

**United Nations Security Council
Open Debate on Children and Armed Conflict**

**India Statement
by
Ms. Paulomi Tripathi, First Secretary**

2 August 2019

Mr. President,

We congratulate Poland on assumption of the Presidency of the Council for this month and also thank today's briefers.

It has been two decades since the Security Council established the children and armed conflict agenda. The importance of preventing and ending violations against children in armed conflicts for sustaining peace is now well recognized.

As the scale and severity of grave violations perpetrated against children remain on the rise, it is clear that there are significant challenges to effective implementation of this mandate.

We make following four points in this context.

First, grave violations continue to be perpetrated by a range of actors in complex situations of armed conflicts. Terrorist networks and other non-state actors continue to exploit children for their own nefarious ends. In some situations the nexus between the state machineries and the non-state actors pose complex challenges.

The impunity of all such actors must be ended through resolute action by governments from whose territory such entities operate.

The international forces operating in areas of armed conflict must also ensure full compliance with international humanitarian law and relevant human rights law in all their responses.

Second, there are well-established international norms to protect children in armed conflicts. Today's challenges are because of the inability to abide by the established norms.

We must focus on consolidating the emerging positive trends in terms of parties to armed conflicts engaging more with the UN, and releasing and reintegrating children recruited by different parties.

Better integration of child protection provisions in peace processes and greater accountability for any violations against children is crucial.

Constructive engagement with the national government concerned in the formulation and effective implementation of the child protection action plan are integral to durable peace.

Preventing persistent attacks on schools, especially girls' schools, and health care also call for greater attention.

Third, based on our experience of UN peacekeeping over the past six decades, we understand the importance of peace operations having sufficient resources, commensurate with their mandate, and requisite number of child protection advisors on the field, for effective implementation of child protection programmes.

My fourth point concerns the importance of credible, impartial and transparent implementation of the mandate given to the UN system.

In spite of the clear mandate by the Council, we are disappointed that the Report of the Secretary-General includes situations which are not armed conflicts or of threat to maintenance of international peace and security.

Such attempt to expand mandate in a selective manner to certain situations only politicizes and instrumentalizes the agenda, obfuscating and diverting attention from the real threats to international peace and security.

Mr. President,

We are cognizant of the urgency to act now to protect today's child victims in order to prevent tomorrow's armed conflicts. India remains a committed partner of the UN in this endeavour.

I thank you Mr. President.