

**Statement by Ambassador Asoke Kumar Mukerji, Permanent Representative,
at the Open Debate on Children and Armed Conflict at the United Nations
Security Council on June 18, 2015**

Mr. President,

Thank you for giving me the floor. We thank our briefers for this debate and congratulate Malaysia on its assumption of Presidency of the Council for the month of June 2015.

Mr. President,

As is evident from the Secretary General's report on the topic before us, despite the progress in UN's peacekeeping initiatives and "The Children, Not Soldiers" campaign, tens of millions of children continue to be the worst affected in situations of armed conflict.

Extreme violence against susceptible children, including shocking cases of abductions in some parts of the world in 2014, calls for greater political will and constructive dialogue among all relevant stakeholders to address the worsening situation.

Mr. President,

We believe that constructive and close engagement with the concerned national Government is essential and integral to establish durable peace, security and development.

The impunity of non-state armed groups and newly emerging extremist organizations which violate the rights of the child can only be overcome by resolute action by governments on whose territory such entities operate. The international community must extend all possible assistance to such governments to strengthen their national capacities to deal effectively with this threat.

We are of the view that sustained capacity building of national institutions of governance should be a key focus area. It is also our firm belief that credible and verifiable data for any monitoring and reporting mechanisms can most effectively be collated by such national institutions.

Based on our extensive experience of six decades of UN peacekeeping, we feel that allocating more resources to peace operations, and deployment of the requisite number of child protection advisors, is a prerequisite for the success of programmes

aimed at protection, reintegration and rehabilitation of child victims and survivors. This should be facilitated in consultation with both the national governments and the concerned peace operation.

Mr. President,

We note that the Concept Note and the Report of the UN Secretary General refer to “abductions” as trigger violations. India condemns the use of “abduction”, which is a tactic of terror.

However, while “abductions” are to be condemned, we must not lose sight of the fact that the Secretary General’s Report must be within the provisions of Article 99 of the UN Charter. We express concern at any attempts to exert undue political pressure on the process of compiling this Report. With respect to the list, the overriding objective should be to have listing and de-listing carried out in a transparent and judicious manner under the close supervision of Member States.

Mr. President,

India on its part, has engaged constructively in the ongoing efforts to make the United Nations work more relevant and effective in addressing issue of children in armed conflict. We are party to all major relevant international instruments, which demonstrates our commitment in this regard.

Mr. President,

We are disappointed that despite the clearly spelt out mandate on “Children and Armed Conflict” in OP16 of UNSC Resolution 1379 (2001), the report of the Secretary General continues to include references to “Other Situations of Concerns”. These references as such cannot be considered a “threat to the maintenance of international peace and security”, as laid down in Article 99 of the Charter. Any consideration of these references by the Council will only distract attention from issues which are actually within the mandate of the Council.

Mr. President,

In conclusion, we would like to see prevention of destructive and grave violations against susceptible children as an explicit priority for all member states of the United Nations, who are poised to adopt an ambitious and far-reaching post-2015 Development Agenda in September this year.

Thank You.
