



BUREAU  
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FOR CHILDREN'S RIGHTS

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LOS DERECHOS DEL NIÑO

المكتب الدولي لحقوق الطفل

# Newsletter on Children's rights in Children and Armed conflicts

*October 2016*

Submitted by: International Bureau for Children's Rights (IBCR)

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# 1. Global Development on Children and Human's rights

## **[News] Five Athens Arrests in International Child Sex Trafficking Bust**

18<sup>th</sup> of October 2016 - Five people were arrested in Athens last week as part of an international effort to crack down on child sex trafficking. The Federal Bureau of Investigation, along with representatives from the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children and several law enforcement partners, announced 82 minors were rescued and 239 traffickers and their associates were arrested as part of Operation Cross Country X. The operation, which ran Oct. 13-15, was an international effort focusing on underage human trafficking. This is the 10th iteration of FBI-led initiative which took place across the United States and, for the first time, in several countries around the world. Law enforcement partners from Cambodia, Canada, the Philippines and Thailand had operations in their respective countries.

[Full Article](#) (Athens Patch)

## **[News] `Island of despair`: Australia intentionally torturing refugees on Nauru, says major Amnesty International report**

18<sup>th</sup> of October 2016 - The Australian government is responsible for the deliberate and systematic torture of refugees on Nauru and should be held accountable under international law, according to a major new report informed by unprecedented access to the secretive island. Amnesty International said it had interviewed 62 refugees and asylum seekers on Nauru, and more than a dozen current or former contract workers who delivered services on behalf of the Australian government, to compile a report it titled: *Island of Despair*.

[Full Article](#) (The Sydney Morning Herald)

## **[News] Canada violating international law by jailing hundreds of migrant children, advocacy groups say**

4<sup>th</sup> of October 2016 - Canada's incarceration of hundreds of migrant children is a violation of Canadian and international law, and a stain on the country's reputation, according to 46 medical and legal advocacy groups who are pressing the government to stop it. Data obtained by the group show an average of 242 children were detained in each of the past four years, often after failed refugee claims. Canada's government says public safety is a main concern, along with flight risk and uncertain identity, but the group's research shows virtually all detentions, almost 90 per cent, are to prevent people fleeing in advance of deportation or not showing up to a tribunal. In some cases, these people's children have been born in Canada and are therefore citizens, but must be detained as well to avoid leaving children alone. That means the 242 number is lower than the true number, as it only includes formal foreign child detainees.

[Full Article](#) (National Post)

## **[News] UK steps up support to end modern slavery and child exploitation globally**

16th of October 2016 – *UK will prioritise ending modern slavery and child exploitation around the world.* To mark the national day against slavery on October 18, International Development Secretary Priti Patel outlined an increase in support for women and girl refugees in Jordan, Iraq and Lebanon, and for vulnerable people at risk of trafficking on migration routes in North Africa and Europe. The International Development Secretary echoed Prime Minister Theresa May at the United Nations General Assembly, as she called on the global community to go further and work faster to stop modern slavery and child exploitation.

[Full Article](#) (Relief Web)

## **[News] Clampdown on child labour in developing world to target UK firms**

15<sup>th</sup> of October 2016 - The government is to intervene to encourage companies to scrutinise their supply chains for evidence of worker exploitation or child labour, the international development minister will announce this coming week. Detailing a £1m grant from the aid budget towards a campaign to lobby businesses to take more responsibility for the labour practices within their supply chains, international development secretary Priti Patel, said she wanted to clamp down on global child exploitation.

[Full Article](#) (The Guardian)

## **[News] Syrian girls are being pushed into child marriage in Lebanese refugee camps**

17<sup>th</sup> of October 2016 - Each year, 15 million girls are married before the age of 18. In developing countries, one in every three girls is married before 18; one in nine is married before 15. If the present trend continues, 150 million girls will be married before their 18th birthday over the next decade. That is an average of 15 million girls each year. Child marriage is a fundamental violation of human rights. According to reports from both UNFPA and Human Rights Watch, child marriage is associated with many harmful consequences. Child brides face a higher risk of contracting HIV; are much more likely to experience domestic violence; and pregnancy remains among the leading causes of death for girls aged 15 to 19 worldwide.

[Full Article](#) (Huffington post)

## **[News] Bangladesh's 'Wedding buster' takes on illegal child marriage**

11<sup>th</sup> of October 2016 - As the UN marks the International Day of the Girl Child on Tuesday, activist Radha Rani Sarker is meeting with European leaders to highlight the plight of girls in her native Bangladesh,

where 73% are illegally married off while still in childhood. Radha, 21, met French Women's Rights Minister Laurence Rossignol and reporters in Paris on Monday as part of a tour that will also take her to Brussels. With her baby face and sparkling black eyes, she did not appear to be intimidated in the presence of the minister and her entourage, telling the story of her life with disarming calmness.

[Full Article](#) (France 24)

## **[News] Yemeni child marriage film submitted to Oscars**

12<sup>th</sup> of October 2016 - Yemen is submitting its first ever full-length movie entry to the Oscars this year, with a film telling the story of a 10-year-old girl fighting to divorce her much older husband. *I am Nojoom, Age 10 and Divorced* will compete alongside films from 84 other countries for the prize of Best Foreign Language Film at the 2017 Oscars. The film is based on the real-life story of Nujood Ali, now 18, who was married to a man in his 30s when she was nine years old. Based on a book by Ali, it tells the story of her escape two months after the arranged marriage, and her struggle to get a local judge to grant her a divorce in the absence of laws against child marriage.

[Full Article](#) (Middle East Eye)

## **[Petition] Child bride faces execution by hanging in Iran**

13<sup>th</sup> of October 2016 - Zeinab Sekaanvand Lokran comes from a poor, conservative Iranian-Kurdish family, and ran away from home to marry Hossein Sarmadi in the hope for a better life.

She was 17 when her husband died. Zeinab was arrested and "confessed" that she killed her husband after he'd abused her for months and refused her requests for divorce. She was then held at the police station for the next 20 days and repeatedly tortured by police officers. After a grossly unfair trial, in which she was denied access to a lawyer during her entire pre-trial detention, Zeinab was sentenced to death by hanging

[Full Article](#) (Amnesty)

## **[News] Shattered dreams: Dim future for the refugee child in Malaysia**

16<sup>th</sup> of October 2016 – IN Malaysia, a country that has positioned itself as a go-to destination for migrants escaping war and persecution in their homes, access to education is a luxury for refugee children.

Malaysia is not party to the 1951 Refugee Convention, but according to the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR), there were 246,270 "people of concern" in Malaysia last year, a figure that included registered refugees, asylum seekers, as well as other categories of stateless people and those in "refugee-like" situations.

[Full Article](#) (Asian Correspondent)

## **[News] Pope issues SOS for ‘invisible and voiceless’ refugee children**

14th of October 2016 – In his annual message for the Vatican’s refugee day, Pope Francis focuses his attention on child migrants, saying they’re the most vulnerable group among the refugees because they are “invisible and voiceless.” Quoting Jesus in the Gospel of Matthew - “whoever receives a child in my name receives me” - the pope notes how Jesus goes on to warn those who cause a child to sin: “It is better for him to have a great millstone fastened round his neck and be drowned in the depth of the sea.”

[Full Article](#) (Crux Now)

## **[News] Saving Bangladesh's children**

27th of October 2016 - In our increasingly interdependent world, malnutrition that causes stunted growth in poor children should be of concern to the community of nations. After all, prosperity and good health are the building blocks of a more stable and less violent world. Bangladesh, formerly known as East Pakistan, separated from the rest of Pakistan and became a sovereign nation-state in 1971. According to the World Bank, "Bangladesh emerged from the ashes of a War of Independence in 1971 as the world's second poorest nation."

[Full Article](#) (The Whig)

## **[News] Investing in early childhood development essential to helping more children and communities thrive, new Lancet Series finds**

5<sup>th</sup> of October 2016 - An estimated 43 percent—249 million—of children under five in low-and middle-income countries (LMICs) are at an elevated risk of poor development due to extreme poverty and stunting, according to findings from *The Lancet’s new Series, Advancing Early Childhood Development: from Science to Scale*. The Series reveals that early childhood development interventions that promote nurturing care—health, nutrition, responsive caregiving, security and safety, and early learning—may cost as little as 50 cents per child per year, when combined with existing services such as health. WHO, the World Bank, and UNICEF contributed to and offered guidance to the Series.

[Full Article](#) (World Health Organization)

## **[News] An investigation found Syrian child refugees in Turkey producing clothes for major brands**

24<sup>th</sup> of October 2016 - Nearly 5 million people have now fled the violence in Syria. More have gone to Turkey than any other country. Desperate for income, many have sought employment illegally in the country’s garment industry. As many foreign brands making garments in Turkey know, factories often exploit the availability of this cheap labor. A report by BBC Panorama lends weight to critics who argue

brands aren't doing enough to safeguard against the practice. "Undercover: The Refugees Who Make Our Clothes," scheduled to air tonight (Oct. 24) on BBC One, found Syrian child refugees in Turkey making clothing for popular British brands Marks and Spencer and Asos. It also found adult refugees working illegally at factories distressing jeans for Spanish brands Zara and Mango.

[Full Article](#) (Quartz)

### **[News] Underage, underpaid and unwelcome**

26<sup>th</sup> of October 2016 - As ever increasing numbers of Syrians flee their homes in search of refuge in Turkey, employers in their adoptive country have taken advantage of their destitution. In sweatshops in Istanbul, the *Telegraph* found children as young as five working for a pittance to help their families survive.

[Full Article](#) (The Telegraph)

### **[News] Refugee parents must be involved in children's education, experts say**

23<sup>th</sup> of October 2016 - Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Minister John McCallum was in Winnipeg last week to meet with his provincial counterparts. At the meetings, McCallum admitted he was surprised at the size of Syrian refugee families resettled to Canada and the number of Syrian children was more than anticipated. With this, media coverage turned to the challenges for schools that a large new student population brings and the need for language and support workers.

[Full Article](#) (CBC)

### **[News] Syria: UN education envoy urges International Criminal Court probe into Idlib school attack**

27<sup>th</sup> of October 2016 - The United Nations envoy for education today called for an immediate investigation by the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court (ICC) into what he called a war crime in Syria – the latest attacks on a school compound in the western province of Idlib that left at least 20 pupils and teachers dead.

[Full Article](#) (UN News Centre)

## **2. Conferences, Courses and Events**

### **Conference – With Children, for Children: From Ideas to Action**

On the occasion of 2016 International Children's Day, a symposium will bring together members of the European Parliament, European Commission officials and 12 children and young people from across

Europe who have participated in local, national or international child participation projects. The objective is to demonstrate how Members of the European Parliament (MEPs) and officials from the European Commission (EC) can engage with children around Europe in a meaningful way.

**Location:** Brussel, Belgium

**Date:** 17<sup>th</sup> of November 2016

[For more information](#) (EuroChild)

### **Conference - International Family Conference: Children's Rights and Family**

International Family Conference is a biennial international academic conference which is organized by the Women's Platform of the Journalists and Writers Foundation (JWF), which holds General Consultative Status at UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). Its aim is to stimulate interdisciplinary and cross-national collaboration and approach to various family issues.

**Location:** Abuja, Nigeria

**Date:** 19<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> of November 2016

[For more information](#) (Journalists and Writers Foundation)

### **Forum - Forum on Human Rights, Democracy and the Rule of Law: Widening the Democratic Space: the role of youth in public decision-making**

In resolution 28/14, adopted on 26 March 2015, the Human Rights Council decided to establish a forum on human rights, democracy and rule of law. The purpose of the Forum is "to provide a platform for promoting dialogue and cooperation on issues pertaining to the relationship between these areas" and to "identify and analyze best practices, challenges and opportunities for States in their efforts to secure respect for human rights, democracy and the rule of law".

**Location:** Geneva, Switzerland

**Date:** 21<sup>st</sup> to 22<sup>nd</sup> of November 2016

**Registration deadline:** 16<sup>th</sup> of November 2016

[For more information](#) (United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights)

### **Conference - PICCWED-Putrajaya International Conference On Child, Women, Elderly And Disabled**

The conference will bring together scholars and practitioners who are interested to present their papers in a diverse range of areas pertaining to Children, Women, Elderly And Disabled People and other related fields.

**Location:** Putrajaya, Malaysia

**Date:** 3<sup>rd</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> of December 2016

[For more information](#) (Piccwed)



## **Conference – International Conference «Early Childhood Care and Education»**

The idea of the child as innocent, as pure, the 'little angel' in need of protection from the harsh realities of life and the corrupting influences of the world around us has come to dominate our thinking, language, values, social policies and educational philosophies in the past few decades. Children are seen as 'little people', 'blank slates', works in progress who are loved, nurtured and guided as they grow to become mature, rational and responsible adults.

**Location:** Moscow, Russian Federation

**Date:** 10th to 13th May 2017

[For more information](#) (ECCE)

### **3. Subregional and Country updates**

#### **Nigeria - Nigeria's Forgotten Children**

18th of October 2016 - Two and a half years since 219 Chibok schoolgirls were abducted by Boko Haram in Nigeria, sparking a global outcry and the #BringBackOurGirls campaign, there has finally been some good news. Yesterday, 21 of those girls were reunited with their families in an emotional ceremony in Abuja, embracing the parents they thought they'd never see again. But it's not a completely happy ending - the girls are traumatized and distressed after 30 months in captivity, and little is known about the fates of the almost 200 others who are still missing. And even less is known about the other children caught in the web of this conflict, those who are suffering horrific abuses perpetrated not by Boko Haram, but by the Nigerian government.

[Full article](#) (Amnesty international)

#### **Syria - Children in war-torn Syria risk their lives to go to school**

21<sup>th</sup> of October 2016 - With the start of the school year in Syria, over 1.7 million children remain out of school and another 1.3 million are at a risk of dropping out, according to new education data. Escalating violence, displacement, increased poverty, and an overstretched and under-resourced education system continue to force children out of school, denying them of their right to education.

[Full article](#) (UNICEF)

#### **Soudan du Sud - 145 enfants soldats libérés par deux groupes armés au Soudan du Sud**

26 octobre 2016- Ils ont été libérés par deux groupes armés à Pibor (Etat du Jonglei) dans l'est du Soudan du Sud, a annoncé le Fonds des Nations unies pour l'enfance. "Notre espoir c'est que la libération d'aujourd'hui soit suivie par de nombreuses autres, pour que les 16.000 enfants qui sont encore dans des

groupes armés puissent rentrer dans leurs familles", a déclaré Mahimbo Mdoe, le représentant de l'Unicef au Soudan du Sud, cité dans le communiqué.

[Article complet](#) (Voa Afrique)

## **Global - War Child Launches A Guide to Sexual and Gender-Based Violence Legal Protection in Acute Emergencies**

15th of October 2016- Exposed to epidemic levels of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) throughout their displacement, refugee women and girls are more affected by violence than any other population of women in the world. In times of war and its aftermath, legal structures that traditionally protect women and children, including formal and informal justice systems and respect for the rule of law, break down leaving them vulnerable to abuse. This includes but is not limited to rape, early and forced marriage and domestic violence.

[Full article](#) (War Child Canada)

## **Ouganda - Quand des ex-enfants soldats de la LRA débattent avec des adolescents ougandais**

24 octobre 2016- Le 19 octobre, Jonathan Littell présentait à Kampala son dernier documentaire, « Wrong Elements », en présence des principaux acteurs, trois anciens otages de la LRA. « Pourquoi n'avez-vous pas tué Kony, lorsque vous étiez dans le bush [le maquis] ? » ; « Avez-vous tué des civils ? » ; « Comment avez-vous été accueillis par les communautés à votre retour ? » Dans la petite salle de l'Alliance française à Kampala, où des adolescents ougandais viennent de visionner le documentaire, Jonathan Littell et les trois principaux acteurs, Geoffrey, Michaël et Nighty, tentent de répondre à la salve de questions qui leur sont adressées. Le réalisateur présentait mercredi 19 octobre son dernier documentaire, Wrong Elements, en présence des principaux acteurs, trois anciens otages de l'Armée de résistance du Seigneur (LRA).

[Article complet](#) (Le Monde)

## **Global - La CPI enquête dans neuf pays, dont huit en Afrique**

21 octobre 2016- La Cour pénale internationale (CPI), dont Pretoria a décidé de se retirer, a ouvert dix enquêtes dans neuf pays, dont huit sont en Afrique, depuis son entrée en fonction en 2003. Cela lui vaut de nombreuses critiques parmi les dirigeants, notamment de l'Union africaine (UA), qui l'accuse de mener "une sorte de chasse raciale". Avant Pretoria, le Parlement burundais avait approuvé le 12 octobre un projet de loi prévoyant que le pays se retire de l'organisation et le président a promulgué cette loi mardi.

[Article complet](#) (Afrique Expansion)

## **Afghanistan - Funding from the Government of Canada boosts War Child Canada's efforts to empower women and girls in Afghanistan**

5th of October 2016- War Child is extraordinarily pleased to announce that our programs team will be receiving \$14.5M from the Government of Canada for the enhancement of women and girls' rights and the protection of children in Afghanistan. The funding, announced by the Government of Canada on October 4th, forms part of a \$40M investment in the country to be rolled out over the next 5 years.

[Full Article](#) (War Child Canada)

## **Syrie - Les enfants risquent leurs vies pour aller l'école en Syrie**

25 octobre 2016- Alors que la rentrée scolaire a lieu en Syrie, le Fonds des Nations Unies pour l'enfance (UNICEF) a indiqué lundi que plus de 1,7 million d'enfants restent non scolarisés et que 1,3 million autres enfants courent un risque de décrochage. Selon de nouvelles données recueillies par le Fonds, une école sur trois ne peut pas être utilisée car elle est soit endommagée, détruite, utilisée pour abriter des personnes déplacées ou pour des fins militaires. Depuis le début de la guerre en 2011, l'agence onusienne a recensé plus de 4.000 attaques contre les écoles.

[Article complet](#) (Iloubnan)

## **Syrie - Indignation internationale après le bombardement d'une école en Syrie**

27 Octobre 2016- Le bombardement d'une école mercredi dans la province d'Idlib, dans le nord de la Syrie, qui a tué 22 enfants et 6 enseignants a soulevé un tollé international et envenimé les relations entre la Russie et le monde occidental. Cette attaque qui pourrait être la plus meurtrière contre une école depuis le début de la guerre en Syrie, selon l'Unicef, a fait réagir les différents protagonistes engagés dans la résolution de la crise.

[Article complet](#) (Radio Canada)

## **République démocratique du Congo - L'UNESCO et l'UNICEF saluent la mémoire des enseignants et élèves tués au Nord Kivu**

24 octobre 2016 - Les Représentants de l'UNESCO et de l'UNICEF en République Démocratique du Congo (RDC) saluent la mémoire des deux enseignants et deux élèves décédés le samedi 15 octobre 2016 dans la ville de Butembo, lors d'accrochages entre des militaires des FARDC et les membres de la secte « Eglise corps du Christ ». Les enseignants victimes de tir d'une roquette étaient en plein exercice de leurs fonctions et les enfants en apprentissage en classe.

[Article complet](#) (UNESCO)

## **Yémen - Yemen : les enfants otages de la guerre**

18 octobre 2016 - Dix-huit mois de guerre, 7 000 morts, 3 millions de déplacés, 1,5 million d'enfants malnutris. Il était temps. Le temps d'une trêve, certes de courte durée, 72 heures. Voilà ce qu'a obtenu le médiateur de l'ONU Ismaïl Ould Cheikh Ahmed. Il a affirmé avoir reçu des assurances en ce sens de la part de "toutes les parties yéménites" présente la nouvelle trêve comme une "reprise de la cessation globale des hostilités" qui avait été mise en place le 10 avril 2016, mais avait ensuite volé en éclats.

[Article complet](#) (TV5 Monde)

## **Syrie - Syrie: Gordon Brown réclame la saisine de la CPI après l'attaque d'une école**

27 octobre 2016 - L'ex-Premier ministre britannique et envoyé spécial de l'Onu pour l'éducation Gordon Brown a réclamé jeudi une enquête de la Cour pénale internationale (CPI) pour "crime de guerre" après l'attaque meurtrière d'une école dans la région d'Idleb (nord-ouest de la Syrie) la veille. "Je demande au Conseil de sécurité d'accepter immédiatement que la procureure de la CPI mène une enquête sur ce que je crois être un crime de guerre", a-t-il déclaré à la presse.

[Article complet](#) (L'Orient le Jour)

## **Yemen - Yemen's Al-Hudaydah: A child's worst nightmare**

22nd of October 2016 - The Yemeni coastal province of Al-Hudaydah is well known for its rich history and famous port that has seen many wars throughout its lifetime. It is unique in the sense that, compared to other Yemeni cities like Sana'a, during the latter half of the 20th century Al-Hudaydah wasn't known for its ancient architecture. The port city of Al-Hudaydah was famous for its restaurants that specialised in making exquisite fish dishes. It was known for its breath-taking views of the Red Sea and its port that exported Yemeni culture to the rest of the world.

[Full article](#) (Middle East monitor)

## **Colombia - Colombia child soldiers reluctant to leave FARC 'family' - rebel commander**

28<sup>th</sup> of October 2016 - The release of scores of child soldiers from Colombia's FARC rebel group is a top priority, but some are reluctant to leave because they fear an uncertain future away from the insurgents they view as family, a guerrilla commander said. Victoria Sandino, a commander with the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), has a seat at the negotiating table where the government and FARC are working to revive a peace accord signed by both sides but narrowly rejected by voters in a referendum earlier this month.

[Full article](#) (Thompson Reuters Foundation News)