



Event to commemorate the 12th official observance of the

International Day for the Elimination of Sexual Violence in Conflict

co-hosted by the Office of the SRSG on Sexual Violence in Conflict, the Office of the SRSG for Children and Armed Conflict, and the Permanent Mission of Argentina to the United Nations

Conflict-Related Sexual Violence Against Children: Safeguarding Futures and Empowering Caregivers

UNHQ Conference Room 11

Friday, 19 June 2026, 10 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

Live webcast available at: <https://shorturl.at/sNDCh>



Background & objectives:

Conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV) against children constitutes one of the most serious and pervasive violations of international humanitarian and human rights law. It is also one of the six grave violations against children as identified by the UN Security Council (S/RES/1261,1999). In situations of armed conflict and political instability across the globe, girls and boys are acutely vulnerable to sexual violence perpetrated by state and non-State actors, including armed forces, militias, groups designated as terrorist by the United Nations, and other parties to conflict. These crimes include rape, sexual slavery, forced marriage, trafficking, sexual exploitation, enforced nudity, sexualized torture, and other forms of sexual violence, inflicting profound physical and psychological harm, disrupting development and education, and often triggering lifelong trauma.

CRSV is neither accidental nor incidental. It is frequently employed deliberately as a tactic of war, terror, repression, and control. Sexual violence is used to destroy families, fracture communities, and destabilize social cohesion, with effects that reverberate across generations. Children are targeted to punish communities, extract information, force displacement, generate revenue through trafficking and exploitation, or incentivize recruitment within armed groups. The use of sexual violence against children thus serves strategic, political, military, and economic objectives within many conflicts, a trend underscored by the dramatic 35 percent increase in reported cases of CRSV

against children in 2024-2025. The impact of CRSV on children is profound and long-lasting. They may face immediate physical and psychological harm, including severe injuries, trauma, unwanted pregnancies, exposure to sexually transmitted diseases, and risk of death. Over the longer term, children experience stigmatization, social exclusion, disruption of education, loss of family support, and heightened vulnerability to re-recruitment, re-victimization, or exploitation. These harms extend beyond the individual child to their caregivers - most often women, who may be themselves survivors of violence including CRSV – and who shoulder the increased burden of care in the face of ruptured healthcare systems, shattered civilian infrastructure, and the targeting of, or denial of access to, frontline humanitarian actors and their services. As formal services collapse or become inaccessible, caregivers are forced to absorb responsibilities that should be met by functioning systems and institutions. This crushing care burden exposes countless conflict-affected women to additional economic hardship, psychological strain, and social isolation, while simultaneously weakening community resilience. Restoring and enhancing systems of care - including healthcare, psychosocial support, and community-based protection - is therefore essential not only for child survivors, but also for the empowerment and wellbeing of caregivers and affected communities, who play a central role in recovery, reintegration and long-term healing.

Despite the existence of a strong normative and legal framework - including multiple UN Security Council resolutions on conflict-related sexual violence and children and armed conflict - CRSV against children remains significantly under-reported and under-addressed. Structural barriers such as insecurity, lack of access to services, fear of retaliation, stigma, and distrust in institutions prevent children and their caregivers from seeking help. Boys, adolescents, and children subjected to sexualized torture in detention face particular invisibility, as harmful stereotypes often deny or minimize their victimization.

Impunity remains a central driver of these crimes, with perpetrators facing few, if any, consequences, while survivors continue to bear the brunt of suffering, stigma and shame. Weak justice systems and peace processes that marginalize or silence survivors further entrench cycles of violence. When sexual violence against children is not confronted directly and early, it undermines prospects for sustainable peace, reconciliation, the restoration of social cohesion, and recovery. Empowering women, caregivers, and affected communities through meaningful participation, equitable resourcing, and the rebuilding of formal systems of care, is indispensable to breaking these cycles and ensuring that responses to CRSV are sustainable, survivor-centered, and transformative. The resilience of survivors, caregivers, and communities shows that change is possible. By restoring systems of care and ensuring caregivers and affected communities are empowered to lead the response, we can build pathways to healing, justice, and a safer future for every child.

In line with General Assembly Resolution 69/293 of 2015, an event will be held to mark the International Day for the Elimination of Sexual Violence in Conflict. This International Day is commemorated every year, on or around 19 June, which marks the date of the unanimous adoption of the first Security Council resolution to recognize conflict-related sexual violence as a tactic of war and a threat to international peace and security (S/RES/1820 of 2008). The purpose of this event is to stand in solidarity with child survivors - and all survivors of conflict-related sexual violence - to spark hope as we raise our voices to say: “#EndRapeInWar”.

Event format:

The event will begin with opening remarks by the three co-hosts followed by video remarks from the SRSG on Violence Against Children. A social worker specialised in CRSV against children will be speaking virtually, representing Resilience Integration and Sustainable Empowerment (RISE), a women-led, community-based NGO in Somalia. H.R.H the Grand Duchess of Luxembourg, in her capacity as a Global Champion in the Fight Against Sexual Violence in Conflict, will deliver a video statement. Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF)'s Representative to the US Government will then deliver remarks. A representative from UNICEF, an active member of the UN Action Against Sexual Violence in Conflict network, chaired by the SRSG-SVC, will present the coordinated work of the United Nations system in “delivering as one” in the fight against CRSV. This will be followed by a statement from the Executive Director of the NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security. Before opening the floor, a short video testimony from a grandmother - the primary caregiver of a child survivor of CRSV in South Sudan - will be presented. To conclude, representatives of Member States, Regional Groups, and Civil Society will be invited to make brief interventions from the floor.¹

Opening Segment:

Moderator: Global Security Reporter - RTÉ, Ms. Yvonne Murray

- 1. Permanent Representative of Argentina to the United Nations, H.E. Francisco Fabián Tropepi*
- 2. Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict and Under-Secretary-General, Ms. Pramila Patten*
- 3. Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict and Under-Secretary-General, Ms. Vanessa Frazier*

Special Guests:

Moderator: Global Security Reporter - RTÉ, Ms. Yvonne Murray

- 1. Video statement from the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence Against Children, Dr. Najat Maalla M'jid*
- 2. Live statement from a social worker at the NGO Resilience Integration and Sustainable Empowerment (RISE) in Somalia*
- 3. Video statement from Her Royal Highness Maria Teresa, Grand Duchess of Luxembourg, and Global Champion in the Fight against Sexual Violence in Conflict*
- 4. Statement from MSF's Representative to the US Government, Ms. Ella Watson-Stryker*
- 5. Statement from a representative from the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), on behalf of the UN Action network*

¹ Member States and Regional Groups wishing to make an intervention are requested to contact the Permanent Mission of Argentina (Ms. Bibiana Brest bib@mrecic.gov.ar) to inscribe on the speakers' list by **Monday 15 June 2026**.

6. *Statement from the Executive Director of the NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security (WPS), Ms. Kaavya Asoka*
7. *Video statement from a grandmother of a child survivor of CRSV in South Sudan*
8. *Interventions from Member States and Regional Groups, including co-sponsors of General Assembly Resolution 69/293*

Moderator closes the event.

Expected outcomes:

1. *Statements by the panelists, Member States, and senior United Nations officials, as informed by the perspectives of survivors and civil society representatives, will enhance understanding of patterns, drivers, and impacts of CRSV on children and the impact on their caretakers.*
2. *Member States will reiterate their commitment to addressing CRSV, including through adequate, flexible, and sustainable resourcing to the Conflict-Related Sexual Violence Multi-Partner Trust Fund (CRSV MPTF), and reinforce their commitment to child-centered prevention, assistance and accountability, as well as highlighting good practices in prevention, accountability, child-sensitive justice, and holistic, survivor-centered services to address harms and safeguard futures by empowering and building the capacity of caregivers and institutions - according to national capabilities.*
3. *Enhanced media coverage globally, including the promotion of key messages on social media (#EndRapeinWar), and a dedicated microsite hosted by the United Nations Department of Global Communications featuring the Secretary-General's annual message and other relevant resources <https://tinyurl.com/5a2ykwy3>*

Focal point for the event: Géraldine Boezio, Public Information Officer, Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict (OSRSG-SVC): geraldine.boezio@un.org