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Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights, including the right to development

Written statement* submitted by Society for Threatened Peoples, a non-governmental organization in special consultative status

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[13 February 2017]

* This written statement is issued, unedited, in the language(s) received from the submitting non-governmental organization(s).

Children and armed conflict in Sudan

According to the European Union's Humanitarian Aid and Civil Protection Unit (ECHO), some 2.1 million children in Sudan, representing 1 in 6 children in the East African country, are malnourished. Most of these malnourished children are living in the areas of armed conflict in the five Darfur provinces or in South Kordofan or Blue Nile. Most of the 2.6 million IDPs in the Darfur provinces are children or women. Fighting and insecurity in Darfur has displaced some 197,000 people in the year 2016. Ten thousands of them could not be registered as IDPs or reached by humanitarian aid due to fighting or government restrictions of humanitarian activities by international aid agencies.

Acute malnutrition rates in Sudan are the highest in the Middle East and North Africa region. The new displaced people urgently need shelter, fuel for heating and cooking and household supplies to care for the children. Children in Darfur have no perspective for education and adequate health services.

Children in Darfur not only are suffering from the disastrous humanitarian situation, but also from massive human rights violations. The failure of the Sudanese government to disarm militias has encouraged a campaign of terror by militia fighters against the civilian population. Children often become the first victims of this brutal and inhuman warfare against civilians. Between November 2016 and February 2017, at least ten children died in brutal attacks by militia fighters or soldiers in the Darfur provinces, eight children were abducted and five girls have been raped.

On February 2, two gunmen have raped a 14 years old girl who was on her way from Um Driseih to her village in Musku (South Darfur). The militia combatants grabbed her and raped her alternately. Then she was found, she was bleeding and unconscious. On Christmas Day 2016, seven militia fighters raped a higher secondary school student in Mukjar (Central Darfur). Only a day later, the 13-year old Idris Munir Makki, a pupil of the basic school, was shot dead by gunmen in Nierteti (Central Darfur). On January 10, 2017, three armed men riding on camels intercepted the 12 years old Shadia Haroun Ibrahim in North Darfur and abducted the girl. On January 10, 2017, three militiamen opened fire on a number of basic school pupils in El Kasr (North Darfur). This is only a small collection of individual cases of massive human rights violations against children in armed conflict in Darfur.

We are welcoming the renewed command order issued by the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) on January 25, 2017, prohibiting the recruitment and use of children in its forces, along with other violations against the rights of children. The organization insisted that any forms of abuses and sexual exploitation of children, abduction and killing and attacks on schools and hospitals strictly are forbidden.

Society for Threatened Peoples calls on the UN Human Rights Council to:

- Urge the government of Sudan to ensure the protection of children in armed conflict in the Darfur provinces, South Kordofan and Blue Nile,
- Disarm militias and ensure the respect of law and order in all areas of Sudan,

- End impunity for crimes and massive human rights violations against the civilian population,
 - Guarantee free humanitarian access to children and the civilian population in all conflict areas.
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