

**UN Security Council Open Debate on Children and Armed Conflict:
'Protecting children today prevents conflicts tomorrow'
(8305th meeting)**

Analysis of member state interventions in acknowledging gender specific realities of sexual violence against children in situations of armed conflict

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London – All Survivors Project (ASP) analyses interventions made by UN member states and international organisations and their efforts to highlight the gender specific realities of sexual violence against children at the UN Security Council Open Debate on Children and Armed Conflict which was held on 9th July 2018.

The 2018 Annual Report on Children and Armed Conflict ([S/2018/465](#)), noted over 900 cases of rape and other forms of sexual violence against girls and boys across all country situations, which represents a discernible increase in the number of cases of sexual violence against children verified last year. The Annual Report specifically reported incidence of sexual violence against boys in seven countries which include Afghanistan, Central African Republic, DRC, Iraq, Somalia, Syria and Nigeria which also marked an increase in the specific mention of sexual violence against boys in five countries in the 2017 Annual Report.

Despite this disturbing trend, less than one third of UN member states and international organisations who intervened at the Open Debate acknowledged conflict-related sexual violence against children. States including Bangladesh, Ireland and Jordan pointed to the specific vulnerabilities of girls to sexual violence in situations of conflict; whereas the European Union (EU), the Principality of Liechtenstein, the United States and San Marino referred to the sexual victimisation of boys [See Figure 2].

In his remarks to the Security Council, the Permanent Representative of the Permanent Mission of Liechtenstein noted, "Sexual violence against children is one of the most chronically underreported violations during situations of armed conflict.

UN monitoring and reporting mechanisms often fail to capture many of the incidences, in particular against men and boys as illustrated in the research conducted by All Survivors Project in situations such as Syria and the Central African Republic,” and added, “We encourage more effective monitoring, documenting, investigating and reporting of violations against children including rape and other forms of sexual violence by all relevant UN entities.”

Particularly noteworthy were also the interventions made by the Permanent Representatives of France and Germany who called for the implementation of gender-specific approaches for boys and girls in reintegration programs.

A literature review of UN and national documentation conducted by ASP shows that sexual violence has been used against men and boys in [26 countries](#) [See Figure 1]. “ASP believes its research reveals only the tip of the iceberg and that urgent and intensified action is required to identify the real extent of the problem of conflict related sexual violence against boys and to respond appropriately,” said Charu Lata Hogg, Executive Director of All Survivors Project. “ASP calls on practitioners and policy makers to make a working assumption that men and boys may be at risk of sexual violence, and design data-gathering and screening processes to identify male and female survivors,” she added.

Sexual violence causes serious physical, psychological, mental and economic harm to its victims, and if left unaddressed can continue to cause suffering to survivors, destroy their families, and damage the fabric of communities. Strong protection measures combined with effective programs of medical and psychosocial support are necessary to assist survivors to rebuild their lives.

[All Survivors Project](#) seeks to ensure that all survivors of sexual violence in situations of conflict and displacement receive equitable access to services, remedies, and reparations.

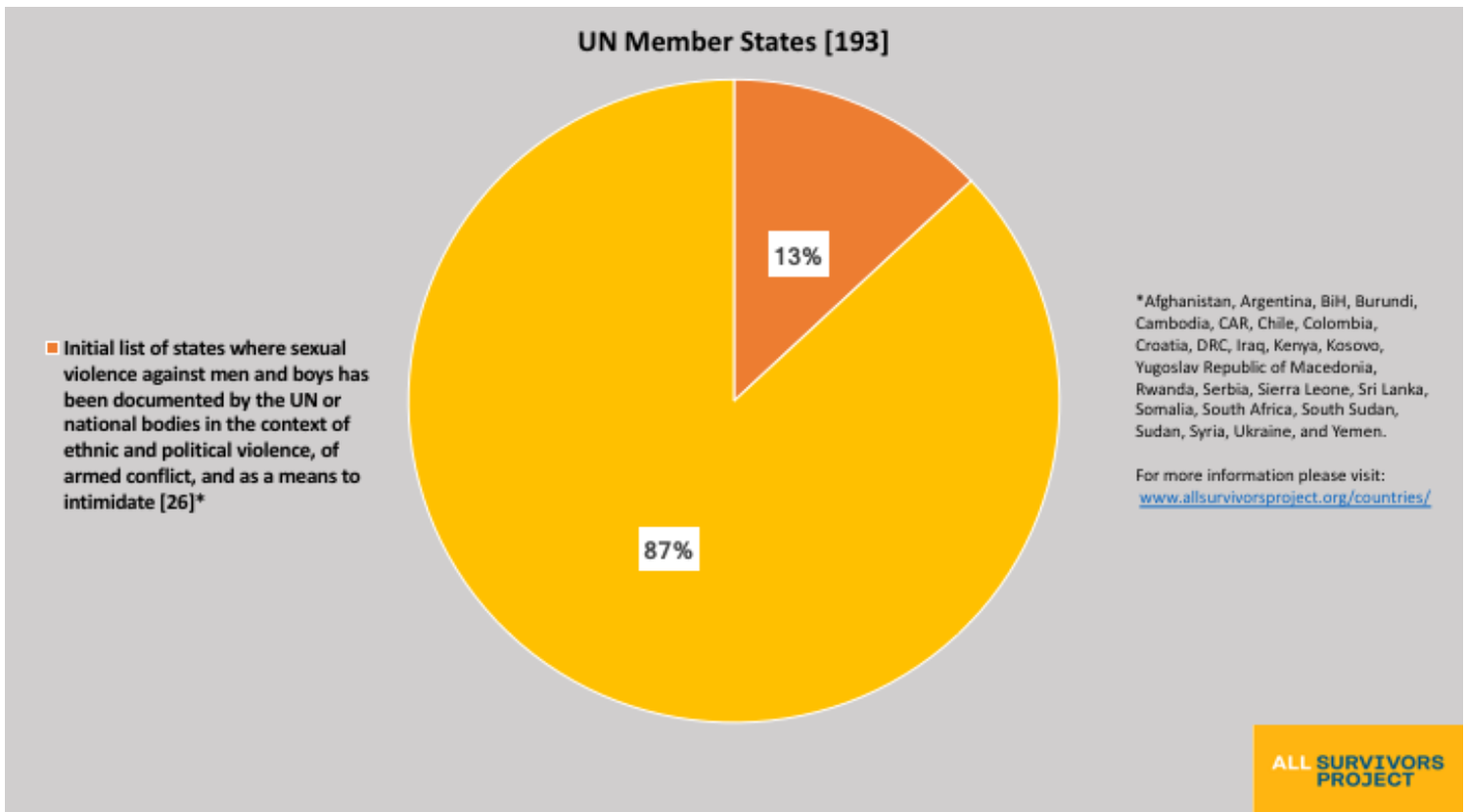


Figure 1. States where sexual violence against men and boys has been documented by the UN or national bodies.

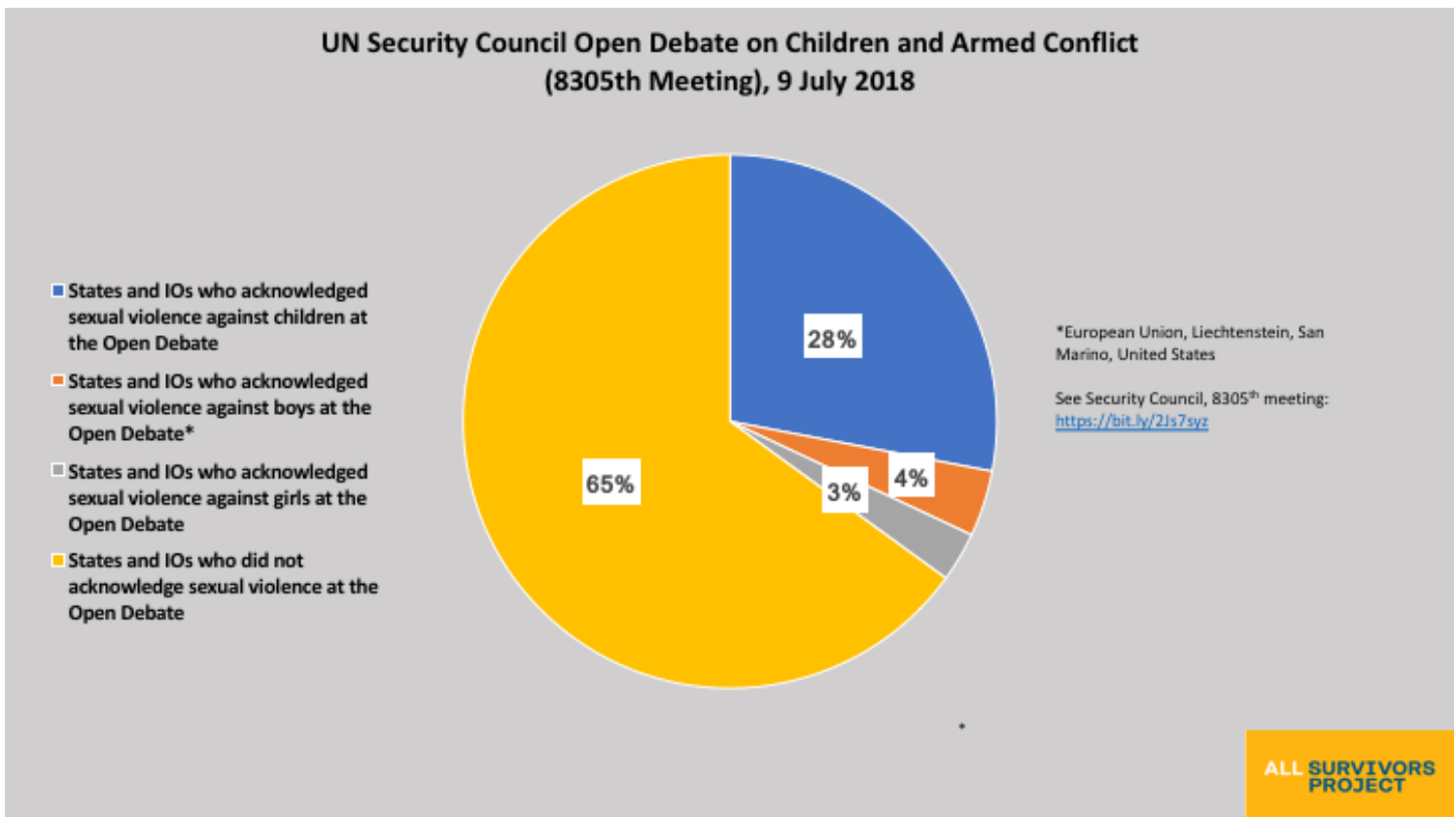


Figure 2. Analysis of interventions acknowledging sexual violence against children/boys/girls in UNSC 8305TH Meeting