grave violations against children in Libya throughout the reporting period. Owing to fighting, the lack of access to affected populations, especially in Sirte and Misrata, and the absence of systematic monitoring and reporting, grave violations against children, including child casualties, were not systematically documented. As a result, even though a total of 129 cases of killing and 247 cases of maiming of children were recorded, mostly in Misrata, Tawargha, Bani Walid and Tripoli, 53 incidents of killing of children (16 girls and 37 boys) and 96 incidents of maiming (18 girls and 78 boys) were verified, mostly in Benghazi, Tripoli, Misrata, Brega, Tawargha, Ajdabiya and Nafusa. The main causes of death and injury were shelling by former Government forces (in particular in Misrata) and crossfire between former Government forces and opposition groups. For example, between mid-February and mid-August 2011, Brega Hospital admitted 24 children, 15 of whom had been shot and 9 injured by explosions. According to medical

personnel in Misrata, Benghazi and Zlitan, in addition to shelling, the association of boys with armed groups was also reported as a cause of killing and maiming. Explosive remnants of war contamination also led to a significant number of child casualties. The most affected areas were Ajdabiya, Nalut, Zinten, Sirte and Bani Walid, especially as displaced populations returned to their homes.

54. Child casualties were also reported in the context of military operations of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in Libya. The Commission of Inquiry on Libya stated that NATO “conducted a highly precise campaign with a demonstrable determination to avoid civilian casualties” (A/HRC/19/68, para. 812). However, it documented at least 10 deaths of children in the course of NATO operations in Majer, Tripoli, Zlitan and Sirte. For example, the Commission found that at least seven children were killed in an airstrike in Majer on 8 August 2011. In addition, the United Nations gathered information on 11 cases of deaths (three boys and eight girls) and a further 11 cases of injuries (four boys and seven girls) related to NATO operations in Brega.

55. The presence of children in armed forces and armed groups was broadly reported in the context of the conflict in Libya, including by the Commission of Inquiry, but the constraints for monitoring and reporting mentioned above prevented the United Nations from verifying all reported incidents. The Commission found strong evidence that, during the fighting, former Government forces recruited and used children. The Commission was also very concerned about the reports of children who had formed part of the opposition forces/brigades associated with the National Transitional Council, also known as the “thumar”, in the Nafusa Mountains. Seventeen cases of recruitment of boys were verified in 2011, which represents only a portion of the actual scope as estimated by witness accounts. Reports indicated that children associated with former Government forces undertook military training and were engaged in fighting alongside adult combatants.

56. Verified information was also received on the presence of children in opposition forces and brigades associated with the National Transitional Council during the conflict. Children were spotted undertaking military training, carrying weapons, wearing uniforms and performing various tasks in support of combat operations. At the end of 2011, children were seen manning checkpoints and providing security, which remains a concern. On 20 May 2011, the National Transitional Council reportedly issued directives to all front-line troops not to recruit children. The United Nations has not been able to confirm this claim at the time of writing. The current Government of Libya is working with the Office of my Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict to address the issue of children remaining associated with some brigades.

57. Concerns remain over the detention of children for alleged association with armed forces of the former regime. The Commission of Inquiry documented four cases of boys who were detained by brigades, together with adults, for association with former Government forces. In addition, five separate cases of abduction and detention of boys, aged 15 to 17 years, were documented by the United Nations. The boys, from the Tawargha community, were taken from internally displaced persons camps by opposition forces/brigades to military bases or security facilities for interrogation. Detention lasted from one day (four cases) to five days (one case). All boys reported being victims of ill-treatment and acts tantamount to torture during their detention.

58. Twenty-seven attacks on schools and four attacks on hospitals were documented in 2011, in particular in Zlitan, Ajdabiya, Misrata, Nalut, Zinten and Sirte. For reasons mentioned above, this number reflects only a portion of all incidents that took place. A majority of these cases were attributed to former Government forces and opposition forces and brigades. One case was attributed to NATO. These attacks included shootings at schools and hospitals, shelling, airstrikes, improvised explosive devices, looting of medical supplies and the use of facilities by the military. This resulted in partial or total destruction of health and education facilities and in disrupted provision of services. During an airstrike, NATO hit the Institute of Health in Tigi, in August 2011, on the basis of intelligence assessment that it was a missile and ammunition storage site for the former Government forces.

59. At the end of 2011, the continued presence of armed brigades and sporadic clashes between these brigades posed a challenge to the Libyan authorities in their efforts to contain the overall security situation. In this context, children remained vulnerable to association with these brigades, displacement and exposure to explosive remnants of war and the widespread presence of small arms and light weapons.

Lord's Resistance Army and the Central African region (the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, South Sudan and Uganda)

60. Grave violations against children by LRA in the Central African region remained a major concern in 2011. The armed group continued to operate in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Central African Republic and South Sudan. While no violations have been reported in Uganda since 2006, Uganda continued military operations against LRA in the region.

61. In the Central African Republic, 101 children (63 boys and 38 girls) were reportedly abducted by LRA in 2011, mostly in Mbomou, Haut-Mbomou and Haute-Kotto prefectures. Out of these, 43 cases were verified by the country task forces on monitoring and reporting. All but one of the abducted girls were released. A Congolese girl who had escaped from LRA in December 2010 was repatriated to the Democratic Republic of the Congo and reunified with her family in January 2011; five boys and four girls were reunified with their families in the Central African Republic. Twenty-four LRA attacks against civilians were documented in 2011, resulting in the killing and injuring of children in Mbomou and Haut-Mbomou. In 2011, over 22,523 civilians were displaced by attacks or fear of attacks by LRA. Access to humanitarian assistance continued to be restricted in LRA-affected areas during the reporting period.

62. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, 211 LRA attacks were documented in 2011. In the Uélé districts of Orientale Province, 124 children (59 girls and 65 boys) were abducted by LRA and escaped a few days to months after their abduction. Thirty-nine children reported that they had been used as combatants, while 51 children reported that they had been used for forced labour. Nine of the 59 girls were abducted for a longer period and reported that they had been used as forced wives. A total of 180 children escaped from LRA in 2011. Six cases of killing and nine cases of maiming of children were attributed to LRA in 2011. Humanitarian assistance continued to be hampered by LRA activity, in particular in Faradje and Dungu in Orientale Province. In total, eight foreign children, five from

the Sudan and three from Uganda, were repatriated in 2011, and 18 Congolese children were repatriated from neighbouring countries to the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

63. In South Sudan, LRA carried out eight attacks against civilians, directly affecting children. In Western Equatoria and Western Bahr el Ghazal States, 13 children were reportedly abducted by LRA in 2011. Six cases of killing of children were confirmed, four of whom died while in captivity. Eighteen girls, between 12 and 17 years of age, separated from LRA by the Uganda People's Defense Force (UPDF) and the "home guards", reported that they had been sexually abused while abducted. One health centre in Western Equatoria State was looted by LRA.

64. In 2011, nine Ugandan mothers (aged 20 to 21) and their children (12 girls and eight boys, all below the age of 6) formerly associated with LRA were received at a reception centre in Gulu, Uganda. The young mothers and children were subsequently reunited with their families.

65. In May 2011, UPDF established standard operating procedures for the reception and handover of children and women separated from LRA in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Sudan and the Central African Republic. The procedures stipulate that child protection actors shall be alerted immediately to the presence of children in LRA custody, and in any case no later than 48 hours, and that all children separated from LRA in UPDF custody, regardless of their nationality, must be handed over to child protection actors in the shortest time possible, in any case no later than within seven days. UPDF, in cooperation with the United Nations, has trained 450 troops on the implementation of the standard operating procedures. To ensure full implementation of the standard operating procedures, all troops participating in counter-LRA operations should undergo comprehensive predeployment training on the procedures. The UPDF is encouraged to enforce full compliance within its ranks, to ensure that all children, including Ugandan nationals, are handed over to child protection actors and within the time frame set out in the standard operating procedures.

66. The weak presence of the Government security forces in LRA-affected areas continued to have an impact on insecurity and impunity and contributed to the establishment of unregulated community-based self-defence groups, such as the "home guards" in South Sudan, and "milices d'auto-défence" in the Central African Republic. Where Government security forces were present, concerns were raised over human rights violations and lack of discipline. For example, a 14-year-old boy who escaped in May 2011 was held hostage for three months by a soldier of the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) who demanded payment for services given to the boy following his release. In the Central African Republic, the Forces armées centrafricaines (FACA) reportedly used children for various purposes, including checkpoint duty.

Myanmar

67. The number of complaints of underage recruitment, including children under 15 years of age, continued to rise, from 194 in 2010 to 243 in 2011, reflecting an increased awareness of the age of recruitment by the Tatmadaw, and the existence of reliable vetting mechanisms, including the International Labour Organization forced labour complaints mechanism and community-based structures for complaints about

underage recruitment. The Committee for the Prevention of Recruitment of Underage Children in Myanmar received more complaints than in previous years as a result of its extensive public awareness campaign. The vast majority of complaints in 2011 reflected recruitment in Yangon, Ayeyarwaddy and Mandalay regions.

68. Children continued to be recruited by the Tatmadaw. The majority of underage recruits interviewed after release stated that their recruiter had not asked their age, or had falsified age documentation for presentation at the recruitment centre. Reports continued to indicate that, in addition to children who were formally recruited into the Tatmadaw, children were also used by the Tatmadaw for forced labour, including as porters. In Kachin State, there were verified reports in late 2011 of children being used by the Tatmadaw alongside adults as porters on the front line.

69. Reports of recruitment and use of children by non-State actors in Myanmar also continued to be received. In 2010, the Democratic Karen Buddhist Army (DKBA) split into two factions, with the majority joining the Tatmadaw as a border guard force, and the remainder allying itself with the Karen National Union/Karen National Liberation Army (KNU/KNLA). In 2011, with respect to both the DKBA border guard force and the separatist DKBA troops, reports were received of forced recruitment of children, unless payment in lieu of recruitment was received. The country task forces on monitoring and reporting was able to verify this practice in Kayin State, Ta Nay Cha and Thandaunggyi townships, in April and August 2011. Reports of increased recruitment by the Kachin Independence Army (KIA) were also received in the second half of 2011, as tensions mounted in Kachin and northern Shan State. The country task force also received allegations of children joining KIA purportedly to avoid being used by the Tatmadaw as porters on the front line. The country task force also confirmed one report of a 15-year-old boy recruited by the Kachin Defense Army (KDA) in northern Shan State.

70. As conflict escalated in Shan State in 2011, reports of Shan State Army South (SSA-S) perpetrating underage recruitment increased. Children are also reportedly present in the ranks of the KNU/KNLA, Karen National Union/Karen National Liberation Army Peace Council, Karen Peace Front (KPF), Karenni National Progressive Party/Karenni Army (KNPP/KA), and the United Wa State Army (UWSA). However, the country task force was unable to verify information about these armed groups owing to travel restrictions imposed on it by the Government.

71. The country task force verified that 43 children had been killed or maimed as a result of conflict-related violence in 22 separate incidents. During the reporting period, children continued to be victims of landmines, explosive remnants of war, mortar and rocket-propelled grenade attacks, and of crossfire between non-State armed groups and the Tatmadaw.

72. There were a number of verified cases of children killed in retaliatory actions by members of the Tatmadaw in villages where non-State armed groups were based, or in villages considered aligned to non-State armed groups. For example, in October 2011 the country task force verified an incident where, after having sustained a severe beating, a one-year-old child in a village in Hsipaw township in northern Shan State died by drowning, when soldiers of the Shan State Army-North (SSA-N) threw the child and his parents into a pit filled with water.

73. Of the 22 verified incidents, a total of 9 occurred in Kachin State as a result of fighting between the Tatmadaw and KIA, during which 22 children were killed or

maimed. In June 2011, for instance, a 16-year-old girl from Bamaw township was shot and killed in crossfire between the Tatmadaw and KIA. In another example, in August 2011, a 3-year-old boy was shot and killed in the crossfire while fleeing his village in Bamaw Township with his grandmother.

74. In 2011, both the Tatmadaw and non-State armed groups, such as KNU/KNLA, KNPP/KA, DKBA, UWSA, KIA and the Myanmar National Democratic Alliance Army (MNDAA) continued to use anti-personnel mines in order to restrict the movement of people, hinder the movement of troops, or to mark areas of operations.

75. The United Nations received a number of reports of attacks on schools or hospitals by the Tatmadaw and other non-State armed groups during the reporting period. The country task force verified that, during the fighting in May 2011 in Kayin State, the Tatmadaw and DKBA/KNLA allied forces had partially destroyed a hospital in Kawkareik.

76. During the reporting period, there were also a number of documented reports in Kachin and Kayin States of schools being closed for long periods and schools being damaged by shelling and mortar fire. In August 2011, the country task force verified one case of a school in Kawng Lwin village in Mansi Township being damaged by artillery fire in exchanges between the Tatmadaw and KIA. In July 2011, the country task force documented the incident of a school in Mone Hkawng village in Mansi Township, Kachin State, being damaged by a Tatmadaw mortar attack.

77. Access to vulnerable groups in many areas of the country, including children, remained limited for United Nations system agencies in Myanmar. The Government continued to restrict access to various parts of the country, citing security concerns as the main reason for limiting the presence and travel of international as well as national personnel of relief agencies. Access was particularly limited in ceasefire and non-ceasefire areas, including mixed administration areas. However, some progress was made when, in December 2011, a United Nations mission visited inaccessible areas along the Myanmar-China border where displacement was recorded.

Nepal

78. The situation in Nepal was included in my previous annual reports. While conflict-related violations against children have significantly decreased in the reporting period, children continue to be at risk. The presence of armed groups operating with political and often criminal motives, primarily in the Terai districts (southern belt of Nepal) and the Eastern Hills, gave rise to general insecurity in those areas.

79. During the reporting period, 4 children were killed and 11 children sustained injuries caused by explosive remnants of war in different parts of the country. Out of the total number of cases documented, approximately half of the cases were related to explosive remnants of war planted before the peace process, while the remaining cases were the result of new contamination.

80. The United Nations Monitoring Team continued to monitor and follow up on the Unified Communist Party of Nepal-Maoist (UCPN-M) compliance with the Action Plan for the discharge of the disqualified Maoist army personnel (including

verified minors) and related tasks, signed on 16 December 2009 between the Government of Nepal, the United Nations and UCPN-M.

81. Information collected and verified by the Monitoring Team indicates that at least one out of the seven Maoist army cantonment sites has ceased to distribute payments to the verified minors through the Maoist army commanders. In addition, three out of five Maoist army cantonment sites that previously provided shared accommodation to verified minors have now either dismantled them or are no longer using them to maintain a link between the verified minors and the Maoist army commanders. There were no verified cases of returns of verified minors to the cantonments.

Occupied Palestinian Territory and Israel

82. In 2011, Palestinian and Israeli children continued to suffer from the prevailing situation of conflict. Twenty Palestinian children (19 boys and one girl) were killed and 448 (393 boys and 55 girls) were injured in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and five Israeli children (four boys and one girl) were killed and two boys were injured in Israel in incidents related to the conflict, marking a significant increase compared with the previous year.

83. Among the 20 Palestinian children killed, 13 boys were killed by Israeli security forces, two boys and one girl by Palestinian armed groups, including the Izz al-Din Al Qassam Brigade and the Popular Resistance Committee in Gaza, two boys by explosive remnants of war and two boys by Israeli settlers. Out of the 448 Palestinian children who were injured, 89 were under the age of 12 years. A total of 384 children were injured by the Israeli security forces, 41 by Israeli settlers in East Jerusalem and the West Bank, 15 by unknown perpetrators owing to the detonation of improvised explosive devices and 8 by unidentified Palestinian armed groups. Sixty-nine per cent of the injuries occurred in the West Bank (including 20 per cent in East Jerusalem), and 31 per cent occurred in Gaza (including 15 per cent in the so-called buffer zone).

84. In the West Bank, there were serious concerns regarding incidents in which Palestinian children were killed or injured by Israeli settlers. In 2011, two boys were killed as a result of shooting attacks perpetrated by settlers, and another 35 boys and 6 girls were injured in incidents involving Israeli settlers, such as throwing stones at vehicles and attacks against Palestinian houses or farm land.

85. In 2011, 8 Palestinian children were shot and killed and 65 boys and 2 girls were injured by the Israeli security forces in the so-called buffer zone in Gaza that was established for security concerns. Thirty-four children were injured while collecting gravel and scrap metal, fishing, at home or playing in the so-called buffer zone. Thirty-four boys were also injured on 15 May 2011 during a demonstration at Erez crossing by live ammunition and tear gas fired by the Israeli security forces to disperse demonstrators near the border fence. All subsequent claims of excessive use of force during this incident are being investigated by the Israeli security forces.

86. Eight Palestinian children were injured as a result of rockets fired by Palestinian armed groups from Gaza that fell short and landed inside Gaza, or by explosives that detonated while preparing for an attack or being stored in populated areas.

87. In 2011, five Israeli children, four boys and one girl, were killed and two boys were injured in conflict-related incidents. A 1-year-old boy was killed in a car accident near Hebron caused by Palestinian stone-throwing. On 11 March, two boys and a three-month-old girl were killed in an attack on an Israeli family living in the Itamar settlement near Nablus, perpetrated by two Palestinian young people. In southern Israel near the border with Gaza, a 16-year-old boy was killed when a rocket fired by a Palestinian armed group hit a school bus on 17 April. Another two Israeli boys, aged 1 and 9 years, were injured when a rocket fired by a Palestinian armed group from the Gaza Strip hit the town of Ashkelon on 20 August.

88. One case of child recruitment by Izz al-Din Al Qassam Brigade was reported, when a 17-year-old Palestinian boy was killed on 11 August by the detonation of the explosives he was carrying while performing surveillance tasks in Rafah, southern Gaza.

89. Five separate cases of use of children by the Israeli security forces for military intelligence purposes were reported in 2011 in Meggido prison and Salem and Mescobiyya interrogation centres. These cases involved Palestinian boys aged 15 to 17 years who were arrested and offered money, entry to Israel and a car or a mobile telephone in exchange for intelligence on activities in their villages.

90. At the end of December 2011, 135 Palestinian children, 134 boys and 1 girl, aged 12 to 17 years, were detained in Israeli prisons for alleged security violations. This represents a steady decrease compared with 2010. It should be noted that on 18 December 2011, 55 children were released as part of the second stage of the prisoner swap for Israeli soldier Gilad Shalit. In 2011, two cases of administrative detention were reported. In the first case, the boy was released in February 2011, after 11 months in administrative detention. Another child was arrested and placed in administrative detention in December 2011. In 2011, 59 children from the West Bank were reportedly transferred to prisons inside Israel in contravention of the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War.

91. In relation to the 135 cases of detention mentioned above, 116 cases were documented through affidavits. Sixty-two children were below the age of 16, including two 10 years of age and one 9 years of age. All of the 116 boys reported being subjected to cruel and degrading treatment by the Israeli security forces and Israeli police while in detention. Ninety-two per cent of the children interviewed reported the use of hand-ties in violation of Israeli security forces orders, 70 per cent reported having been blindfolded, 61 per cent reported having been beaten, 7 per cent reported solitary confinement, 21 per cent reported denial of access to toilets and 18 per cent reported denial of access to food and water.

92. In a positive development, on 27 September 2011, the Israeli Military Commander in the West Bank issued Order 1676 which raised the age of majority in the West Bank from 16 to 18 years. This amendment increases the level of protection given to children in the context of juvenile military courts in the West Bank by introducing new provisions that relate to the adequate and professional care of child detainees, the separation of child detainees from adults, notification of parents, access of parents to trials, appointment of a lawyer and so forth.

93. A significant number of attacks on schools and education facilities continued to be reported both in Israel and in the Occupied Palestinian Territory in 2011. These attacks resulted in damage to schools or interruption of education, and in

some cases, in direct injury of children. Thirty-six cases were reported in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, compared with 20 cases reported in 2010. Four attacks were reported against Israeli schools, compared with one case in 2010.

94. Twenty-three cases of attacks on schools or military use of schools were reported in the West Bank, including 15 by the Israeli security forces and 8 by Israeli settlers. In five instances related to search operations in villages or to demonstrations, the Israeli security forces fired tear gas at Palestinian schools, resulting in students suffering from tear-gas inhalation. In several instances, direct attacks on schools or military use of schools were reported. In seven cases, Israeli soldiers entered school premises. In April 2011, the Israeli security forces converted a school into a military outpost for a few hours in Nablus. In another incident, the killing of five members of an Israeli family in a settlement near Nablus led to a curfew imposed by the Israeli security forces on the adjacent village of Awarta. During a period of five days, the military conducted search operations and used one school as a detention and interrogation centre. In addition, eight attacks were perpetrated by Israeli settlers, including by physically assaulting Palestinian children on their way to school, attacking schools by throwing rocks and empty bottles, or vandalizing schools. One incident involved Israeli settlers setting fire to a school prayer room in Huwwara (Nablus). In addition to these attacks, 10 schools located in Area C of the West Bank received demolition or stop-work orders issued by the Israeli authorities.

95. Fourteen incidents of attacks on schools were reported in Gaza. Eleven schools were damaged as a result of shooting or heavy firing near the schools, or by Israeli air strikes targeting Palestinian armed groups or suspected weapons and ammunition storage located in the vicinity of schools. Palestinian armed groups were responsible for damage caused to two schools in Gaza, when rockets allegedly fired at southern Israel fell short. In addition, an unidentified Palestinian armed group attacked a United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East summer games facility in Beit Lahiya.

96. Missiles or rockets fired from Gaza damaged four school facilities in Israel, including a day-care centre in the area of Eshkol in March 2011, a day-care centre and a high school in Beer Sheba in August 2011 and a school in Ashdod in October 2011.

Somalia

97. In 2011, the United Nations documented 948 cases of recruitment of children, mostly by Al-Shabaab. There were also documented cases of recruitment and use by the Transitional Federal Government and allied militia. Separately, the Transitional Federal Government forces inadvertently recruited 86 children, who were identified and repatriated from Bihanga military training camp in Uganda in April and August 2011. While 11 of these children joined a United Nations-supported reintegration programme, a number of them were reportedly released without undertaking a formal release process, and others reportedly remain in the custody of Transitional Federal Government forces.

98. In June 2011, mass recruitment by Al-Shabaab in Kismayo, Lower Juba region, was reported by a victim of child recruitment, who indicated that the recruitment took place in Kismayo town and that over 80 children remained in the training camp from which he had escaped. Reports were also received of girls

recruited and forcibly married to Al-Shabaab combatants. Children were typically recruited by Al-Shabaab from schools and madrasas, particularly in internally displaced person settlements in Somalia and refugee camps in neighbouring Kenya. Forced recruitment increased in 2011 as a result of the escalation of military operations in Somalia.

99. In 2011, 127 cases of abduction were reported. Most abductions and detentions were carried out by Al-Shabaab in South Central zone.

100. In 2011, 7,799 child casualties of conflict were registered in the three main hospitals in Mogadishu. The main cause of death among children below the age of 5 were burns, chest injuries and internal haemorrhage caused by blasts, shrapnel and bullets. In addition, the United Nations verified the killing of at least 189 children and the injury of 362 as a result of conflict. For example, in October, in Mogadishu, Banadir region, Al-Shabaab conducted a suicide attack against the Ministry of Education using a vehicle-borne improvised explosive device. Hundreds of children waiting outside to apply for scholarships were affected; at least 15 children were killed and 18 were seriously wounded.

101. A total of 252 cases of rape and sexual violence were reported in 2011. Continued fighting has rendered children more vulnerable to rape and sexual violence, particularly in open and unprotected internally displaced person settlements and especially in Mogadishu. The Transitional Federal Government and allied militia were the main alleged perpetrators in Mogadishu and border areas. In August and September 2011, the United Nations noted a trend emerging where multiple perpetrators raped the same victims in a group setting. Cases of sexual slavery were also reported, with Al-Shabaab fighters reported to have taken girls as young as 9 years old for marriage. Sexual violence in Al-Shabaab-controlled areas was underreported, given the significant fear of reprisals.

102. In 2011, Al-Shabaab and militia groups continued to target schools. In May 2011, a teacher was killed by Al-Shabaab in the Hiiran region for opposing the recruitment of children. In August 2011, Al-Shabaab used a school in Elwak district, Gedo region, for military purposes, disrupting the education of over 500 children. Since February 2011, the school has been used intermittently. In December 2011, Al-Shabaab militia attacked and used a secondary school in Merka district, Lower Shabelle region, as an operations centre. Schools in Mogadishu have been reportedly closed or used by Transitional Federal Government forces.

103. The ongoing conflict continued to restrict humanitarian access and hamper the delivery of assistance, especially in areas controlled by Al-Shabaab. This was further complicated by military interventions in the fourth quarter of 2011. Humanitarian actors have experienced increasing difficulty in accessing South Central zone, particularly following the access ban against 16 humanitarian organizations issued by Al-Shabaab in November 2011. It is estimated that the access ban affected over 3.5 million people — half of them children. The ban affects regions that were critically affected by the famine of 2011.

South Sudan

104. The United Nations verified 352 cases of recruitment or use of children in 2011. Of these, 253 were associated with SPLA, while 99 were associated with armed groups loyal to commanders David YauYau, Peter Gatdet and the late Gatluak

Gai. In addition, 272 boys were released to the South Sudan Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Commission from various armed groups.

105. In 2011, the country task forces on monitoring and reporting verified the killing of 104 children and the maiming of 78. In addition, 306 reports of killing and maiming were received. Thirty-three children were reportedly killed and 36 injured during five separate clashes between SPLA and armed groups (South Sudan Democratic Movement, South Sudan Liberation Army, an armed group led by Joseph Oloney, and an armed group led by Gabriel Tang). Air strikes by the Sudanese Armed Forces in Unity State resulted in the death of three children and injury of two.

106. In 2011, the country task force also verified the use of 21 schools by SPLA, resulting in the disruption of schooling for approximately 10,935 children. An additional 10 schools were damaged as a result of fighting among different armed groups. In addition, four primary schools in the counties of Uror and Bor were damaged during tribal fighting in Jonglei State, in August and October respectively. The SPLA Deputy Chief of Staff issued an order in December to all SPLA commanders to immediately vacate all schools used by their forces. Two schools were vacated after the issuance of the order.

107. A total of 602 children were reportedly abducted during 2011, of which 356 cases were verified by the United Nations. Most of the abductions took place in the context of tribal conflict in Jonglei State.

108. In 2011, 34 incidents of restriction of humanitarian access were reported, during which personnel of humanitarian organizations were harassed, robbed or blocked at military checkpoints: 8 incidents of looting or diversion of aid were reported; 10 humanitarian premises were raided for equipment and supplies, delaying the humanitarian response in certain areas; and 16 reports were received of humanitarian staff being exposed to violence, out of which two incidents were fatal. Hostilities in the border areas between South Sudan and the Sudan, mined roads in Unity State and tribal conflict in Jonglei continue to limit access to areas where violations are reported and hinder humanitarian assistance to affected populations.

Sudan

Darfur

109. In 2011, the country task forces on monitoring and reporting documented 45 cases of recruitment and use of children, representing a significant decrease from the 115 recorded in 2010. Of the 45 cases, 7 were perpetrated by the Sudanese police forces; 5 by the Border Intelligence Forces; 5 by Central Reserve Police; 14 by pro-Government militias; 5 by the Sudan Liberation Army (SLA)/Abdul Wahid; 3 by the Popular Defense Forces (PDF); 1 by the Sudanese Armed Forces; 1 by SLA/Minni Minawi; 1 by JEM; and 3 by unidentified armed groups. The majority of recorded incidents of recruitment and use of children took place in Government-controlled areas. Collection of information in areas that were not fully under the control of Government forces, such as parts of Jebel Mara and the border areas with South and North Kordofan, remained a challenge owing to restrictions and denial of access by both Government and armed groups.

110. The country task force verified 54 cases of maiming and 17 cases of killing of children. The 17 cases of killing included 7 attributed to crossfire, 5 attributed to the Sudanese Armed Forces air strikes and 5 to explosive remnants of war. Of the 54 cases of maiming, 23 children were shot, and 31 were injured by explosive remnants of war.

111. In 2011, the country task force verified 59 cases of rape of girls aged 6 to 17 years, an increase compared with the 22 cases recorded in 2010. Some of these cases were reported to the police or to the Sudanese Armed Forces. The alleged perpetrators included members of the Sudanese Armed Forces, unidentified armed men, armed nomads, pro-Government militia, Sudanese police forces, PDF and the Central Reserve Police. Limited access in areas controlled by armed groups and fear of being stigmatized affected the documentation of sexual violence cases.

112. One incident of looting of a school was reported, allegedly by the Sudanese Armed Forces in North Darfur in January 2011. The looting of a hospital in South Darfur by unknown armed elements was also reported.

113. Throughout 2011, humanitarian access continued to be seriously hampered in some areas of Darfur owing to fighting between Government forces and armed groups, as well as security restrictions imposed by the Government. Restrictions and denial of access delayed or prevented the delivery of essential drugs and vaccination for children in Darfur in April 2011.

Three areas (Abyei, Blue Nile and South Kordofan)

114. Cases of recruitment and use of children significantly increased in Abyei, Blue Nile and South Kordofan in 2011, with 52 verified cases compared with 8 in 2010. In South Kordofan and Abyei, 41 cases of recruitment of boys aged between 14 and 17 years were verified. Perpetrators included SPLA (12); the Sudan People's Liberation Movement-North (SPLM-N) (5); the Sudanese Armed Forces (2); PDF (5); and unidentified armed groups (17). In Blue Nile, 11 cases of recruitment of boys between 14 and 17 years were verified and attributed to SPLA (10) and the SPLM-N (1). The country task force received a number of credible allegations of abductions of children by SPLM-N with the aim of forcefully recruiting them.

115. From April to June 2011, the number of cases of killing and maiming increased with the resumption of conflict. At least 29 children were reportedly killed and 34 maimed in South Kordofan and Abyei during the reporting period. Of these, two children were killed and three were injured in incidents involving explosive remnants of war. The remaining children were killed or injured as a result of crossfire between the Sudanese Armed Forces, PDF and SPLM-N, or as a result of shelling and aerial bombings by the Sudanese Armed Forces. In addition, one 7-year-old boy was killed and two children aged 14 and 16 years were injured by Sudanese Armed Forces aerial bombing in Blue Nile. Lack of access impeded the verification of these incidents.

116. Monitoring cases of sexual violence against children in South Kordofan, Abyei and Blue Nile continued to be a challenge. One incident of rape of a 14-year-old girl by four PDF elements in South Kordofan was verified. The country task force received allegations of about 20 additional cases of rape targeting Nuba girls and women by unidentified armed elements, including one incident leading to the death of a girl.

117. The military use of schools and hospitals in El Buram localities, in South Kordofan, by the Sudanese Armed Forces before June 2011 continued. In addition, the functioning of at least 12 schools in South Kordofan was disrupted since fighting began in June 2011. As at December 2011, the education of an estimated 137,900 schoolchildren had been disrupted owing to schools being damaged or used by armed forces, inhabited by internally displaced persons or contaminated with explosive remnants of war. In Blue Nile, it is estimated that 35,335 children were prevented from attending school owing to the disruption of the functioning of 156 schools as a result of fighting between the Sudanese Armed Forces and SPLM-N in Bau, Geissan and Kurmuk localities.

118. Humanitarian access deteriorated in South Kordofan, Abyei and Blue Nile in 2011 owing to insecurity and Government-enforced restrictions of movement and new administrative measures. Although limited humanitarian access was granted in some areas of South Kordofan and Blue Nile, this was restricted to Government-controlled areas. In addition, no international humanitarian staff has been allowed into South Kordofan and Blue Nile since early October 2011. Meanwhile, Abyei remained accessible for humanitarian actors only through South Sudan.

Syrian Arab Republic

119. The United Nations has received reports of grave violations against children in the Syrian Arab Republic since March 2011 and throughout the reporting period, continuing into 2012. In response to the need for United Nations verified information, my Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict sent a technical mission to the region to conduct interviews with victims and witnesses in refugee camps, villages and hospitals in the region in March 2012. In almost all recorded cases, children were among the victims of military operations by Government forces, including the Syrian Armed Forces, the intelligence forces and the Shabbiha militia, in their ongoing conflict with the opposition, including the Free Syrian Army (FSA). Children as young as 9 years of age were victims of killing and maiming, arbitrary arrest, detention, torture and ill-treatment, including sexual violence, and use as human shields. Schools have been regularly raided and used as military bases and detention centres. Information obtained by the technical mission is in line with the findings of the independent international commission of inquiry on the Syrian Arab Republic.

120. Interviews with former members of the Syrian Armed Forces and the intelligence forces indicated that civilians, including children, were targeted by Government forces if they were residing in villages where members of FSA or other armed opposition groups were believed to be present or where deserters were hiding, or if they were seen fleeing the country seeking refuge. In one instance, a former member of the Syrian Armed Forces stated that, during protests in Tall Kalakh in December 2011, he was given an order by his commander to shoot without distinction, although the soldiers were aware that there were women and children among the protesters. During the armed break-up of the demonstrations, the witness saw three girls between approximately 10 and 13 years of age who had been killed by the Syrian Armed Forces. In another similar incident in Aleppo in the fourth quarter of 2011, a former member of the intelligence forces witnessed the killing of five children in a secondary school during demonstrations.

121. The grave violations continued into 2012 and although this is beyond the reporting period, the gravity of the incidents requires their inclusion in the report. Witness accounts described a particularly grave incident in the village of Ayn l'Arouz in the Jabal Azzawiyah in Idlib province. On 9 March 2012, Syrian Armed Forces, together with the intelligence forces and the Shabbiha militia, surrounded the village for an attack that lasted over a period of four days. Government forces entered the village on the first day and killed 11 civilians, including three boys aged between 15 and 17 years. Thirty-four persons, including two boys aged 14 and 16 years, and one 9-year-old girl, were arrested for interrogation about the suspected presence of deserters. Eventually, the village was reportedly left burned and 4 out of the 34 detainees were shot and burned, including the two boys aged 14 and 16 years.

122. There is no evidence of Government forces formally conscripting or enlisting children under the age of 18 years. However, the Syrian Armed Forces and its associated Shabbiha militia used children as young as 8 years on at least three separate occasions within the reporting period. In the incident mentioned above in the village of Ayn l'Arouz in March 2012, a witness stated that several dozen children, boys and girls ranging between the ages of 8 and 13 years, were forcibly taken from their homes. These children were subsequently reportedly used by soldiers and militia members as human shields, placing them in front of the windows of buses carrying military personnel into the raid on the village.

123. The United Nations collected dozens of accounts of eyewitnesses of both children as young as 14 years of age who were tortured while in detention, as well as former members of the Syrian Armed Forces who themselves were forced to torture or witness torture. The Shabbiha militia was also involved in the detention and torture of children, especially during military operations and often in makeshift detention cells in schools. Most child victims of torture described being beaten, blindfolded, subjected to stress positions, whipped with heavy electrical cables, scarred by cigarette burns and, in one recorded case, subjected to electrical shock to the genitals. At least one witness said that he had seen a young boy of approximately 15 years of age succumb to his repeated beatings. Children were detained and tortured because their siblings or parents were assumed to be members of the opposition or FSA, or they themselves were suspected of being associated with FSA. On one occasion, in May 2011, a 15-year-old boy was taken into custody by intelligence forces in the municipal building in Jisr Ash-Shughur and repeatedly beaten with heavy electrical cables during interrogation. The boy stated that there were at least 20 other children his age or younger held in detention.

124. The United Nations has received some credible allegations of the recruitment and use of children by armed opposition, including FSA and other armed groups, although FSA has a stated policy of not recruiting any child under 17 years of age. Various sources reported on young children association with FSA carrying guns and wearing camouflage uniforms. My Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict reminded all parties of their obligations under human rights and international humanitarian law.

125. The United Nations recorded multiple accounts of the use of schools by Government forces, including the Syrian Armed Forces, the intelligence forces and the Shabbiha militia as military staging grounds, temporary bases, detention centres, sniper posts and centres for torture and the interrogation of adults and children. Several witnesses stated that the intelligence forces and the Shabbiha militia had

gun emplacements installed on the roofs of schools while students were attending. Accounts also indicated that, on a number of occasions, children were killed or injured by Government forces during military operations on school grounds, and schools were looted and burned as retribution by Government forces in response to student protests.

126. Reports also pointed out that, during the reporting period, hospitals were struck by heavy artillery by Government forces. Aside from the conduct of military operations that prevent civilians from accessing hospitals, reports also indicated that injured persons, including children and their families, were afraid to seek medical treatment out of fear of reprisals by the Government for suspected association with the opposition. Similarly, reports were also received of medical workers being intimidated and threatened by Government forces for having provided or being suspected of providing medical assistance to members of the opposition.

B. Information on grave violations against children in situations not on the agenda of the Security Council or in other situations

Colombia

127. The armed conflict continued to pose considerable challenges for the protection of children in 2011. Children of African descent and of indigenous communities were disproportionately affected.

128. Widespread and systematic recruitment and use of children by non-State armed groups in Colombia continued in 2011. Although the actual scale and scope remains unknown, 300 cases of recruitment and use were reported in 29 of the 32 departments in the country. The early warning system of the Office of the Human Rights Ombudsman, which monitors and flags imminent risks of human rights violations against civilians, identified 50 risk situations in 16 departments (104 municipalities) in 2011, including 20 cases of risk related to child recruitment.

129. The Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia — Ejército del Pueblo (FARC-EP) and the Ejército de Liberación Nacional (ELN) continued to recruit and use children. For example, in May in Antioquia, in two separate events, 15 children were recruited by FARC-EP and 13 children were recruited by ELN. In May and June 2011, in Meta, five children were recruited by FARC-EP. The non-State armed groups that emerged after the demobilization of the paramilitary group Autodefensas Unidas de Colombia (AUC) also continued to recruit and use children. In February 2011, for example, in Antioquia, at least 13 children were recruited by several of these groups, including Los Paisas, Los Rastrojos and Los Urabeños. In a 2011 report, the Office of the Ombudsman noted a strengthening of these non-State armed groups, following a process of reconfiguration, expansion and consolidation in various regions of the country.

130. In 2011, reports were received regarding the use of children for intelligence purposes by the Colombian National Army. On several occasions, children separated from non-State armed groups remained in military premises for periods exceeding 36 hours, in violation of the Code on Children and Adolescents and directives by the Ministry of National Defence. For example, in August 2011, in Putumayo, a 15-year-old boy who escaped from FARC-EP and surrendered to the Colombian National Army, was held in military premises for 72 hours. The Colombian National

Army also continued to use children in civil-military activities. Such activities, when undertaken in conflict-affected areas, put children at risk and expose them to retaliation by members of non-State armed groups.

131. Children continued to be victims of attacks, including indiscriminate attacks carried out by armed groups, or as a result of crossfire among non-State armed groups or between non-State armed groups and security forces. In January and February 2011, in various attacks by FARC-EP and other non-State armed groups targeting community leaders and local authorities, three boys and one girl, relatives of these leaders, were killed. In June 2011, in Nariño, an 11-year-old boy was killed and three boys injured in a FARC-EP attack on the police. As at December 2011, at least 32 children had been injured and 7 children were killed by anti-personnel mines and explosive remnants of war.

132. While underreported, girls continued to be victims of sexual violence attributed to members of non-State armed groups. Girls associated with non-State armed groups were often required to have sexual relations with adults at an early age and forced to abort if they became pregnant. In September 2011, a 16-year-old girl separated from FARC-EP reported having undergone five forced abortions during the four years she was associated with the group, in Antioquia. In December 2011, in Nariño, a pregnant 17-year-old girl and a 12-year-old indigenous girl were raped during a massacre by members of Los Rastrojos. In November 2011, in Putumayo, a 12-year-old indigenous girl was raped, tortured and murdered by members of an unidentified non-State armed group. In March 2011, in Nariño, a 17-year-old girl was raped, forced to clean a public place naked, tortured and forced to eat excrement, and subsequently killed in front of the community, allegedly by members of Los Rastrojos. Reports have also been received of cases of sexual violence against children involving members of the security forces.

133. Attacks against schools by non-State armed groups continued to be reported. Schools were damaged as a result of hostilities as well as by anti-personnel mines and explosive remnants of war. In addition, teachers and students were targeted by non-State armed groups, for preventing recruitment and for recruitment and use, respectively. In May 2011, in Arauca and Norte de Santander, 15 teachers were threatened by FARC-EP, ELN and other non-State armed groups. In August 2011 in Córdoba, 44 teachers were threatened. At least 18 of these resorted to displacement for protection. These threats left 1,160 children without schooling.

134. The military use of schools by the Colombian National Army was reported in several departments, including Antioquia, Arauca, Cauca, Córdoba, Huila, Nariño, Norte de Santander and Valle del Cauca. In August 2011, in Cauca, members of the Colombian National Army used a school for seven days, resulting in the suspension of classes.

135. Humanitarian access was restricted owing to the armed conflict, particularly affecting children and indigenous peoples. The departments of Antioquia, Arauca, Cauca, Caquetá, Chocó, Guaviare, Huila, Meta, Córdoba, Nariño and Norte de Santander were particularly affected. Some communities did not receive humanitarian assistance and basic services as a result of armed confrontations, the establishment of illegal armed checkpoints and massive mine laying.

136. Information on the abduction of children was limited during the reporting period. In May 2011, a 14-year-old indigenous girl, the sister of a community leader,

was abducted and tortured for four days, allegedly by members of Los Rastrojos, in Nariño. Also in Nariño, in July and August 2011, the abduction of two girls, aged 13 and 16 years, was attributed to FARC-EP, reportedly as a reprisal for maintaining relationships with members of the National police.

India

137. In 2011, reports were received of recruitment and use of children by Maoist armed groups, also known as Naxalites, particularly in Chhattisgarh State and some districts in adjoining states. In December 2011, the Ministry of State for Women and Child Development stated in Parliament that Maoist armed groups were recruiting and indoctrinating children, and had constituted children's squads and associations (*Bal Dastas*, *Bal Sangham* and *Bal Manch*) as part of mass mobilization. This is supported by a 2010 National Commission for Protection of Child Rights report, which indicated that children were being recruited by Maoist armed groups through, inter alia, intimidation and abduction, and were used in support roles, including as lookouts, messengers, porters and cooks. The report also pointed to the recruitment of children by the militia Salwa Judum. In its judgement of 5 July 2011, the Supreme Court of India ordered the State of Chhattisgarh to take all appropriate measures to prevent the operation of any group, including but not limited to Salwa Judum, that in any manner sought to take the law into its own hands, act unconstitutionally or violate human rights.

138. In 2011, incidents of attacks on schools by Maoist armed groups continued to be reported. Home Ministry statistics indicated that between 2006 and November 2011, Maoist armed groups destroyed 258 school buildings, mostly in Chhattisgarh, Jharkand and Bihar States, of which 21 schools were destroyed between January and November 2011. Government statistics indicate that the number of attacks on school buildings has declined progressively since 2009. The Supreme Court has, on at least two occasions, ordered security forces to vacate schools in Chhattisgarh State, most recently in its order of 18 November 2011. In January 2011, the Government of Chhattisgarh conceded that security forces were using 31 schools. The use of schools by the security forces continued to be reported in various states in 2011.

139. The Government of India has strongly condemned the acts of Naxalites. Based on recommendations from relevant stakeholders, including the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights, the Government of India has undertaken a multifaceted approach to address the protection of children in areas of civil unrest, involving focused development efforts, capacity-building and improvement in local governance, in coordination with the concerned state government authorities. While some recommendations of the National Commission remain to be implemented, in 2010 the Government of India launched a pilot scheme, *Bal Bandhu*, in 10 districts of Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Chhattisgarh and Maharashtra to address children's needs comprehensively, focusing on protection, education, health, nutrition, sanitation and safety aspects, including through local community participation. As at 2011, the project had been initiated in nine districts. In September 2011, the Prime Minister announced the launch of the Integrated Action Plan for 60 Naxal-affected districts, with the purpose of implementing public infrastructure projects and improving services.

Pakistan

140. In 2011, Pakistan continued to experience attacks by armed groups using terror tactics and influenced by and/or associated with the Taliban or Al-Qaida, including the Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP). Attacks have targeted Government sites, schools and civilians, including children, in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa, the Federally Administered Tribal Areas and urban centres.

141. In 2011, 11 incidents were reported of children being used by armed groups to carry out suicide attacks, involving 10 boys, some as young as 13, and one 9-year-old girl. In one such incident, on 3 April 2011, one boy was killed and another was arrested in a double suicide attack on a Sufi shrine in Dera Ghazi Khan, southern Punjab, which killed 50 people and injured 120. A 14-year-old survivor reported having been trained for two months in Taliban camps in North Waziristan. In another incident on 19 August 2011, a boy was used in a suicide attack during Friday prayers at a mosque in the Ghundai area of Khyber Agency, killing 48 people and injuring more than 100.

142. In 2011, children continued to be victims of indiscriminate attacks, including by improvised explosive devices and suicide bombings. Reports indicate that a total of 57 children were killed during the reporting period from landmines, explosive remnants of war and improvised explosive devices (38), bomb blasts (11), shelling (4) and targeted attacks (4). In one case, on 5 June 2011, a bomb blast in a bazaar outside Peshawar killed seven people, including an 11-year-old girl, and injured four other children, for which TTP claimed responsibility. In another case, on 13 September 2011, TTP allegedly attacked a school bus in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa, killing four children.

143. Child casualties as a result of landmines and other explosive devices remained a serious concern in 2011. The majority of the casualties were reported in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa and the Federally Administered Tribal Areas, including the killing of 30 children (25 boys and 5 girls) and injuring of 49 children (29 boys and 20 girls).

144. Throughout the year, schools continued to be directly targeted by armed groups in bomb and improvised explosive device attacks, resulting in 152 incidents of partial or complete destruction of school facilities in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas and Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa. According to the Federally Administered Tribal Areas Department of Education, a total number of 73 schools were damaged in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas, with the remainder occurring in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa. In a double attack on 20 December 2011 in Charsadda District, a Government primary school for girls and a primary school for boys were blown up. In neighbouring Mohmand Agency, TTP claimed responsibility for the attack, reportedly to avenge military operations in the region and in opposition to secular and girls' education.

145. With regard to the abduction of children, it was reported that on 31 August 2011 at least 27 boys from Bajaur Agency were abducted along the border with Afghanistan by armed militants of TTP. Seventeen children under the age of 10 were released by TTP and two other boys managed to escape, leaving at least eight children with TTP. The remaining children are believed to be in the neighbouring Kunar Province in Afghanistan.

146. On 10 January 2012, the Governor of Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa launched a child protection policy in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas, implementing a plan

for protective services and child protection units in all Federally Administered Tribal Areas Agencies. The Malakand-based Sabaoon rehabilitation and reintegration programme for children taken into custody by the Pakistan security forces for alleged association with armed groups received 29 new cases in 2011, bringing the total number of children in the Sabaoon Centre to 170; 102 of these children have been reintegrated into their families, including two girls.

Philippines

147. An increase was noted in the recorded number of cases of recruitment and use of children by armed groups in 2011 (54 children) compared with 2010 (24 children). The country task forces on monitoring and reporting documented 26 incidents, involving 33 boys and 21 girls. Of that number, the country task force verified two incidents, involving two boys and four girls aged between 14 and 17, attributed to the New People's Army (NPA). The Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) was implicated in two verified incidents, involving seven boys, who were armed and performing military functions. Although the United Nations currently has no access to the areas under control of the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Movement (BIFM), a breakaway faction of MILF led by commander "Kato", the country task force received reports that the armed group had children within its ranks. Four incidents, involving six boys aged between 13 and 17 years, were attributed to the Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG). Reports indicate that ASG used children as combatants against Armed Forces of the Philippines targets, but these cases could not be verified owing to security concerns.

148. A number of incidents of association of children and/or false labelling of children as NPA combatants were attributed to AFP and the Citizen Armed Force Geographical Units, its associated paramilitary groups. The country task force verified six cases, involving at least 12 boys and 7 girls aged between 10 and 17. There were also allegations that as part of the implementation of the new Internal Peace and Security Plan (*Bayanihan*) children were used for military intelligence by AFP and its associated Units. There have also been reports of four cases of detention by AFP and the Units, involving two boys aged 13 and 17, and two girls aged 6 and 14, as part of counterinsurgency operations.

149. During the reporting period, children continued to be victims of bomb explosions, shootings, explosive remnants of war and improvised explosive device attacks. Although fewer encounters took place between Government security forces and MILF, fighting with other armed groups, including NPA, ASG and private militia remained relatively unchanged compared with the previous reporting period. In 2011, 44 incidents of killing and maiming of children were recorded, signifying an increase in the number of child casualties. Twenty-six children, including 16 boys and 10 girls, were reportedly killed, and 41 children, including 21 boys and 20 girls, were reportedly maimed. Of those incidents, nine implicated AFP and the Citizen Armed Force Geographical Units, five implicated MILF, three implicated ASG and one implicated NPA. Twenty-seven incidents were attributed to private militia and unknown perpetrators. It is important to note that violations allegedly committed by armed groups, in particular ASG and NPA, are more difficult to verify, as few primary sources are willing to come forward, and the United Nations has restricted access to the concerned areas for security reasons.

150. There was a significant increase in incidents affecting schools and hospitals in 2011. During the reporting period, a total number of 52 cases were recorded. Twenty-seven cases, of which 16 were verified, were attributed to AFP and its associated Citizen Armed Force Geographical Units, including one incident of military use of a health centre, one incident of a school being burned during an airstrike operation, and 14 incidents of military use of schools in the course of counterinsurgency operations.

151. The remainder of the recorded incidents of attacks on schools and hospitals were attributed to MILF (6), NPA (4), ASG (3) and unknown perpetrators (12). During the clashes between MILF and the breakaway faction BIFM in August 2011, the country task force verified that two schools were used and another partially destroyed during the fighting. An increase was also observed of improvised explosive devices being planted by NPA and other unknown perpetrators near and on school grounds, targeting AFP detachments.

152. Throughout the reporting period, 13 incidents of abduction of children have been recorded, involving at least 12 boys and 8 girls aged between 4 and 17. A pattern of kidnap-for-ransom activity to finance armed groups was observed in the conflict-affected regions of Mindanao. ASG was identified as perpetrator in three incidents of abduction of children, involving three boys, and MILF was identified in one incident, involving a 7-year-old girl. Nine more incidents, involving at least seven boys and five girls following similar modus operandi were recorded, but the perpetrators remain unknown.

Sri Lanka

153. During the reporting period, the security situation in the country stabilized, gradually moving towards an early recovery. However, assistance for the most vulnerable families in the north remained a challenge. There continued to be a heavy military presence, and the civil administration is in need of further strengthening. The Government stated that this would be a priority. The implementation of these commitments as well as the recommendations of the Lessons Learned and Reconciliation Commission, including on children, will positively contribute towards post-conflict efforts.

154. No new cases of recruitment of children by armed groups have been reported since October 2009. However, the whereabouts of 1,373 children of a total of 6,905 who had been recruited by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) remains unknown, and the location of five boys previously recruited by the Tamil Makkal Viduthalai Pulikal (TMVP), three of which have been traced to the forces of Inya Bharathi, is also unknown. The Government of Sri Lanka has been actively following up on these allegations. The National Child Protection Authority has undertaken an independent investigation and made recommendations to the Government of Sri Lanka which are being pursued by the Criminal Investigation Division of the police. To date, no prosecution has been initiated.

155. Since 2008, three rehabilitation centres have been in operation, providing education, care, psychosocial support and reunification assistance to children associated with LTTE, TMVP and Inya Bharathi. To date, 594 children aged between 12 and 18 years, including 364 boys and 230 girls, have completed the rehabilitation programme and have been reunited with their families. However, recent community awareness programmes have revealed that a number of children

formerly associated with armed groups have not accessed reintegration programmes, including a trend of underreporting of girls. The country task forces on monitoring and reporting is engaging with the Government on the need to identify the possible reintegration needs of these individuals.

156. In December of 2009, the Vavuniya Government Agent and the Probation and Child Care Commissioner (Northern Province) jointly established the Family Tracing and Reunification Unit for unaccompanied and separated children, with UNICEF support. At the time of writing, 736 tracing applications had been registered concerning children, the majority of whom were recruited by LTTE. To date, 139 children have been matched and referred to the Unit for tracing and verification, of which 42 have been reunited with their family members.

157. The Government of Sri Lanka has made headway in the evacuation of school premises in the reporting period, vacating four out of five schools recorded in my previous report. However, one school in Poonahri, Kilinochchi District, remains in use by the Sri Lankan Army. The Government has indicated that the school will be vacated by May 2012. I remain concerned that 14 additional schools in Mullaitivu, Kilinochchi and Jaffna districts continue to be used by Sri Lankan security forces, although these areas are not opened for civilian return.

Southern border provinces of Thailand

158. Although no exact figures are available, children continued to be victims of attacks by armed groups against Government officials, security forces and civilians in the four southern border provinces of Thailand: Yala, Pattani, Narathiwat and Songkhla. On 3 February 2011, for example, armed assailants reportedly opened fire on a group of civilians in Panare district, Pattani Province, killing five people and injuring four others, including a 12-year-old boy. In another incident, on 16 September 2011, three bombs exploded at 30-minute intervals in different public places in Sungai Kolok district, Narathiwat province, reportedly killing five civilians, including a 3-year-old girl, and injuring another 115 people. On 1 February 2011, members of a family in Rueso district, Yala Province, including a 15-year-old girl and a 7-year-old boy, were reportedly executed by armed assailants.

159. During the reporting period, armed groups reportedly continued to carry out targeted attacks against schools, teachers and students, purportedly because they were perceived as a symbol of Government authority. The practice of having Government soldiers present on some school grounds in the southern border provinces to provide protection is also worrisome. On 28 September 2011, various sources reported that 18 members of a uniformed armed group attacked Ban Lamoh school in Rueso district, Narathiwat Province. The gunmen reportedly opened fire on soldiers waiting to escort teachers home, killing one 7-year-old child in the crossfire. In another incident, on 19 July 2011, three students were allegedly injured when a motorcycle bomb exploded in front of a school in Bannang Sata district, Yala Province.

160. Armed groups were also allegedly responsible for the killing of at least 31 Government teachers and educational personnel in the southern border provinces during 2011. All reported incidents follow a similar *modus operandi* characterized by a combination of hit-and-run attacks and the use of improvised explosive devices. On 15 January 2011, a teacher at Decha Pattayanukul in Muang district, Pattani Province, was reportedly killed in a drive-by shooting. In another case, on

25 July 2011, five teachers were reportedly injured in a bomb attack at the entrance of Ban Lamud School in Muang district, Yala Province.

161. Reports continue to indicate that children in the southern border provinces were targeted for recruitment by armed groups, and that these children were used in a variety of roles, including for intelligence gathering, diversion tactics and arson attacks. The United Nations has also received allegations of association of children with the Chor Ror Bor (village defence volunteers). These reports indicated that children were engaged by the Chor Ror Bor to patrol villages, man checkpoints and identify police suspects.

162. The Government of Thailand has taken positive action to protect children in the southern border provinces. The Government made increasing efforts to prevent the involvement of children with armed groups under the guidance of the Plan for the Development of the Five Southern Border Provinces Special Areas (2009-2012), as well as the Educational Development Plan in the Southern Border Provinces (2010-2012). It should also be noted that, on 19 April 2011, the Government amended its 2008 regulation on the Chor Ror Bor to explicitly prohibit the recruitment of children below 18 years of age. In addition, the United Nations has been informed that the Government is in the process of setting up a Subcommittee on the Protection and Development of Children and Youth to oversee and respond to the situation of children in the southern border provinces.

163. The United Nations country team in Thailand has informed my Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict that it is not in a position to monitor, report or verify the aforementioned allegations of violations against children in the southern border provinces. It is therefore critical that the United Nations country team be granted such access to the southern border provinces that is necessary to independently verify and report on alleged violations against children in the region, as requested. I strongly encourage the Government of Thailand to strengthen cooperation with the country team to enable such access.

Yemen

164. The United Nations and its partners documented the association of children to the Yemeni armed forces and various armed groups. Members of the Yemeni armed forces indicated that children were in the ranks of the Republican Guard, and in Sana'a and Taiz, were seen armed at military checkpoints of the Yemeni armed forces. In the districts of Khanfar and Zinjibar in Abyan Governorate, the recruitment and use of children by the Yemeni armed forces and pro-Government tribal militia to fight against Ansar Al-Shari'a/Al-Qaida in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) was observed, with many families enlisting their children for financial reasons.

165. The recruitment and use of children by the breakaway First Armoured Division (FAD), led by defected General Ali Mohsen, was also documented during 2011. Children associated with FAD were seen carrying out security duties in Sana'a. Elements in FAD indicated to the United Nations that many children were associated with the armed group. They also described how FAD encouraged voluntary enlistment among demonstrators in Change Square in Sana'a.

166. In Sa'da, recruitment drives by the Al-Houthi armed group included the targeting of children. New recruits, including children, were seen manning Al-Houthi checkpoints in Sa'da city and fighting armed tribal groups in neighbouring Al-Jawf Governorate. In the districts of Khanfar and Zinjibar in Abyan Governorate, children were observed being recruited in mosques by the Ansar Al-Shari'a/AQAP. One 15-year-old boy reportedly joined Ansar Al-Shari'a/AQAP and was later killed during fighting in 2011.

167. A total of 159 children (138 boys and 21 girls) were reportedly killed in 2011, compared with 76 cases in 2010. The number of children maimed increased fourfold to 363 (312 boys and 51 girls), from 79 in 2010. Another 322 child demonstrators (319 boys and 3 girls) reportedly suffered tear-gas suffocation. Most cases of killing and maiming occurred in Sana'a (47 killed and 141 maimed), Taiz (27 killed and 112 maimed) and Aden (19 killed and 21 maimed). Killing and maiming resulted from, inter alia, children being fired upon alongside adult demonstrators; proximity to clashes between Government forces and opposition groups (including FAD and armed tribal groups such as the Al-Ahmar group); or indiscriminate shelling by Government forces or armed groups. While the verification of perpetrators has been challenging, some 76 per cent of the reported cases received by the United Nations were attributed to Government forces (the Republican Guard and Central Security Forces) and pro-Government militias in Sana'a, Taiz and Aden. In Abyan Governorate, 31 children were killed and 28 maimed as a result of the fighting in late May between Government forces and Ansar Al-Shari'a/AQAP. Fourteen children were reported killed and 29 children maimed in Al-Houthi controlled areas of Sa'da Governorate, mainly in the village of Damaj, home to a (Sunni) Salafist religious group, which was under siege by the (Shiite) Al-Houthis in late 2011, before an agreement was reached by the parties. Twenty-eight children were killed and nine maimed by mines or explosive remnants of war during the reporting period, including 18 children who were killed and 4 injured in an explosion at an ammunitions factory in Abyan Governorate, in March 2011.

168. A surge in attacks on schools was recorded, including 211 attacks on schools affecting a total of 150 schools, including in Sana'a (130), Taiz (72), Abyan (7), Hajja (1) and Sa'da (1). Incidents against schools included looting; military use of schools by armed forces (Republican Guard and Central Security Forces) and armed groups (FAD and the Al-Ahmar group); shelling; aerial bombardment; arson; and intimidation. In Sana'a, at least 77 schools were attacked, the majority of which was reported to have been carried out by armed groups such as FAD and the Al-Ahmar group. The operations of Al-Houthi in Hajjah decreased school attendance. Forty-five schools were closed as a result of armed conflict and violence. In total, the schooling of some 200,000 children was disrupted in 2011.

169. In total, 23 attacks on hospitals and medical personnel were reported, including nine health-care facilities in Sana'a and the killing of two medical staff in Change Square, while they were reportedly assisting injured demonstrators. In Abyan, the Al-Razi Hospital was bombed, resulting in the maiming of two children. Three hospitals in Abyan were allegedly used by pro-Government tribal militia. In Taiz, four hospitals were reportedly attacked, including Al-Thawrah Hospital, which was used by the Republican Guards in October 2011 as a base for military operations while patients were being treated. It was subsequently attacked on 3 December 2011, allegedly by armed groups. In Sa'da, the only primary health

centre in the As Safra district of Damaj was shelled by Al-Houthi during the first half of November of 2011; damage forced the closure of the centre.

170. In total, 46 incidents of denial of humanitarian access for children were reported. In addition to Al-Jawf Governorate, safe and unhindered humanitarian access in Abyan Governorate was impeded by fighting between Government forces and the Ansar Al-Shari'a/AQAP. A siege by Al-Houthi on the village of Damaj, Sa'da Governorate, from October to December 2011, disrupted the provision of basic services, affecting 12,000 inhabitants. Meanwhile, Al-Houthi placed conditions on humanitarian assistance in their area of control; some humanitarian agencies completely withdrew from Sa'da Governorate as a result. Sixty-seven security incidents affecting humanitarian actors were reported, perpetrated predominantly by tribal armed groups and Al-Houthi.

III. Information on progress made by parties to conflict on dialogue, action plans and the release of children

Afghanistan

171. On 30 January 2011, an action plan for the prevention of underage recruitment by the Afghan National Security Forces, including annexes on sexual violence and killing and maiming in contravention of international humanitarian law, was signed by the Government of Afghanistan and the United Nations, and witnessed by my Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict. A working group composed of Ministry representatives was established to report on the implementation of the Action Plan. A first compliance report was submitted to the United Nations at the beginning of 2012.

172. Positive initiatives were taken by individual ministries in moving towards the prevention of recruitment and use of children, and progress was noted in the course of 2011. For example, the Ministry of the Interior trained more than 150 staff of the Afghan National Police on age-assessment procedures and launched a nationwide awareness-raising campaign for the prevention of underage recruitment. The Ministry of the Interior also initiated investigations into 19 cases of alleged underage recruitment into the Afghan National Security Forces. In the western region, the Afghan National Police established child centres in four provincial recruitment centres, which began systematically documenting and rejecting attempts by children to enlist. Also in compliance with the Action Plan, the Ministries of the Interior and Defence have provided the United Nations with unimpeded access to Afghan National Police and Afghan National Army recruitment and training centres, and the Ministry of Justice to detainees in juvenile rehabilitation centres across the country. Also, in line with the addendum to the Action Plan, both the Ministry of the Interior and the Minister of Defence issued directives to prevent the recruitment and sexual abuse of children in the ranks of the Afghan National Security Forces, specifically stating sanctions for the perpetrators. Finally, the Government of Afghanistan mapped all the programmes and legislation that identified gaps and enhanced implementation of the Action Plan. This effort is welcome as a step towards full compliance with the Action Plan.

173. However, the lack of regular follow-up with the United Nations on the development of a comprehensive interministerial strategy has delayed the full implementation of the Action Plan, despite constructive engagement and initiatives taken by individual ministries.

174. Limited access to certain areas and the fragmentation of armed groups impeded dialogue on the recruitment and use of children. However, dialogue with elders in communities has proven partially successful, in particular for the reopening of schools and the safe access for humanitarian assistance. It should also be noted that the highest religious council, the *Ulema Shura*, issued a fatwa in March 2011, which condemns child recruitment, attacks against education and killing and maiming in contravention of international humanitarian law.

Central African Republic

175. On 19 October 2011, APRD, which had released approximately 1,300 children between 2009 and 2010, signed an action plan with the United Nations to end the recruitment and use of children. On 20 November, another action plan on the recruitment and use of children was signed by CPJP, and witnessed by my Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict. Furthermore, on 20 November, the leader of UFDR, in dialogue with my Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict and my Special Representative in the Central African Republic, reiterated his commitment to release children remaining in UFDR ranks, and undertook to allow United Nations verification of the presence of children. In 2007, UFDR had signed an action plan to end recruitment and use of children with the United Nations.

176. Since the signing of the action plans, two implementation committees were created with CPJP and UFDR, respectively, to oversee the release of children. Attempts to contact APRD leadership and put in place an implementation committee failed following the arrest of the APRD leader. Further, owing to security constraints, the United Nations was not able to verify the absence of children in the ranks of APRD.

177. In April 2011, the Government of the Central African Republic established an Interministerial National Council on Child Protection to support the development and validation of new legislation, policies and strategies on child protection, as well the reinforcement of data collection and profiling of different vulnerabilities to which children are exposed in the country. In 2011, the National Assembly ratified the two Optional Protocols to the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The Government has also drafted a child protection law, which was being finalized in 2011.

178. During the reporting period, an estimated 400 children were separated from self-defence groups in the Ouham-Pende prefecture.

Chad

179. On 14 June 2011, an action plan to end the recruitment and use of children by the Armée nationale tchadienne was signed in N'djamena between the Government of Chad and the United Nations, and witnessed by my Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict. In the action plan, the Government committed to preventing underage recruitment in the Armée nationale tchadienne and associated

forces by, inter alia, allowing United Nations verification of the presence of children in their ranks, and criminalizing the recruitment and use of children in armed conflict under domestic law.

180. In August 2011, a committee of experts composed of the Government, the United Nations and civil society developed a road map to guide the implementation of the action plan, as well as terms of reference for focal points in the Ministries of Social Action and National Defence. The implementation of the action plan remains limited, despite advocacy by the country task forces on monitoring and reporting, representatives of the international community in Chad and my Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict. In February 2012, the Ministries of Social Action and National Defence nominated focal points in their respective Ministries to ensure, in cooperation with the United Nations, the supervision and monitoring of the implementation process.

181. During 2011, a total of 165 children formerly associated with armed forces and groups, all boys, were supported in two transitional care centres in N'djamena. Of the 55 children separated from armed groups in 2011, 50 children between the ages of 14 and 17 years (including 13 girls) were separated from the Chadian armed group Mouvement pour la démocratie et la justice au Tchad, 4 children were separated by the Armée nationale tchadienne from CPJP, an armed group based in the Central African Republic, and one child was separated from the Chadian armed group Union des forces républicaines. The latter boy had been captured in 2010 but was held for over 10 months in the prison of N'djamena before being handed over to child protection actors.

Colombia

182. The Government voluntarily accepted the monitoring and reporting mechanism pursuant to Security Council resolution 1612 (2005) on the condition that any dialogue between my Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict, the United Nations country team or the country task forces on monitoring and reporting and illegal armed groups is possible only with the prior and explicit consent of the Government of Colombia. There was no contact or dialogue between the United Nations system and non-State armed groups during the period covered by the report on the preparation and implementation of action plans to address grave violations against children, delaying progress in the implementation of resolution 1612 (2005).

183. During the reporting period, the Colombian Institute of Family Welfare provided protection to 282 children (76 girls and 206 boys) separated from non-State armed groups. Of these, 207 were separated from FARC-EP, 44 from ELN and 24 from non-State armed groups that emerged after the demobilization of paramilitary organizations, considered as criminal gangs by the Government. In 2011, the Institute also provided protection to three children who had separated from AUC, the Ejército Popular de Liberación and the former Ejército Revolucionario Guevarista. Children separated from other non-State armed groups formed after the demobilization of paramilitary organizations were not systematically referred to the Institute; some were referred to the Attorney General's Office for prosecution. All children, as victims, should be accorded the same benefits and protection, regardless of the group that recruited or used them.

184. The Inter-Sectoral Commission for the prevention of recruitment and use of children by illegal armed groups, composed of 17 governmental entities, continued

activities aimed at the prevention of child recruitment, including supporting the development of regional action plans on prevention and awareness-raising. The Commission also addressed the prevention of conflict-related sexual violence. Coordination mechanisms for the prevention of recruitment at the departmental and municipal level were also established. The impact of the work of the Commission would be reinforced by the strengthening of its coordination and leadership role, ensuring financial sustainability and by increasing its institutional capacity.

185. Other child protection activities conducted by the Government of Colombia include prevention measures adopted under the national development plan, “Prosperity for all”, endorsed by local authorities in six departments to date; the Colombian Institute of Family Welfare protection and reintegration programme; and the Office of the Human Rights Ombudsman early warning system, operationalized with help of the Inter-Institutional Early Warning Committee.

186. As at 31 August, 1,448 cases of child recruitment had been registered, out of a total of 26,026 crimes confessed in the framework of the Justice and Peace Law (Law 975). In December, the first conviction under this legal framework was handed down for the recruitment between 1997 and 2002 of 309 children in Antioquia and Chocó, by former AUC commander “El Aleman”.

Democratic Republic of the Congo

187. Despite entering its seventh year on my list of parties that commit grave violations against children, the Government and FARDC made little progress towards the development and implementation of an action plan to halt the recruitment and use of children. Nevertheless, the Ministries of Defence and of Justice and Human Rights created a joint inter-ministerial committee/working group to discuss an action plan to end recruitment and use of children by FARDC in line with Security Council resolution 1612 (2005).

188. While some progress was made in separating children from FARDC through the security sector reform process, concerns remain over the ineffectiveness of the mechanisms to verify the ages of incoming recruits, further compounded by low levels of birth registration.

189. In 2011, 1,244 children (1,226 boys and 18 girls) were separated from armed forces and groups, in North Kivu (69 per cent), South Kivu (23 per cent) and Orientale Province (7.6 per cent). Forty-two of the children were foreigners (40 Rwandans and 2 Ugandans). Three factors explain the higher number of documented releases in North Kivu: FARDC operations against armed group operations in the province; the comparatively high presence of protection actors; and the difficulty of accessing many locations in South Kivu and Orientale Province. In July 2011, General Kirikicho Mirimba, commander of the Mai-Mai Kirikicho armed group operating in South Kivu, made a written commitment to separate children from the ranks of his armed group.

190. Most of the children separated during 2011 had been recruited and used by FDLR, various Mai-Mai groups and FARDC. The majority escaped and approached bases or partners of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) for assistance; others were identified through MONUSCO screenings during FARDC “regimentation”, biometric registration and training events. Most of the 1,244 children released had

been recruited before 2011 and had been associated with armed forces and armed groups between one and three years, corresponding to the 2008-2011 period of increased hostilities between armed groups and FARDC, as well as clashes between armed groups such as CNDP and the Patriotes résistants congolais (PARECO). It is unclear whether the small number of girls separated in 2011 reflects the extent of girls' association with armed forces or armed groups. Child protection actors commonly identify girls long after they have separated from an armed force or armed group.

Myanmar

191. Beginning in October 2010, the co-chairs of the country task forces on monitoring and reporting participated in seven meetings to negotiate an action plan with the Tatmadaw, including the integrated border guard forces. Discussions on the action plan were also held between my Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict and the Myanmar delegation in New York during September to November 2011 and are ongoing. There has been much progress in the negotiation process, and the country task force reported that it is optimistic that an action plan will be signed in 2012. However, the country task force and my Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict also reported that a number of issues remain outstanding before this can be done. This includes access of the country task force to affected children, in particular to military facilities and prisons, and permission to have additional international staff for monitoring purposes.

192. There was no dialogue with non-State actors during the reporting period, despite the fact that the issue has been pursued throughout the reporting period by the co-chairs of the country task force at the highest level. Access to vulnerable groups in many areas of the country, including children, continued to be challenging for United Nations system agencies and other international humanitarian actors. However, there was some progress by the end of the reporting period, as the Government, in principle, has agreed to provide the country task force with a written assurance that once an action plan is signed with the Tatmadaw, it would facilitate access to non-State armed groups. The terms of that access are yet to be agreed. The country task force has advocated with the Government to include the protection of children in armed conflict as an important aspect of any comprehensive strategy to negotiate the transformation of ceasefire groups to border guard forces or to resolve the conflict with KIA, KNU/KNLA, KNPP/KA and SSA-S.

193. The country task force verified the release of 109 underage recruits, all boys, from the Tatmadaw in 2011. Of these, 61 were released under the ILO forced labour complaints mechanism. In 2011, the Government continued to regularly submit a list of discharged children.

194. In addition to those formally released, the country task force obtained information from the Government of an additional 417 potential new recruits rejected at the recruitment unit screening between January and the end of September 2011 for the reason of being under 18 years of age. However, despite increasing visits to Tatmadaw recruitment units and training schools, it remained difficult for the country task force to determine that these vetting measures were consistently applied. During informal discussions, Tatmadaw soldiers have highlighted the

conflicting pressure they are under, with instructions to find new recruits often taking precedence over the age restrictions on recruitment.

195. Furthermore, arrests of underage recruits as “deserters” continued in 2011. ILO documented a total of 22 children arrested and charged with desertion in 2011, of whom three were released and discharged from service.

196. New military instructions continued to be issued in 2011 on the prevention of underage recruitment. The Government shared documents indicating that, in 2011, 51 soldiers of the Tatmadaw were either warned, had their pay and allowances cut, received a serious reprimand or were demoted for recruitment and use of children. However, the country task force noted that, in most cases, the penalties meted out to those convicted of underage recruitment were not commensurate with the crimes committed.

Nepal

197. A technical mission from the Office of my Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict was undertaken in coordination with the United Nations Monitoring Team in Nepal, from 12 to 16 December 2011. The purpose of the mission was to advocate with the UCPN-M to fully comply with the action plan and to assist the Monitoring Team in this regard. The mission met with the UCPN-M Chair, Pushpa Kamal Dahal “Prachanda”, senior Maoist army leaders, members of the diplomatic community and members of the Government of Nepal. A matrix of UCPN-M compliance with the action plan was developed and shared with the relevant Maoist leaders to help UCPN-M address the remaining challenges towards full compliance.

198. Following the technical mission, a letter was sent by the UCPN-M Chair to the Maoist Army division commanders. The circular acknowledged some of the findings of the Monitoring Team and requested the division commanders to fully comply with the action plan. Subsequently, UCPN-M has taken steps to suspend payments, to cease providing housing and to encourage disqualified minors to register for the reintegration programme provided by the United Nations. In the light of the above, it has been determined that UCPN-M has come into full compliance.

Philippines

199. During her visit to the Philippines in April 2011, my Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict met with the MILF leadership to discuss the implementation of the action plan between MILF and the United Nations, signed in August 2009. It was agreed with MILF that the registration of children across the 21 base commands would be completed within nine months, while more determined criteria on the degrees of association with the armed group would be applied to the identification of children. MILF reaffirmed its position that no child under the age of 18 would be recruited or used, yet acknowledged that children might become involved through the community fabric.

200. The extension of the United Nations-MILF action plan remains pending. While the MILF agreement in principle to continue with implementation of the action plan remains, the expiry of the action plan in July 2011 after two years of implementation has been followed by a significant period of inactivity. This period, from August 2011 to the present, coincided with the MILF withdrawal from the peace talks with

the Government of the Philippines, and an escalation in armed skirmishes between AFP, MILF and the breakaway BIFM. Direct communication between the United Nations and MILF resumed in December 2011, allowing for constructive dialogue on the challenges to the complete registration of children associated with MILF. This dialogue is expected to result in the signing of an addendum on the extension of the action plan within the first quarter of 2012.

201. The National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDFP), the political front of NPA, agreed on 7 April 2011 to meet for talks on the possibility of an action plan with the United Nations to prevent and halt the recruitment and use of children. In January 2012, with the knowledge of the Government of the Philippines, a technical team from the United Nations met with members of the NDFP negotiating panel for an initial discussion. NDFP continues to deny that NPA has any children in its ranks, and claims to have a policy of no underage recruitment. NDFP requested more time for internal consultation and committed to continue a protection dialogue with the United Nations.

202. Owing to the security risks involved, the United Nations has not been able to engage with ASG to date.

203. During her field visit in April 2011, my Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict was able to gain the commitment of the Department of National Defense and AFP to develop a strategic plan for the protection of children affected by armed conflict. This strategy aims to address concerns surrounding the association of children with AFP paramilitary units, including the Citizen Armed Force Geographical Units, by ensuring child protection training for AFP personnel, the establishment of vetting procedures at the local level, and the secondment of international specialized staff to the AFP Human Rights Office.

Somalia

204. While the implementation of the recommendations of the Security Council Working Group on children and armed conflict was delayed owing to a change of Government in 2011, the political commitment of the post-June 2011 Government to end grave violations against children by the Transitional Federal Government was encouraging. A number of important steps have been taken. In July, the Transitional Federal Government issued General Order No. 1, which underlined that the recruitment and use of children by members of Somali National Security Forces was a violation of national law and the Code of Conduct of the armed forces. In November, during a mission of my Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict to Mogadishu, the Transitional Federal Government appointed military and civilian focal points to interact with the country task forces on monitoring and reporting, including on the development of an action plan to address recruitment and use of children by Transitional Federal Government forces. Procedures to ensure that children are screened during recruitment exercises and are separated on an ongoing basis from the Transitional Federal Government forces will be the cornerstone of the action plan that the Transitional Federal Government will develop with United Nations support. Engagement with Al-Shabaab on the protection of children was not possible during the course of the year.

South Sudan

205. The country task forces on monitoring and reporting was formally established in September 2011, following the independence of South Sudan and the establishment of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS). Following consultations, a new action plan was signed by the Government of South Sudan on 13 March 2012 during the visit of my Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict. SPLA has continuously granted access to military barracks or training centres for child protection actors to verify the presence of children. Following the August 2010 establishment of the SPLA Child Protection Unit at SPLA headquarters, such units have been established in seven other SPLA divisions.

206. SPLA offered the rebel militia groups in South Sudan amnesty if they surrendered and accepted integration into SPLA within a certain deadline. Three armed groups (allied to David YauYau, Peter Gatdet and the late Gatluak Gai) accepted that arrangement. The children associated with those three groups were released prior to integration.

207. Four military orders were issued during the reporting period by SPLA for the immediate release of all children and for halting all recruitment and use of children within SPLA. As a result, seven military barracks submitted the names of 392 boys who were released from SPLA.

208. As part of the programme for release and reintegration of children associated with armed forces or groups in South Sudan, a total of 352 children (351 boys and 1 girl) were registered by the South Sudan Disarmament Demobilization and Reintegration Commission in 2011. Of these, 272 (all boys) were released through the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme in 2011. Some 255 children were reunited and received reintegration assistance. In addition, 210 children released in 2010 continued to receive assistance during 2011.

Sri Lanka

209. In relation to the continued listing of the Inya Bharathi faction and in response to efforts by the Government of Sri Lanka to implement the recommendations of the Working Group of the Security Council on children and armed conflict, a United Nations Headquarters compliance mission visited Sri Lanka in January 2012. The mission found that the Government had undertaken serious efforts to locate the five children allegedly still associated with the Inya Bharathi faction. Upon the request of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Nation Child Protection Authority undertook initial investigations, which were subsequently handed over to the Criminal Investigation Division of the Police for further investigation. In addition, on 7 January 2012, additional enquiries were undertaken by the Secretary of Justice in the presence of the Director General for the United Nations of the Ministry of External Affairs and local authorities directly with Inya Bharathi. Mr. Bharathi denied the charges. The mission was able to verify that the police had approached the families and witnesses in the cases and those investigations continue. There has been no obtained evidence suggesting that Mr. Bharathi possesses a chain of command over the aforementioned cases. The United Nations in Sri Lanka will continue to monitor and report on the case.

210. In view of the efforts of the Government to investigate the whereabouts of the remaining children allegedly still associated with the Inya Bharathi faction, and

their compliance with previous action plan commitments and the recommendations of the Working Group on children and armed conflict and the special envoys of my Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict in Sri Lanka, I have delisted the Inya Bharathi faction from the annexes.

Sudan

211. In 2011, progress was made in discussions between the United Nations and the Sudanese Armed Forces on the preparation of a time-bound action plan. Discussions began during the course of the year with SLA/Abdul Wahid to establish an action plan to end the recruitment and use of children. In addition, SLA/Historical Leadership submitted a written commitment to the United Nations to end the recruitment and use of children in Darfur.

212. During the reporting period, 255 former child soldiers, including 94 young adults and 164 below 18 years of age, were registered in North and West Darfur by the North Sudan Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Commission. They had been formerly associated to JEM/Peace Wing, SLA/Mustapha Terab and Liberals and Reform Movement (LRM). Separately, the SLA/Historical Leadership shared a list of 120 children associated with their group in South Darfur with the United Nations for registration with the Commission. In Blue Nile, 353 children, all of them boys between 13 and 17 years old, were released between 30 December 2010 and April 2011 from SPLA and registered by the Commission.

213. During the reporting period, there were encouraging signs of progress in the area of juvenile justice. In my previous report, concerns were raised over the death sentence imposed against four children who allegedly took part in a JEM attack on a convoy of the Government of the Sudan in Sanyi Afundu in 2010 (see A/65/820-S/2011/250, para. 150). On 20 June 2011, the Supreme Court of the Sudan handed down a ruling dismissing the death sentence imposed by the Court in Nyala, South Darfur, and ordered a retrial, citing failure to follow the established legal procedures necessary to guarantee a fair trial.

214. The country task force on monitoring and reporting registered progress by the Government to address rape cases with the opening of investigations by the police that resulted in the arrest of 16 alleged perpetrators, including Government officials. In addition, the Government of the Sudan and the Liberation and Justice Movement signed the Agreement on the adoption of the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur, on 14 July. The Doha Document contains provisions that comprehensively address the causes of the conflict in Darfur and assist in addressing violations against children.

Yemen

215. In May 2011, the Government of Yemen issued a statement expressing its commitment to end the recruitment and use of children. In follow up to the recommendations of the universal periodic review of Yemen by the Human Rights Council, a decree on the same matter was issued by the Government in November. In August 2011, in response to my 2010 report on children and armed conflict and the listing of two Yemeni parties, the Minister of Legal Affairs and the Higher Council for Motherhood and Childhood reaffirmed in writing their commitment to work with the United Nations on ending the use and recruitment of children. Defected General Ali Mohsen of FAD issued a decree in November 2011 for the

release of 100 children. However, verification of this by the United Nations was not possible in 2011. Following the signing of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC)-brokered agreement in November, a military affairs, security and stability committee was formed with a mandate to rehabilitate combatants who do not meet conditions for service with the armed forces. The United Nations began working with the Committee to develop a concrete, time-bound action plan to end the use and recruitment of children in the armed forces of Yemen.

216. No progress was made in 2011 on the release of children from pro-Government militia. In November 2011, in response to the universal periodic review recommendations on Yemen, the Government entrusted the Minister of Legal Affairs to form a committee to conduct independent and transparent investigations into allegations of human rights violations committed during the civil unrest that started in February 2011. However, progress has been slow. It is expected that this recommendation will be implemented with the establishment of a new transitional Government following the signing of the GCC initiative. The Higher Council for Motherhood and Childhood has, since the inception of the civil unrest, raised awareness and advocated against the use and exploitation of children, including through the media.

217. Dialogue with the Al-Houthi armed group on grave violations against children and the development of an action plan to end recruitment and use was not possible during the reporting period.

IV. Follow-up to specific requests in Security Council resolution 1998 (2011)

Communications with sanctions committees

218. Following a briefing by my Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict on the situation of conflict-affected children in Somalia, the Security Council Sanctions Committee pursuant to resolutions 751 (1992) and 1907 (2009) concerning Somalia and Eritrea expanded in July 2011 its sanctions designation criteria to include grave violations against children, including recruitment and use, killing and maiming, sexual violence, abductions, attacks on schools and hospitals and forced displacement in Somalia. My Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict continued to work closely with the Group of Experts established to monitor the implementation of the sanctions regime for the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

219. This brings to four the number of sanctions committees that now have designation criteria on grave violations against children (Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Somalia and the Sudan). Other sanctions regimes involving individuals or entities that commit grave violations against children — in particular those against Al-Qaida and the Taliban — are encouraged to include designation criteria for grave violations against children.

220. The expansion of the sanctions architecture on grave violations against children is a significant step. The threat of sanctions sends a powerful signal to parties that perpetrate grave violations, and has contributed to greater compliance with the Security Council agenda on children and armed conflict. Further efforts are necessary to ensure that sanctions are imposed against perpetrators. To this end, the

Working Group of the Security Council on children and armed conflict and my Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict are encouraged to increase transmission of specific information on alleged perpetrators to existing sanctions committees.

Options for increasing pressure on persistent perpetrators

221. Of grave concern is the unacceptably high, and growing, number of persistent perpetrators of grave violations against children listed in the annexes to my report. In the present report, 32 persistent perpetrators — that is, parties that have been listed for grave violations against children for five years or more — are listed, of which seven are Government security forces. While efforts by some persistent perpetrators to address the commission of grave violations are welcome, further decisive and immediate action is needed to halt these violations, and to ensure that persistent perpetrators are brought to account.

222. A number of actions could be considered. First, further linkages could be developed with the Security Council sanctions regimes. In addition to the expansion of designation criteria on grave violations against children to all relevant sanctions regimes, consideration could be given to ways by which sanctions may be imposed in contexts for which there is no existing sanctions committee, possibly beginning with relevant situations on the agenda of the Council. Secondly, high-level attention by the Council to the question of persistent perpetrators is warranted with a view to develop concrete measures, including specific consultations on persistent perpetrators. Thirdly, progressive and incremental measures could be taken by the Working Group on children and armed conflict, with the support of my Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict, to develop close cooperation with national and international courts to address persistent perpetrators who have not taken concrete steps to halt grave violations.

Information on the criteria and procedures used for listing and delisting parties to conflict in the annexes to the annual report of the Secretary-General on children and armed conflict, in line with Security Council resolution 1998 (2011)

Authority

223. In paragraph 3 of its resolution 1998 (2011), the Security Council requested the Secretary-General to include in the annexes to his annual reports on children and armed conflict those parties to conflict that engage in recurrent attacks on schools and/or hospitals, and/or recurrent attacks or threats of attacks against protected persons in relation to schools and/or hospitals in situations of armed conflict, bearing in mind all other violations and abuses against children, and noted that paragraph 3 would apply to situations in accordance with the conditions set out in paragraph 16 of its resolution 1379 (2001).

224. In paragraph 22 (a) of its resolution 1998 (2011), the Security Council requested the Secretary-General to attach to his report a list of parties to armed conflict on the agenda of the Council or in other situations, in accordance with paragraph 19 (a) of its resolution 1882 (2009) and paragraph 3 of its resolution 1998 (2011).

225. Paragraph 22 (d) of its resolution 1998 (2011), the Security Council also requested the Secretary-General to include in his 2012 report on children and armed

conflict information on the criteria and procedures used for listing and delisting parties to armed conflict in the annexes to his periodic reports, bearing in mind the views expressed by all the members of the Working Group on children and armed conflict during informal briefings.

Specific listing and delisting criteria

226. The concepts of “school” and “hospital” include all educational and medical facilities, determined by the local context, including informal facilities of education and health care. An attack on a school or hospital that has retained its civilian character constitutes a violation of international humanitarian law. In addition, even in cases where attacks on schools and/or hospitals may not result in child casualties, they may affect children through the disruption of educational and/or medical services.

227. Under international humanitarian law, schools and hospitals are protected civilian objects and therefore benefit from the principles of distinction, proportionality and precautions. For the purposes of listing, attacks on schools and/or hospitals include direct attacks against them as well as indiscriminate attacks, resulting in damage to or destruction of these facilities or which have the effect of impeding the ability of a school or hospital to function and/or placing children at risk, and acts of looting of these protected facilities. The country task forces on monitoring and reporting will continue to monitor and report on other concerns, including the military use of schools, although it does not constitute a trigger for listing.

228. Threats of attacks against protected persons in relation to schools and/or hospitals include a declaration of intention or determination to inflict harm, whether physical or moral, related to the provision of education or medical assistance. For the purpose of listing, these threats need to be credible and the consequences plausible.

229. Protected persons in relation to schools and/or hospitals refer to schoolchildren, teachers, medical personnel and any civilians involved in education or medical assistance, unless and for such time that such persons are directly participating in hostilities. For listing purposes, these attacks against protected persons need to have a link with the act of teaching and/or the provision of health care.

230. The references to “recurrent” attacks on schools and/or hospitals and “recurrent” attacks or threats of attacks against protected persons in relation to schools and/or hospitals suggest that such attacks or threats of attacks have been committed several times, which, as such, excludes single, isolated incidents or the random conduct of an individual acting alone.

231. Recruitment and use of children, killing and maiming of children in contravention of applicable international law, and rape and other forms of sexual violence against children, will continue to be the basis for listing and delisting, in conformity with past practice and my 2010 report on children and armed conflict (S/2010/181), and in line with applicable international law.

232. A party listed on the basis of Security Council resolutions 1539 (2004), 1612 (2005), 1882 (2009) and/or 1998 (2011) will be delisted on conditions specified in paragraphs 178-180 of my 2010 report on children and armed conflict (ibid.).

Security Council Working Group visit to Afghanistan

233. The Working Group of the Security Council on children and armed conflict, led by the German Chair, visited Afghanistan from 4 to 9 June 2012, at the invitation of the Government. The purpose of the visit was to follow up on the implementation of the action plan signed between the Government of Afghanistan and the United Nations, in January 2011, with the purpose of ending the recruitment and use of children, as well as sexual violence committed by the Afghan National Security Forces. During the visit, the Working Group was able to assess first-hand the impact of attacks on schools and hospitals on the lives of Afghan children in preparation of Security Council resolution 1998 (2011). In addition, the Working Group followed up on recommendations made in its conclusions of May 2011 (S/AC.51/2011/3). The Working Group met with senior Government officials, religious leaders, the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), United Nations representatives, as well as civil society partners and children affected by the conflict.

234. The Security Council delegation was encouraged by the efforts of the Government of Afghanistan to implement the action plan, including the Government's commitments to secure the full compliance of its forces. The Working Group also received assurances from the ISAF Commander with regard to support for the implementation of the action plan in its capacity-building activities with the Afghan National Security Forces and cooperation with the monitoring and reporting process, as well as commitments with regard to access to child detainees in Parwan detention facility.

First judgment at the International Criminal Court

235. On 14 March 2012, the International Criminal Court (ICC) delivered its verdict in the case *Prosecutor vs. Thomas Lubanga Dyilo*. Mr. Lubanga was convicted for the war crime of conscripting and enlisting children under the age of 15 into the Forces patriotiques pour la libération du Congo, and for making them participate actively in hostilities. This was the Court's first judgment on the issue of child recruitment and sets important international jurisprudence for future cases.

236. In 2008, my Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict filed an amicus curiae before the International Criminal Court arguing for a broad interpretation of the term "participate actively in hostilities" in article 8 (2) (b) (xxvi) of the Rome Statute to ensure justice and protection for all children associated with armed forces or armed groups. The Court in its judgment stated: "as regards the offence of using children under the age of 15 to participate actively in hostilities, the Chamber has concluded that this includes a wide range of activities, from those children on the front line (who participate directly) through the boys and girls who are involved in a myriad of roles that support the combatants [...]. The decisive factor is whether the support provided by the child to the combatants exposed him or her to real danger as a potential target". The Court makes a distinction between "direct participation in hostilities", which determines combatant status under international humanitarian law and "actively participating in hostilities", which is the criteria used for the recruitment of children, holding that the latter is to be interpreted broadly. The Chamber accepted the approach adopted by the Pre-Trial Chamber and suggested by my Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict that "conscripting" and "enlistment" are both forms of "recruitment", in that they refer to the incorporation of

a boy or a girl under the age of 15 into an armed group, whether coercively (conscription) or voluntarily (enlistment). These interpretations allow for greater protection for all children associated with armed forces or armed groups.

V. Recommendations

237. I welcome the signing of action plans by the Afghan National Security Forces in Afghanistan, the Armée nationale tchadienne in Chad, SPLA in South Sudan, and APRD and CPJP in the Central African Republic, as well as the progress made by parties in releasing children, and in addressing impunity for perpetrators through investigations and prosecutions. I strongly urge parties who have been listed in my annual reports for recruitment and use of children, killing and maiming of children, sexual violence against children and/or attacks on schools and hospitals, and who have not concluded action plans to do so without delay, in conjunction with the respective country task forces on monitoring and reporting.

238. With an increase of action plans signed and under negotiation, I urge the donor community to address, as a matter of priority, the funding gaps for the implementation of action plans, including the monitoring of compliance with action plans, and sustainable, long-term reintegration needs of children formerly associated with armed forces or armed groups, including economic reintegration.

239. I encourage the Member States concerned to allow independent access to the United Nations for the purposes of monitoring and reporting on grave violations against children, and facilitate contact between the United Nations and non-State armed groups to ensure broad and effective protection for children, including for purposes of concluding action plans in accordance with Security Council resolutions 1539 (2004), 1612 (2005), 1882 (2009) and 1998 (2011), as well as undertaking specific commitments and measures to address all grave violations against children. Such contact will not prejudice the political or legal status of those non-State armed groups.

240. The Security Council is encouraged to put increasing pressure on those parties who are persistent perpetrators of grave violations against children and are listed in my annual reports, and to continue considering the application of targeted measures. These measures include the establishment of linkages with the Security Council sanction regimes; the development by the Council of other concrete measures, including specific consultations on persistent perpetrators; and the close cooperation with national and international courts to address persistent perpetrators who have not taken concrete steps to halt grave violations.

241. I urge the Security Council to ensure that specific provisions for the protection of children continue to be included in all relevant mandates of United Nations peacekeeping operations, as well as political and peacebuilding missions, including by means of the deployment of child protection advisers in accordance with the Child Protection Policy of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations. The need for child protection capacity in all situations mentioned in the present report, including in situations where there is no peacekeeping or political mission, should also be systematically addressed. Child protection concerns should be reflected in all United Nations planning instruments and processes, including budget provisions, technical assessment, review missions and reports to the Council.

242. Reports of child casualties in the course of military operations, including the use of explosive weapons, aerial bombardments and drones, continue to be of concern, and I remind all parties of their obligation under international human rights law and international humanitarian law, in particular the principles of distinction and proportionality and the duty to protect children and prevent violations, to take all necessary precautions to avoid civilian casualties. I strongly urge them to ensure that they continuously review tactical directives for the better protection of children during the conduct of military operations, and that military and police personnel are sensitized to the protection of children's rights under national and international laws.

243. I welcome the universal ratification campaign of my Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict, UNICEF and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to encourage Member States that have not done so to sign and ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict. As important mechanisms to strengthen national legal and policy frameworks for the protection of children, I call upon States parties to the Convention and its Optional Protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict to implement recommendations by the Committee on the Rights of the Child and to submit timely reports under the Optional Protocol.

VI. Lists in the annexes to the report

244. In the annexes to the present report, three new parties to conflict are listed for recruitment and use of children: SPLM-N, the Yemeni armed forces and the breakaway FAD. Two parties have been delisted after full implementation of the action plan: the UCPN-M and the Inya Bharathi faction. Three parties have been removed from the annexes as the armed groups no longer exist and no violations against children were reported during the reporting period: the Front nationaliste et intégrationniste (FNI), the Chadian armed opposition groups and the Movement of Popular Force for Rights and Democracy. One new party has been listed for killing and maiming of children: the Syrian Government forces. Five parties have been listed for attacks on schools and/or hospitals: the Taliban forces, FDLR, Al-Qaida in Iraq, the Islamic State of Iraq and the Syrian Government forces. It is important to note that for the present report parties can only be listed for incidents of attacks on schools and/or hospitals that took place after July 2011 in accordance with Security Council resolution 1998 (2011). Thirty-two parties to conflict have been in the annexes for at least five years and are therefore considered persistent perpetrators.

245. It should be noted that the annexes do not list countries as such. The purpose of the lists is to identify particular parties to conflict that are responsible for specific grave violations against children. In that regard, the names of countries are referred to only in order to indicate the locations or situations where offending parties are committing the violations.

Annex I

List of parties that recruit or use children, kill or maim children, commit rape and other forms of sexual violence against children, or engage in attacks on schools and/or hospitals in situations of armed conflict on the agenda of the Security Council, bearing in mind other violations and abuses committed against children*

Parties in Afghanistan

1. Afghan National Police, including Afghan Local Police.^a This party has concluded an action plan with the United Nations in line with Security Council resolutions 1539 (2004) and 1612 (2005).
2. Haqqani network^{a,b}
3. Hezb-e-Islami of Gulbuddin Hekmatyar^{a,b}
4. Taliban forces, including the Tora Bora Front, the Jamat Sunat al-Dawa Salafia and the Latif Mansur Network^{a,b,d}

Parties in the Central African region (Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo, South Sudan and Uganda)

Lord's Resistance Army (LRA)^{a,b,c}

Parties in the Central African Republic

1. Armée populaire pour la restauration de la république et la démocratie (APRD).^a This party has concluded an action plan with the United Nations in line with Security Council resolutions 1539 (2004) and 1612 (2005).
2. Convention des patriotes pour la justice et la paix (CPJP).^a This party has concluded an action plan with the United Nations in line with Security Council resolutions 1539 (2004) and 1612 (2005).
3. Front démocratique du peuple centrafricain (FDPC)^a
4. Lord's Resistance Army (LRA)^{a,b,c}
5. Mouvement des libérateurs centrafricain pour la justice (MLCJ)^a
6. Self-defence militias supported by the Government of the Central African Republic^a
7. Union des forces démocratiques pour le rassemblement (UFDR).^a This party has concluded an action plan with the United Nations in line with Security Council resolutions 1539 (2004) and 1612 (2005).

* The parties which are underlined have been in the annexes for at least five years and are therefore considered persistent perpetrators.

^a Parties that recruit and use children.

^b Parties that kill and maim children.

^c Parties that commit rape and other forms of sexual violence against children.

^d Parties that engage in attacks on schools and/or hospitals.

Parties in Chad

1. Armée nationale tchadienne, including newly integrated elements.^a This party has concluded an action plan with the United Nations in line with Security Council resolutions 1539 (2004) and 1612 (2005).
2. Justice and Equality Movement (JEM)^a

Parties in the Democratic Republic of the Congo

1. Forces armées de la République Démocratique du Congo (FARDC), including integrated elements from various armed groups, including the Congrès national pour la défense du peuple (CNDP), formerly led by Laurent Nkunda as well as elements currently led by Bosco Ntaganda^{a,c}
2. Forces démocratiques de libération du Rwanda (FDLR)^{a,c,d}
3. Front de résistance patriotique en Ituri/Front populaire pour la justice au Congo (FRPI/FPJC)^{a,c}
4. Lord's Resistance Army (LRA)^{a,c}
5. Mai-Mai groups in North and South Kivu, including the Patriotes résistants congolais (PARECO)^{a,c}

Parties in Iraq

1. Al-Qaida in Iraq^{a,b,d}
2. Islamic State of Iraq (ISI)^{b,d}

Parties in Myanmar

1. Democratic Karen Buddhist Army (DKBA)^a
2. Kachin Independence Army (KIA)^a
3. Karen National Union/Karen National Liberation Army (KNU/KNLA).^a This party has sought to conclude an action plan with the United Nations in line with Security Council resolutions 1539 (2004) and 1612 (2005), but the United Nations has been prevented from doing so by the Government of Myanmar.
4. Karenni National Progressive Party/Karenni Army (KNPP/KA).^a This party has sought to conclude an action plan with the United Nations in line with Security Council resolutions 1539 (2004) and 1612 (2005), but the United Nations has been prevented from doing so by the Government of Myanmar.
5. Shan State Army South (SSA-S)^a
6. Tatmadaw Kyi, including integrated border guard forces^a
7. United Wa State Army (UWSA)^a

Parties in Somalia

1. Al-Shabaab^{a,b}
2. Transitional Federal Government^{a,b}

Parties in South Sudan

1. Lord's Resistance Army (LRA)^{a,b,c}
2. Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA).^a This party has concluded an action plan with the United Nations in line with Security Council resolutions 1539 (2004) and 1612 (2005).

Parties in the Sudan

1. Justice and Equality Movement (JEM)^a
2. Justice and Equality Movement/Peace Wing (JEM/Peace Wing)^a
3. Popular Defense Forces (PDF)^a
4. Pro-Government militias^a
5. Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF)^a
6. Sudan Liberation Army (SLA)/Abdul Wahid^a
7. Sudan Liberation Army (SLA)/Free Will^a
8. Sudan Liberation Army (SLA)/Historical Leadership^a
9. Sudan Liberation Army (SLA)/Minni Minawi^a
10. Sudan Liberation Army (SLA)/Mother Wing (Abu Gasim)^a
11. Sudan Liberation Army (SLA)/Peace Wing^a
12. Sudan Liberation Army (SLA)/Unity^a
13. Sudan People's Liberation Movement North (SPLM-N)^a
14. Sudan police forces, including the Border Intelligence Forces (BIF) and the Central Reserve Police (CRP)^a

Parties in the Syrian Arab Republic

Syrian Government forces, including the Syrian Armed Forces, the intelligence forces and the Shabbiha militia^{b,d}

Annex II

List of parties that recruit or use children, kill or maim children, commit rape and other forms of sexual violence against children, or engage in attacks on schools and/or hospitals in situations of armed conflict not on the agenda of the Security Council, or in other situations, bearing in mind other violations and abuses committed against children*

Parties in Colombia

1. Ejército de Liberación Nacional (ELN)^a
2. Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia — Ejército del Pueblo (FARC-EP)^a

Parties in the Philippines

1. Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG)^a
2. Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF).^a This party has concluded an action plan with the United Nations in line with Security Council resolutions 1539 (2004) and 1612 (2005).
3. New People's Army (NPA)^a

Parties in Yemen

1. Al-Houthi rebels^a
2. Breakaway First Armoured Division (FAD)^a
3. Pro-Government tribal militia^a
4. Yemeni armed forces^a

* The parties which are underlined have been in the annexes for at least five years and are therefore considered persistent perpetrators.

^a Parties that recruit and use children.