



PERMANENT MISSION OF GREECE
TO THE UNITED NATIONS



Security Council Open Debate on Children and Armed Conflict Wednesday 24 June 2026

Greece's Statement delivered
by H.E. Ms. Aglaia Balta
Permanent Representative of Greece to the United Nations

Thank you, Madam President

I thank Colombia for convening this open debate on a matter of critical importance to the Security Council. I thank also Special Representative of the Secretary-General Vanessa Frazier, and UNICEF Executive Director, Catherine Russell, as well as our civil society briefer, Mr. André Prosperity Raymond, Country Director of Plan International Haiti.

Greece reiterates its strong support for the Children and Armed Conflict mandate as a core element of the United Nations work for peace and security, and as an effective and operational tool for the protection of children. Over the past 30 years, the CAAC mandate has identified and addressed grave violations against children, contributing substantially to their protection. We commend the continued and dedicated efforts of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict and of UNICEF.

Colleagues,

We are appalled at the extreme levels of violations attested in this year's Secretary-General annual report. Its findings are deeply alarming and reflect an ongoing erosion of respect for international law, including international humanitarian law and international human rights law. We take note that in 2025, violations against children in armed conflict reached unprecedented levels. The United Nations verified that violations affected 24,174 children in 2025, the highest number recorded since the establishment of the mandate.

Against this background, allow me to emphasize the following points:

First, Greece strongly condemns all grave violations against children in armed conflict. We reiterate our call to all parties to conflict to comply with their obligations under international humanitarian law and human rights law, and to take all feasible measures to ensure that children receive the special protection to which they are entitled to under the Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocols.

Second, we urge all parties to conflict to take concrete measures to protect education from attacks, including from risks posed by new technologies and by the use of explosive

weapons in populated areas, to refrain from the military use of schools and to support the continuous access to safe education, including for girls, displaced children and children with disabilities.

Third, we underline the need to ensure accountability for perpetrators of grave violations. Ending impunity is essential to prevent future violations. States must support independent, thorough, transparent and effective investigations and accountability mechanisms, including at the regional and international level.

Fourth, we underline the contribution of the Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism in providing with verified and actionable information on the six grave violations, and stress the need to strengthen its capacities. We support the enhancement of child protection capacity in UN peace operations and political missions, including in the context of mission drawdown or transition.

Furthermore, we recognize that digital technologies have fundamentally altered the dynamics of grave violations against children. We welcome and amplify the call of the Secretary-General to technology and social media companies to take concrete measures to prevent the use of their platforms for the recruitment and exploitation of children, and to cooperate with accountability and child protection mechanisms.

Colleagues,

We must recognize and build upon the progress made over 30 years since the establishment of the CAAC mandate. Its contribution to the release of more than 220,000 children from armed forces and armed groups and to the conclusion of numerous action plans and commitments stands as a powerful reminder that change is possible.

In the context of the Security Council, we must preserve the efficacy and full implementation of the CAAC mandate. In this regard, it is unfortunate that for the second consecutive year an impasse over the appointment of Chairs of the Security Council subsidiary organs has prevented the Working Group from performing its duties. We hope the issue is resolved soon. Greece stands ready to assume its role as Chair again and work vigorously until the end of our tenure in the Security Council and beyond.

As I conclude, allow me to recall the words of a child conveyed through “Prove it Matters” campaign: “What is peace? In my own experience – peace is something I have never experienced”. We must ensure that no child grows up having to ask what peace is, but instead grows up living it, in safety and dignity.

I thank you.