

Children and Armed Conflict
12 July 2011, United Nations Security Council Chamber

Statement by Mr. Pavlichenko, Representative of Ukraine

While Ukraine aligns itself with the statement delivered by the observer of the European Union, I would like to commend Germany for its strong commitment to advancing the children and armed conflict agenda, as well as the intensive work done by the Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict under the leadership of Ambassador Wittig. I would also like to recognize the personal commitment to this issue on the part of Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and his Special Representative Radhika Coomaraswamy.

We welcome the Secretary-General's most recent report on children and armed conflict (S/2011/250), as it contains many valuable recommendations, including those on measures that could be undertaken against persistent violators. Important progress has been made over the past year. We welcome the expansion of the triggers for listing to include the killing and maiming of children, rape and other sexual violence. We also welcome the exchange of information among the sanctions committees. We would like to encourage more such interaction between the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, the sanctions committees, their expert groups and the Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict.

Noting with concern the increased number of attacks on educational facilities, we encourage the Security Council to address this problem in its future deliberations. We consider it important to thoroughly investigate, prosecute and punish all those who commit grave violations against children. Ukraine also encourages the Security Council to include in sanctions committee mandates, where appropriate, provisions pertaining to violations of applicable international law committed against children and of Security Council resolutions on children and armed conflict.

We in Ukraine have made child welfare a strategic national priority. Ukraine has undertaken appropriate measures to protect the rights and dignity of every child. We remain fully committed to the proper implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. Earlier this year, the Committee on the Rights of the Child considered Ukraine's initial report under article 8 of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the involvement of children in armed conflict. The Committee welcomed, among other things, Ukraine's endorsement of the Paris Commitments to protect children from unlawful recruitment or use by armed forces or armed groups, and of the Paris Principles and Guidelines on Children Associated with Armed Forces or Armed Groups. The Committee also welcomed Ukraine's mandatory training regarding children in armed conflict, including on the Convention and the Optional Protocol, which is organized for Ukrainian military personnel who participate in international peacekeeping operations.

We firmly support the Special Representative's campaign for universal ratification of the Optional Protocols to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and stress the great importance of such legally binding international instruments for protecting all children worldwide, with no exceptions.

In conclusion, my delegation would like to reaffirm Ukraine's commitment — particularly as an active participant in peacekeeping operations and a member of the Peacebuilding Commission and the Executive Board of UN-Women — to applying all its efforts to help assure children of healthy, appropriate conditions in every situation of their lives. We believe that resolution 1998 (2011), adopted today, can contribute to children's well-being. As one of the resolution's sponsors, Ukraine looks forward to its full and successful implementation.