

Research Report: The Question of Recruiting Children as Soldiers in Conflict Zones

Introduction

The recruitment of children as soldiers is a severe violation of international law, affecting thousands in conflict zones such as Africa, the Middle East, and Southeast Asia. These children are forcibly recruited, manipulated, or coerced into armed groups, resulting in long-term psychological, social, and educational damage.

Causes

1. **Poverty:** Armed groups exploit children's need for food, shelter, or money.
2. **Weak Governance:** In unstable regions, armed groups act with impunity.
3. **Forced Recruitment:** Many children are abducted or threatened into joining.
4. **Social Breakdown:** Orphans and displaced children are especially vulnerable.

Impacts

- **Psychological Damage:** PTSD, anxiety, and long-term trauma.
- **Loss of Education:** Disrupted schooling limits future opportunities.
- **Prolonged Conflicts:** Child soldiers perpetuate violence and instability.

International Frameworks

- **UN Convention on the Rights of the Child:** Prohibits child recruitment.
- **Rome Statute of the ICC:** Declares it a war crime to recruit children under 15.
- **UN Resolutions 1612 & 2225:** Establish monitoring and accountability mechanisms.

Solutions

1. **Strengthen Laws:** Enforce bans on child recruitment.
2. **Rehabilitation Programs:** Provide psychological support, education, and reintegration for former child soldiers.
3. **Poverty Alleviation:** Address root causes through development and education.
4. **Global Monitoring:** Ensure violations are reported and prosecuted.

Conclusion

Ending the use of child soldiers requires collaboration among nations, stricter enforcement of laws, and comprehensive support for affected children. MUN delegates should focus on practical solutions to prevent recruitment and rehabilitate victims, ensuring a future free of child exploitation in armed conflicts.