

OSRSG CAAC Contribution to the Universal Periodic Review on Somalia, June 2015

1. Background

Somalia is one of the seven countries involved in the “Children, Not Soldiers” campaign, which aims to end recruitment and use of children by Government forces by 2016. Two action plans were signed by the Transitional Federal Government (TFG) in 2012: one on recruitment and use of children in July and the other on killing and maiming of children in August.

2. Recommendations

- Welcome the efforts of the Federal Government of Somalia in improving the protection of Somali children; congratulate them on their national ratification of the Convention of the Rights of the Child but urge the Government to complete the ratification process so that Somalia can be considered as a signatory party to the CRC. Call on the Government to sign the CRC optional protocols, in particular the Optional Protocol on the Involvement of Children in armed Conflict (OPAC).
- Welcome the continued engagement of the Federal Government of Somalia on the implementation of the Action Plans to end the recruitment and use of children and killing and maiming against children by national armed and security forces, and in this regard urge the Government to implement all remaining provisions, with the support of the United Nations.
- Express concerns about the continued recruitment and use of children in the ranks of the Somali National Army and associated militias [819 in 2014], and in this regard call upon the Federal Government of Somalia to take all necessary measures to ensure the immediate identification and release of these children in line with the SOPs on the handover of children signed in February 2014.
- Call upon the Federal Government of Somalia to consider alternatives to the detention of children for their alleged or actual association with armed groups. In any circumstances, the deprivation of liberty of children must be a measure of last resort and for the shortest period.
- Call upon the Federal Government of Somalia to take all necessary measures to protect children in the course of military operations.
- Call upon the Federal Government of Somalia to put in place screening mechanisms as part of the integration process of regional militias into the SNA in order to ensure that any children are identified and separated from the militias but also that no perpetrator of grave violations against children are integrated into the SNA.