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Security Council Addresses Digital Risks to Children in Armed Conflict through Resolution 2832 (2026)

The Security Council today called for stronger measures to protect children affected by armed conflict from violations and abuses facilitated by digital technologies, while promoting their safe use for education and child protection.

Unanimously adopting resolution 2832 (2026) (to be issued as document [S/RES/2832 \(2026\)](#)), the Council condemned all violations of applicable international law involving the recruitment and use of children by parties to armed conflict, as well as their re-recruitment, killing and maiming, rape and other forms of sexual violence, abductions and attacks against schools and hospitals.

The 15-member organ further called on Member States “to protect children in situations of armed conflict from violations and abuses committed, facilitated or amplified through digital technologies” and encouraged that the impact on children is put at the centre of digital policymaking.

By its terms, the text also encouraged Member States to ensure that teachers and educators have access to digital resources and ensure that children affected by armed conflict build digital literacy and resilience.

The representative of Greece, the draft’s author, said the children and armed conflict mandate established three decades ago has evolved alongside the changing nature of conflict. The mandate is becoming “stronger, more credible and more effective” each time the Security Council aligned it with realities on the ground.

Today, children are being recruited through social media and messaging platforms and exploited, coerced and radicalized online, she warned. “Recruitment through a smartphone is still recruitment”, she stressed,

adding that “a mandate that cannot see where violations begin is a mandate that falls behind”.

She clarified that the draft is not intended to regulate the technical aspects of digital content or infringe upon freedom of expression, but to address violence fuelled by such content.

The resolution “does not close the chapter on this urgent issue” but “opens it”, she declared, stressing that the protection of children must keep pace with technological change. “Thirty years ago, the international community resolved that children caught in war would no longer be invisible”, she recalled, referring to the mandate of the Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict established by the General Assembly in 1996. She then urged efforts to ensure that children “do not vanish” in today’s digital space.

Despite unanimous backing for the resolution, some members voiced concerns and reservations about certain aspects of the text.

Speaking after the adoption, the Russian Federation’s representative said digital technologies have not created new categories of grave violations against children in armed conflict, stressing that the Council’s existing mandate remains unchanged. Regarding the draft’s request to compile best practices on the issue, he emphasized that this work should be carried out by the Special Representative within the scope of the existing mandate and without the involvement of external actors.

Noting that the United States had withdrawn support for the Office of the Special Representative over its perceived lack of results, its representative disassociated his delegation from references expanding the Office’s role.

China’s representative likewise expressed reservations that “some legitimate concerns raised by some Council members have not been fully reflected” and that “the text still has room for improvement”.

While supporting the resolution, Denmark’s representative called for stronger regulation of major technology companies to protect children. She said her delegation would have preferred stronger language in the resolution on the responsibility to protect children, compliance with international humanitarian and human rights law, gender-based violence and the role of country task forces on monitoring and reporting.

Likewise, Latvia’s representative underscored the importance of further research, including from a gender perspective, to better understand the harms associated with digital technologies. “Existing evidence indicates that girls face heightened risks of technology-facilitated gender violence, which warrants particular attention”, he said.

Somalia's representative expressed concern that its implementation could overburden conflict-affected countries. Stressing the importance of national ownership, adequate resources and safeguards for children's sensitive information, he called for greater recognition of regional organizations. "The protection of children is primarily the responsibility of national Governments", he said.

The representative of Bahrain called for greater international cooperation, national capacity-building and exchanges of expertise to address digital risks and strengthen protection and prevention mechanisms.

Digital technologies "must never become another means through which conflict reaches children", said the representative of Liberia. Calling for accountability for those using digital technologies to recruit, coerce or exploit children, he emphasized: "An affirmative vote carries a responsibility, which is to turn agreement into protection" and success will be measured by children being safer from exploitation and better able to learn.

Children

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