



FORUM: U.N. International Children’s Emergency Fund (UNICEF)

AGENDA: “Ensuring Access to Education for Children in War Zones.”

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Esteemed Delegates and Honorable Advisors,

It is my utmost honor and immense pleasure to welcome every single one of you to TTMUN'26.

Ever since its first session in 2015, TTMUN Conferences have been an undeniable portrayal of unity, collaboration, and resilience by the fellow members of the TTMUN Club. As the executive team of TTMUN'26, we have dedicated countless hours to organize the 11th annual session of TTMUN; while doing so, we have maintained the same passion and dedication with every step we have taken to sustain the quality of TTMUN. That being said, as the Secretary-General of TTMUN'26, I would like to thank my fellow executive team members and our remarkable advisor, Vesile Acar, whose support made it possible to organize this conference and host you here at our school on the 27th, 28th, and 29th of April. Yet, beyond its tradition, TTMUN'26 is shaped by its purpose.

Our mission in TTMUN Club is to foster mutual growth in a collaborative environment where we are not only discussing real-world issues but also work towards solutions. Therefore, in correlation with our mission, we have chosen the theme of TTMUN'26 to be "Bridging Divides in Human Rights". The significance of the theme lies in the unfortunate irony of the persistence of human rights violations. Today, our world is witnessing and turning a blind eye to human rights violations that the United Nations was initially established to ensure that the world would never witness and do so again. Acknowledging this, we, the youth shall not only wait for our turn to come tomorrow but shape it today. Hence, as the executive team, we hope for a fruitful conference where everyone, regardless of their role, contributes to the debates, lobbying, and discussions, bearing the urgency of our global reality in mind.

As we embark on this journey, this mission will be in action over the course of three days as the delegates will have the opportunity to be active in one of nine committees of TTMUN'26 with fifteen diverse agenda items that seek to solve the serious issues that our world is facing. While doing so, let's embrace the unparalleled value of collaboration, respect, and empathy for a better future. Finally, I hope that you have an incomparable MUN experience and once again as the Secretary General, I wholeheartedly welcome everyone to the TTMUN'26.

“All my hope is in youth!”

—Mustafa Kemal Atatürk.

Yours sincerely,

Derin Halatçı - Secretary General

INTRODUCTION

War is a tragedy. It has been ongoing for as long as humanity has existed, conflicts are a sad factor of humans that'll probably never cease to exist. Although wars could be defined as a matter between two states or more, for example the war between Russia and Ukraine, its effect on civilians cannot be denied; in this specific agenda its effect on children. As a result, children cannot practice their right to get educated under any circumstance, under 'Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), Article 28'. It has been bestowed on the UN to ensure that the said children in war regions are able to practice their birth rights.



Education is one of the most fundamental rights of every child and is essential for personal development, social stability, and global progress. However, in many parts of the world affected by armed conflict, this basic right is severely threatened. Millions of children living in war zones are unable to attend school due to violence, displacement, destruction of infrastructure, and lack of resources. As a result, an entire generation risks growing up without the knowledge and skills necessary for a secure and independent future.

In conflict-affected areas, schools are often damaged, destroyed, or used for military purposes, making them unsafe for children. Teachers may flee or be unable to work, and families are frequently forced to prioritize survival over education. In such environments, children who are out of school become more vulnerable to serious risks, including child labor, early marriage, exploitation, and recruitment by armed groups. Therefore, education is not only a basic human right but also a form of protection that can save lives and provide stability during times of crisis.

The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) plays a key role in promoting and protecting children's rights, including the right to education, especially in emergency situations. UNICEF works with governments, non-governmental organizations, and international partners to provide safe learning spaces, train teachers, distribute educational materials, and support policies that ensure continued access to education during conflicts. Despite these efforts, many challenges remain, such as limited funding, security concerns, and difficulties in reaching affected populations.

Ensuring access to education in war zones requires strong international cooperation, innovative solutions, and long-term commitment. It is not only about rebuilding schools, but also about creating safe, inclusive, and flexible learning opportunities for all children, including those who are displaced or living in refugee camps. Education can help children regain a sense of normalcy, hope, and resilience, while also contributing to peacebuilding and the prevention of future conflicts.

This topic is highly relevant for delegates in this committee, as it combines humanitarian, social, and political dimensions. Delegates are encouraged to consider the root causes of the problem, evaluate existing international frameworks, and propose realistic and effective solutions. By addressing this issue, the committee aims to protect children’s rights and ensure that no child is denied education, even in the most challenging circumstances.

KEY TERMS & DEFINITIONS

Conflict-Affected Areas

Areas in a state of armed conflict, fragile post-conflict areas, as well as areas witnessing weak or non-existing governance and security, such as failed states, and widespread and systematic violations of international law, including human rights abuses.

Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs)

Individuals forced to flee their homes due to armed conflict, generalized violence, human rights violations, or natural/human-made disasters, who remain within their own country's borders. Unlike refugees, they do not cross an international border and are not protected by international refugee law.

Refugees

People who cross international borders to escape conflict or persecution, protected under international law (1951 Refugee Convention).

Education in Emergencies (EiE)

Quality learning opportunities for all ages in situations of crisis, including early childhood development, primary, secondary, non-formal, technical, vocational, higher and adult education. EiE provides physical, psychosocial, and cognitive protection that can sustain and save lives. Common situations of crisis in which EiE is essential include conflicts, situations of violence, forced displacement, disasters, and public health emergencies

Child Protection

Policies and actions aimed at preventing violence, abuse, exploitation, and neglect of children especially in war zones.

Safe Schools

Schools that are protected from attacks, military use, and violence — ensuring children can learn without fear.

War Zones

“A war zone is a designated area, either on land or at sea, where the rights of neutral nations are not upheld by countries engaged in conflict. This term is commonly used in discussions about international law and military operations. In these areas, the rules of engagement and conduct may differ significantly from those in peaceful regions, affecting how nations interact and the protections available to non-combatants.”

<https://legal-resources.uslegalforms.com/w/war-zone>

Defining Factors:

- Humanitarian law establishes different methods to define areas or zones within which special protection will be provided for populations in danger and in which no fighting may take place. The Geneva Conventions and the Protocols make a specific distinction between: non-defended localities, hospital zones and localities, hospital and safety zones and localities, neutralized zones, demilitarized zones.
- For a region to be a proper “safe zone”, must fulfil the conditions: all combatants, as well as mobile weapons and mobile military equipment, must have been evacuated, no hostile use may be made of fixed military installations or establishments, no acts of hostility may be committed by the authorities or by the population; no activities in support of military occupation may be undertaken.

Armed Conflict (War)

“This term was understood as covering the legal concepts of “international armed conflict” (generally the use of armed forces between states), and “non-international armed conflict” (a situation of protracted armed violence between government authorities and a non-governmental armed group, or between non-governmental armed groups).



For non-international armed conflicts to exist, the violence must reach a certain level of intensity, and at least one of the non-governmental groups involved must possess organised armed forces, meaning they are under a certain command structure, and have the capacity to sustain military operations.

(Safe Schools Declaration, pg. 7 ‘Armed Conflict’)

Military Use of Schools

“This term referred to the broad range of activities in which the fighting forces of parties to armed conflict might engage with the physical space of a school or university in support of the military effort, whether temporarily or on a long-term basis. This term included, but was not limited to the following uses: as barracks or bases; for offensive or defensive positioning; for storage of weapons or ammunition; for interrogation or detention; for military training or drilling of soldiers; for the recruitment of children as ‘child soldiers’ contrary to international law; as observation posts; as a position from which to fire weapons (firing position) or to guide weapons onto their targets (fire control). Instances in which forces are present in the vicinity of schools and universities to provide for the school’s protection, or as a security

measure when schools are being used, for example, as election polling stations or for other non-military purposes were not understood as being included in this term.

Law of Armed Conflict

The law of armed conflict restricts the targeting of schools and universities. Schools and universities are generally accepted as civilian objects, and shall not be attacked under normal circumstances. The attacking of a civilian objective is considered a war crime under The Rome Statute, Article 8 2 3, Subclause (b), Sub-subclause, (ix).

Child



“For the purposes of the present Convention, a child means every human being below the age of eighteen years unless under law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier.”

(Convention on the Rights of the Child, Part I, Article 1)

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

One of the recent incidents where this agenda was relevant is Syria, where schools have been bombed and shelled in cities such as Aleppo and Idlib which inevitably lead to the children in the region not being able to practice their right to education. A 2013 UNESCO-backed report documented a 16 year old Syrian boy in Lebanon who couldn't graduate simply because his school in Syria was shelled and deemed unusable. The kid being born in a war region simply destroyed his future prospects.

Another region where this agenda sparks is Afghanistan. Schools have been attacked by various armed groups and have sustained damage far enough to deem the schools unusable, while the current regime, the Taliban, has shut down or repurposed many schools. Furthermore, under Taliban rule, females have been prohibited from being able to partake in secondary education in large parts of the country, directly stripping a major amount of the female population residing in Afghanistan from their educational rights; simply because of their gender. This instance stands to be different than most as most school buildings stand but that the regime in the war region has willingly prohibited the use of those schools.

One of the other instances where terrorist regimes have deprived children in war regions of their right to education is in Nigeria. Boko Haram, which is a Islamist-extremist terrorist group active in Africa, has bombed countless schools, abducted students (most famously the Chibok girls in 2014), and threatened many more people with harm if they send their children to school. This course of action has led to long-term drop out of children with many of the

drop outs never re-enrolling even after areas where sovereignty was restored by local authorities, ultimately causing countless children to be deprived of their rights.

Another one of the recent instances is the occupied Palestinian territory, the Gaza Strip. The ongoing conflict in the Palestinian region has led to many schools being bombed and many children to not only be deprived of their right to education but to have also lost their lives. Schools have been transformed into bomb shelters, or have been turned into rubble by the unlawful bombings on the region. The conflict in the region is still ongoing and the number of children being deprived of their right to live, their right to education continues to get lower day by day.

Globally, more than 127 million primary and secondary-age children and young people in crisis affected countries are out of school, including those in war zones, refugee settings, and fragile states. Between 2020 and 2024, UNESCO ran over 320 education-in-emergencies initiatives, reaching around 42.5 million people, including children in active conflict zones, while UNICEF and partners have reopened some 2.4 million children into temporary learning spaces in highly affected areas where roughly 19 million children are out of school.

Global monitoring by the Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack records thousands of attacks on schools and universities annually, with a 20–44 percent increase in such incidents since 2020, underscoring that the military use of schools and direct strikes on education infrastructure remain a growing pattern in armed conflicts worldwide. In several war-torn contexts, 90–95 percent of school buildings have been damaged, repurposed, or turned into shelters, making safe, continuous education extremely difficult and leaving many children without functional schooling for years.

The Rome Statute, Article 8, 2 3, Subclause (b), Sub-subclause (ix):

“For the purpose of this Statute, war crime means:

...

(ix) Intentionally attacking buildings dedicated to ... education, provided they are not military objectives.”

The Geneva Convention on 12 August, 1949; Article 50 ‘Children’:

“The Occupying Power shall, with the co-operation of the national and local authorities, facilitate the proper working of all institutions devoted to the care and education of children.”

“Should the local institutions be inadequate for the purpose, the Occupying Power shall make arrangements for the maintenance and education, if possible by persons of their own nationality, language and religion, of children who are orphaned or separated from their parents as a result of the war and who cannot be adequately cared for by a near relative or friend.”

1977 Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949 relating to the Protection of Victims of Non-International Armed Conflicts:

“Children shall be provided with the care and aid they require, and in particular ... they shall receive an education ... in keeping with the wishes of their parents, or ... of those responsible for their care.”

(Relating to the Protection of Victims of Non-International Armed Conflicts, Protocol II, Article 4)

“(c) take the other necessary precautions to protect the civilian population, individual civilians and civilian objects under their control against the dangers resulting from military operations.”

(Relating to the Protection of Victims of Non-International Armed Conflicts, Protocol I, Article 58)

CURRENT SITUATION

As of the latest instances, in May 2025, an Israeli airstrike hit the Fahmi al-Jarjawi School in the al-Daraj neighborhood of Gaza City, killing 36 people, including 18 children and 6 women, and injuring 55 others. Human rights groups such as Euro-Med and UN experts have described the act as a massacre and is considered fully unlawful. It also must be noted that the act is in direct relation to the agenda.

Recent 2026 reporting notes that Israeli attacks continue to harm children and civilians in Gaza, amid severely damaged educational infrastructure which points to the fact that even where classes resume, the risk and fright of being bombed in a place of education is still a threat.

There are no yet completed prosecutions for the unlawful bombings of schools in Gaza, but several active international-law and human-rights mechanisms are documenting the said attacks and pushing for accountability.

The current acting organizations go as:

The International Criminal Court has an ongoing investigation on the “Situation in the State of Palestine” covering crimes and specifically war crimes since 2014. The ICC’s Office of the Prosecutor is gathering evidence on attacks against civilians and civilian objectives, including schools, but has yet to take any form of action nor has indicted any individuals for the school bombing incidents.

Certain Human-rights groups and academic studies (e.g. University of Cambridge) explicitly treat the bombardment of Gaza’s schools as “scholasticide” and argue that existing evidence already meets the threshold for war crimes charged under the Rome Statute (the founding document of the ICC) mainly under “intentionally directing attacks against civilian objects.”

Several key bodies in the, or related to the UN are currently in active documentation and analysis of the attacks. These bodies stand to be:

UN Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territory: The body reports that Israeli forces damaged or destroyed over 90 percent of Gaza’s civilian education places and found that repeated strikes on school turned shelters were often indiscriminate or disproportionate, which stands to be a war crime.

UN Human Rights Council mechanisms and special procedures:

UN human rights experts have repeatedly condemned the attacks as “blatant violations of international law” and have called for states to support criminal accountability for the ICC to pursue cases.

Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack (GCPEA):

The GCPEA coordinates monitoring, reporting, and advocacy around attacks on schools worldwide, specifically in Gaza, and urges states and courts to use its accountability guides to prosecute education related violations.

MAJOR PARTIES INVOLVED

UNICEF

The work done by UNICEF on this specific agenda item and other relevant agenda items is undeniable. For instance, UNICEF has established temporary learning spaces and “catch up classes” in Gaza, Ukraine, Sudan and other conflict zones, including schools in underground metro stations and in bomb shelters in frontline areas. Not only that, but another one of UNICEF’s countless contributions to the case is that they ran large scale “bridge education” projects for Syrian refugee children by partnering up with Education Above All



UNHCR (UN Refugee Agency)

The agency actively runs the “Educate A Child” and “Primary Impact” initiatives relating to the agenda, enrolling hundreds of thousands of refugee children in school and primary-education programmes across Africa, Asia, and the Middle East. Furthermore, they have provided large scholarships for individuals in relation to the DAFI programme, and support secondary and tertiary education for displaced youth, helping them access safer, structured learning despite war and displacement.



UNESCO

UNESCO leads the “Protecting Education from Attack” programme in over 30 war-struck countries, monitoring damage to schools, rehabilitating infrastructure, and building teacher capacity after attacks. Also, UNESCO has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the UN Officer for Children and Armed Conflict to strengthen protection and continuity of education for children affected



by armed groups and hostilities.

Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack (GCPEA)

The GCPEA coordinates research and advocacy around attacks on schools worldwide, producing global reports and policy guides that have been used to push for stronger legal protections and accountability. Further works with



governments and UN agencies to promote and implement the Safe Schools Declaration, encouraging states to avoid using schools for military purposes and to protect students and teachers.

Save the Children

The programme runs emergency-education programmes in Syria, Yemen, Ukraine, Gaza, and Myanmar, including setting up “temporary learning spaces,” training teachers, and providing materials and psychosocial support. Has helped hundreds of thousands of conflict-affected children re-enter school through local-education-support projects and advocacy for their right to education.

War Child

War Child delivers education in conflict regions (e.g., Syria, Iraq, Democratic Republic of the Congo) via child-friendly spaces, psychosocial support, and teacher training that keep children learning even when formal schools are destroyed or closed. Pioneered “non-formal” education models in war zones, such as recreational learning and play-based activities, to maintain cognitive and social development under crisis conditions.

International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)

The ICRC adopted an “Access to Education” strategy (2021–2026) that pressures states and armed groups to respect schools’ civilian status and to avoid military use of educational facilities. Funds and supports school-repair and teacher-support projects in conflict-affected countries, helping children return to learning even in areas close to active fighting.



The World Bank

The World Bank has financed major education-in-fragility programmes, such as the “Restoring Education and Learning” project in Yemen, which helps rebuild schools, train teachers, and distribute supplies for children in war-torn regions. Works with UNICEF and governments to channel multi-year funding for education in war-struck and fragile states, treating schooling as part of broader stabilization and development.

RELEVANT INTERNATIONAL DOCUMENTS

Security Council Resolution 2225 (2015):

Link: [https://undocs.org/S/RES/2225\(2015\)](https://undocs.org/S/RES/2225(2015))

The resolution addresses the protection of civilians in armed conflict and emphasizes the need to protect children from the effects of landmines and explosive remnants of war, including impacts on access to schools and safe learning environments.

Security Council Resolution 2764 (2024)

Link: [https://undocs.org/S/RES/2764\(2024\)](https://undocs.org/S/RES/2764(2024))

The resolution addresses a specific conflict situation, emphasizing the importance of humanitarian access, protection of civilians, and compliance with international law, which are essential for maintaining safe conditions that enable children’s access to education in conflict-affected areas.

Security Council Resolution 2601 (2021)

Link: [https://undocs.org/S/RES/2601\(2021\)](https://undocs.org/S/RES/2601(2021))

The resolution focuses on the protection of children in armed conflict, stresses the need to prevent attacks or impediments on schools and hospitals, and urges States and armed groups to refrain from using schools for military purposes and to safeguard children’s right to education.

Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR)

Link:

https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/UDHR/Documents/UDHR_Translations/eng.pdf

The UDHR sets out the fundamental human rights to be universally protected, including the right to education, stating that everyone has the right to free and compulsory elementary education and that higher education shall be accessible to all on the basis of merit.

Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)

Link: <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/crc.pdf>

The CRC is a treaty that recognizes the rights of children and obliges States parties to ensure the protection, survival, and development of children, including the right to education without discrimination and to receive education that develops the child's personality, talents, and respect for human rights.

International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR)

Link: <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/cescr.pdf>

The ICESCR establishes the right of everyone to education, including free and compulsory primary education, available and accessible secondary education without discrimination, and the progressive realization of free higher education, with a focus on the full development of the human personality and respect for human rights.

Commentary on the Guidelines for Protecting Schools and Universities from Military Use during Armed Conflict (GCPEA)

Link:

<https://protectingeducation.org/publication/commentary-on-the-guidelines-for-protecting-schools-and-universities-from-military-use-during-armed-conflict/>

The Commentary explains and clarifies the "Guidelines for Protecting Schools and Universities from Military Use during Armed Conflict," highlighting how they support the protection of education during hostilities, interpreting them in relation to international humanitarian law and offering practical examples of how states and armed groups can implement the Guidelines to reduce military use of schools and universities and safeguard children's access to safe education.

USEFUL LINKS

Guidelines for Protecting Schools and Universities from Military Use during Armed Conflict

Link:

https://protectingeducation.org/wp-content/uploads/documents/documents_guidelines_en.pdf

The Guidelines set out concrete measures to help states and armed groups reduce or avoid the use of schools and universities for military purposes during armed conflict, in order to protect students, teachers, and the continuity of education.

The Safe Schools Declaration and the Guidelines for Protecting Schools and Universities from Military Use during Armed Conflict (ICRC)

Link:

<https://www.icrc.org/en/document/safe-schools-declaration-and-guidelines-protecting-schools-and-universities-military-use>

The ICRC explains the Safe Schools Declaration and the Guidelines, showing how they strengthen protection of education under international humanitarian law and guide parties to conflict on preserving schools' civilian character and safety.

SOLUTION ALTERNATIVES

- **Strengthening legal and political commitments:**
Encourage more states to endorse and implement the Safe Schools Declaration and the Guidelines for Protecting Schools and Universities from Military Use, including through national legislation that prohibits armed forces or armed groups from using schools and universities for military purposes, and by training military commanders and government officials on these rules. This would reduce direct military attacks on and occupation of schools and help create a norm that education spaces must remain protected civilian sites.
- **Supporting accountability and monitoring mechanisms:**
Invest in robust monitoring of attacks on schools and military use of education facilities by UN bodies, human-rights organisations, and local networks, and channel that evidence into international-criminal-law processes (such as ICC investigations) and domestic-level prosecutions. By increasing the legal and reputational costs of targeting or misusing schools, this approach can deter future violations and reinforce the right to education in war zones.

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