



ArcMUN

Aristotelio College Model United Nations

The United Nations Human Rights Council committee (UNHRC)

Protection of children in armed conflict

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INTRODUCTION

We, the chairs of the Human Rights Council of the United Nations, would like to welcome you to the 15th ArC MUN. This model is a great opportunity to develop your social skills and discover hidden aspects of your personality. We wish to have a fruitful debate and we will try our best to make your experience unforgettable. If you have any questions or need some further help, feel free to contact us via email at unhrc.arcmun@gmail.com

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS AND INFORMATION

In order for you to be fully prepared for the session, you should follow the next steps:

1. Get accustomed to the procedure of the session. Please feel free to read the procedure in the official website of ArcMUN 2017. (<http://aristoteliocollegemun.weebly.com/rules-of-procedure.html>) We will explain the procedure once more when in person, so please do not worry that much for the rules from now.
2. Read your Study Guide and indulge yourselves in individual research. Read the links provided in this guide and also do research in other websites and mass media. However, keep in mind that you should conduct your research based on official data provided by formal websites (i.e. the UN website, the European Commission etc.)
3. Know the policy of the country you are representing. You should always bear in mind that during the conference you will be representing a **specific country** and its policies and not your personal point of view on the issue debated.
4. You should know not only your country's view on the topic, but also some general information regarding alliances, geopolitical state, natural resources etc.
5. Write and send to the committee email before **February 1st**, a position paper, in which you will explain **your country's point of view, measures and possible suggestions on our topic; "Protection of children in armed conflict"**.
6. Visit the session's website to see the official example of a position paper and how it should be structured.

DESCRIPTION OF THE ISSUE

The Human Rights Council is part of the United Nations since 2006. It consists of 47 States responsible for promoting and protecting all human rights globally. It makes sure that all people have the same rights and are aware of them. It checks what governments do to protect their people and whether or not they implement what has been agreed on at the United Nations. But most importantly, it helps people whose rights were taken away.

Unfortunately, history proves that children have always been part of armed conflict. They have no other choice than to encounter the same horrors as adults, either as casualties or even as child soldiers. Children are particularly vulnerable in diseases, food and water

shortages, since their growing bodies need steady supplies of essential nutrients. Moreover children is easily traumatized for the rest of their lives from being exposed to violence and brutal death.

Recent reports have revealed the augmentation of dangers for children. Since 2006 it is estimated that child victims have included:

- 2 million killed;
- 4-5 million disabled;
- 12 million left homeless;
- more than 1 million orphaned or separated from their parents;
- 10 million psychologically traumatized.

The involvement of children in acts of war is usually a consequence of their recruitment in military organizations. Specifically, reported cases have shown that children are recruited through abduction, threats to join, temptation with money or drugs and propagation to strive for a cause. In spite of the existing legislation at national and international level, children are still victimized by armed conflicts in both developed and developing countries. However some countries claim to provide rehabilitation programs for discharged child soldiers, but still these programs do not suffice against the risk of recruitment. So it is in high need to make international and national efforts to protect children in armed conflicts.

BASIC DEFINITIONS

Child

The Convention on the Rights of the Child defines a 'child' as a person below the age of 18, unless the laws of a particular country set the legal age for adulthood younger.

Child Soldiers

A child soldier is defined as any person less than the legal age for adulthood with who is a member of armed government forces or of a regular or irregular armed group or associated with these forces, whether or not there is an armed conflict.

Armed Conflict

An armed conflict is a contested incompatibility which concerns government and/or territory where the use of armed force between two parties, of which at least one is the government of a state, results in at least 25 battle-related deaths.

Non-governmental Organization (NGO)

A non-governmental organization (NGO) is any non-profit, voluntary citizens' group which is organized on a local, national or international level. They perform a variety of

service and humanitarian functions, bring citizen concerns to Governments, advocate and monitor policies and encourage political participation through provision of information.

INTERNATIONAL FRAMEWORK

Geneva Conventions of 1949 (hereafter GCIII and GCIV) and their Additional Protocols of 1977 (API and APII) lay down a series of rules according them special protection. Meanwhile, the **Convention on the rights of the child** and its recent **Optional Protocol on the involvement of children in armed conflict** make further suggestions towards the better protection of the child in such situation, with the latter specifically aiming to protect children from recruitment and use in hostilities. The Protocol also reminds States that children under 18 are entitled to special protection and so any voluntary recruitment under the age of 18 must include sufficient safeguards. States parties who have ratified the protocol must also take legal measures to prohibit independent armed groups from recruiting and using children under the age of 18 in conflicts.

POINTS TO CONSIDER DURING THE DEBATE

- How can non-governmental organization (NGO) help the situation.
- How can governments prevent the recruitment of children in military organizations.
- Enhancement of rehabilitation programs; what is needed to be done.
- Altering and improving existing legislation.

SUGGESTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

- <http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/issues/children/>
- <http://www.humanium.org/en/children-in-war/>
- <https://www.icrc.org/en/download/file/1033/children-legal-protection-factsheet.pdf>
- <http://www.ohchr.org/en/hrbodies/hrc/pages/hrcindex.aspx>
- <https://childrenandarmedconflict.un.org/mandate/opac/>

Optional protocol to the CRC:

- <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/OPACCRC.aspx>

Convention on the Rights of the child:

- <http://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/crc.aspx>