

*"Child Protection is a collective responsibility and an inherent priority within our broader obligation to promote the protection of civilians, and to put protection at the center of our peace and security efforts."*

Jean-Pierre Lacroix  
UN Under-Secretary General for Peace Operations

## Grave Violations against Children in Peacekeeping Settings

Armed conflicts disproportionately affect children who are subject to grave violations, namely killing and maiming, recruitment or use, rape and other grave sexual violence, abduction, attacks on schools and hospitals and denial of humanitarian access. The UN has placed Child Protection at the center of its peacekeeping efforts.

## Instances of grave violations against children reported in 2020



## Child Protection Advisers (CPAs) Drive Child Protection Activities on Multiple Fronts

*"CPAs are our eyes and ears on the ground."*

USG Virginia Gamba  
Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict (CAAC)

- **Advising the mission leadership and mainstreaming** Child Protection considerations into all mission activities.
- **Monitoring and Reporting** on the six grave violations against children under the UNSC-mandated Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism (MRM). CPAs also fulfill key reporting obligations to the UNSC, contributing to the Secretary General's annual and country reports on CAAC.
- **Negotiating** with state and non-state parties to conflict, leading **high-level advocacy** for Child Protection.
- **Capacity building** of national counterparts to help them fulfill their responsibilities in the field of Child Protection.
- **Awareness raising**, and support and promotion of national legal reform to protect children.

## 2020 Highlights

UNMISS Child Protection Officers participated in over 160 patrols to verify instances of child rights violations.

838 children have been voluntarily released as a result of the signature of 37 unilateral declarations facilitated by the MONUSCO Child Protection Section.

22 Malian Defense and Security Force officers and 152 police personnel participated in training of trainers on Child Protection.

The Central African Republic adopted the Child Protection Code, criminalizing the recruitment and use of children.

## How do we make a difference?

The deployment of CPAs in UN peacekeeping missions addresses Child Protection concerns at the political and operational levels. Some of their key achievements include:

- The **integration of Child Protection's concerns in peace processes** through the missions' political advocacy.
  - E.g. in Central African Republic and South Sudan, among others.
- The **release of thousands of children from armed forces and groups**, in partnership with UNICEF and national Child Protection actors.
  - In 2020, **2,101** children were released and reintegrated in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and **44** in South Sudan; **497** children were separated from armed forces and armed groups in the Central African Republic (Source: 2020 SG Annual Report on CAAC).
- The **delivery of CP training to thousands of military and civilian peacekeepers**.
  - UNHQ Child Protection Team has been delivering an annual specialised course on Child Protection for the UN Military since 2015

### Decrease in the number of grave violations

**- 16.5 %**

(Between 2018 and 2019 in the five countries where UN peacekeeping missions with a CP mandate were deployed. In peacekeeping settings, Country Task Forces on Monitoring and Reporting are co-chaired by the SRSG/Head of Mission and the UNICEF Country Representative.)

## Child Protection Capacities in Peacekeeping

UNSC 1379 (2001): Requests inclusion of Child Protection mandates and staff in UN peacekeeping operations.

UNSC 2143 (2014): Recognizes the crucial role of Child Protection Advisers in UN peacekeeping operations.

**85**

**Approved Child Protection posts for 2020-2021**

**Child Protection personnel as % of total peacekeeping personnel (Civilian + Uniformed)**  
(MINUSCA, MONUSCO, MINUSMA, UNMISS)

**0.13%**

**Child Protection Budget vs Overall Mission Budget**  
(MINUSCA, MONUSCO, MINUSMA, UNMISS)

9,923,429 USD vs 4,695,550,900 USD

**0.21%**