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PEACE AND SECURITY COUNCIL

1314TH MEETING

21 NOVEMBER 2025

ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA

PSC/PR/COMM.1314 (2025)

COMMUNIQUÉ



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Adopted by the Peace and Security Council (PSC) of the African Union (AU) at its 1314th meeting held on 21 November 2025, which was dedicated to an Open Session on Children Affected by Armed Conflicts.

The Peace and Security Council,

Recalling Decision [Assembly/AU/Dec.753(XXXIII)] adopted by the 33rd Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the Union held in February 2020 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, which, among others, requested the AU Commission to integrate child protection into the Silencing the Guns campaign and also in the AU Theme for the year 2020, as well as to develop a comprehensive policy on child protection;

Also recalling its previous pronouncements and decisions on children affected by armed conflicts, in particular, Communiqué [PSC/PR/COMM.1290.1 (2025) adopted at its 1290th meeting held on 22 July 2025;

Mindful of the increasingly asymmetrical nature of armed conflicts on the Continent, including the rise in violent extremism and terrorist attacks, as well as emerging unconventional threats to peace and security, exacerbating the vulnerability of children to the six grave violations, namely: killing and maiming; recruitment and use by armed forces and armed groups; sexual violence; attacks against schools or hospitals; abduction; and denial of humanitarian access;

Taking note of the Opening Remarks by H.E. Ambassador Churchill Ewumbue-Monono, Permanent Representative of the Republic Cameroon to the African Union and Chairperson of the Peace and Security Council for November 2025; the Introductory Statement by H.E. Ambassador Bankole Adeoye, Commissioner for Political Affairs, Peace and Security and Co-chair of the Africa Platform on Children Affected by Armed Conflicts (AP-CAAC), the statement by H.E. Ambassador Ntsiuoa Sekete, Permanent Representative of the Kingdom of Lesotho to the AU and Vice Chair of the AP-CAAC, and the statement by Honourable Professor Robert Nanim Doya, Special Rapporteur on Children Affected by Armed Conflicts and member of the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACERWC);

Also taking note of the statements by the representatives of the United Nations International Children's Education Fund (UNICEF); Save the Children International; AU Member States and by Regional Economic Communities and Regional Mechanisms for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolutions (RECs/RMs); and

Acting under Article 7 of its Protocol, the Peace and Security Council:

1. **Expresses deep concern** over the prevalence of armed conflicts across the Continent, which continue to disproportionately affect children, including by exacerbating their vulnerability to grave violations;
2. **Recognises** the negative impact of the six grave violations on the physical, and psychosocial well-being of children and their communities, as well as on the long-term peace and development prospects of the affected communities;
3. **Condemns in strongest terms** all violations against children, and attacks against schools and hospitals, by whosoever, particularly, the recent abduction of schoolgirls in Kebbi State of Nigeria;

expresses solidarity with the abducted girls and their families, as well as full support to the efforts being deployed by the Government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria to urgently rescue these girls and **strongly warns** the abductors that they will be held to account for their heinous activities;

4. **Underlines the need** to fight impunity and in this regard, **calls for** continued strengthening and effective application of all accountability measures and frameworks to promote justice for all children in contexts of armed conflicts;
5. **Reiterates the urgent need** to comprehensively address the underlying structural root causes of conflicts in the Continent; **calls for** well-coordinated and child-centred approaches that prioritize prevention, protection, **and also calls** for mainstreaming child protection in disarmament demobilization reintegration (DDR) efforts, as well as for sustained psycho-social support to victims of abuses;
6. **Emphasises the importance** of urgent operationalisation and implementation of the Operational Guidance Note (OGN) on Child-Sensitive Early Warning and of integrating child protection indicators within the Continental, regional, and national early warning and early response systems;
7. **Encourages** Member States that have not yet done, so, to urgently sign, ratify and domesticate the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child and to adopt integrated approaches to effectively mainstream and strengthen child protection within peace and security structures, national development plans, and humanitarian frameworks, in pursuit of the AU Agenda 2040 for Children: Fostering an Africa Fit for Children;
8. **Reaffirms** the centrality of AU normative frameworks, including the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC) with its near-universal ratification, the Model Law on Children Affected by Armed Conflict, and the Safe Schools Declaration, **while underscoring the pressing need** to expedite the domestication, implementation and enforcement of these instruments;
9. **Emphasizes** the pivotal role of Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) as frontline actors who provide monitoring, documentation, early warning, community-based reintegration, and child-sensitive support services in conflict-affected areas and, in this regard, **calls upon** the AU Commission, AP-CAAC, Member States and RECs/RMs to strengthen engagement with, and provide consistent support to, CSOs, who serve as essential eyes and ears on the ground and help bridge gaps between policy commitments and practical protection outcomes;
10. **Underlines the necessity** of coordinated and comprehensive services for children affected by conflict, including education, healthcare, case management, legal aid, social work, psychosocial support, and access to safe spaces, and **stresses the need** for ensuring that all reintegration programmes are child-sensitive and context-appropriate;
11. **Requests** the AU Commission to champion and expand Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) for children affected by armed conflict, and the development of a practical AU Guidance Note on Community-Based MHPSS for Children in Conflict Settings to support Member States, peace support operations and humanitarian actors in delivering coordinated and context-appropriate psychosocial assistance to children;

12. **Commends** the work of the Africa Platform on Children Affected by Armed Conflicts (AP-CAAC) as a multi-stakeholder advisory mechanism advancing the promotion and protection of children's rights on the continent; and **encourages** Member States and development partners to enhance their support to ensure the Platform's sustainability and more impact;
13. **Also commends** the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of Children (ACERWC) for the continued provision of technical assistance to Member States in all matters relating to child protection; as well as the UNICEF and Save the Children for their dedication and commitment to advance and promote child protection globally, particularly, in contexts of armed conflicts;
14. **Also encourages** Member States and RECs/RMs to effectively implement existing frameworks and fully mainstream AU child protection policies as part of their peace and security, humanitarian and recovery efforts;
15. **Underscores the importance** of scaling up and diversifying financial resource mobilization efforts for the AU Child Protection agenda, including, by engaging the private sector;
16. **Stresses the importance** of enhancing partnerships among governments, civil society organisations, international organisations, and affected communities to ensure that the needs of children, especially in education, health, psychosocial support, and livelihood opportunities, are effectively addressed in post-conflict reconstruction and development efforts; and **also encourages** international actors to prioritize adequate, predictable and sustainable financing for child-focused and gender-sensitive programmes that effectively address the specific needs of children and meets the best interests of affected children;
17. **Requests** the AU Commission to continue providing technical assistance to affected Member States and communities to advance child protection measures, including ensuring the alignment of national child protection programmes with continental and international child protection standards and ensuring sustainable reintegration support for children associated with armed forces and armed groups (CAAFAAG);
18. **Commends** the AU Youth Wise and FemWise for their active involvement in advancing and mainstreaming child protection within mediation processes; and **urges** mediation support experts to promote inclusive approaches that recognize children as essential stakeholders in fostering sustainable peace across the continent and **calls** for the finalization, adoption, and implementation of the Proposed AU Guidelines on Child Protection and Child Participation in Mediation and Peace Processes to ensure that mediation efforts systematically take into account the rights, needs, and voices of children;
19. **Looks forward** to the outcomes of the Safe Schools Declaration Conference to be organized in Nairobi, Kenya, from 25 to 26 November 2025;
20. **Also looks forward** to the successful organization of the next episode of the Banjul Process on Children Affected by Armed Conflicts in early 2026;
21. **Considers organizing** a side event on Children Affected by Armed Conflicts margins of the next Ordinary Session of the AU Assembly of Heads of State and Government to be held in early 2026;

22. **Requests** the Chairperson of the Commission to commission a comprehensive study on the nexus between armed conflicts and violations against children, including child marriages;
23. **Reiterates** the request to the Chairperson of the Commission to expedite the appointment of the AU Special Envoy for Children in Situations of Armed Conflict, to provide strategic leadership, advocacy, and coordination of child protection efforts across the continent; and
24. **Decides** to remain actively seized of the matter.