



Ministerio de  
**Relaciones Exteriores y Cultura**  
República Argentina

# PROTECTING EDUCATION FROM ATTACK

BUENOS AIRES CONFERENCE ON SAFE SCHOOLS

ARGENTINA | 28-29 MARCH 2017

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CONFERENCE REPORT

# FOREWORD

## MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND WORSHIP

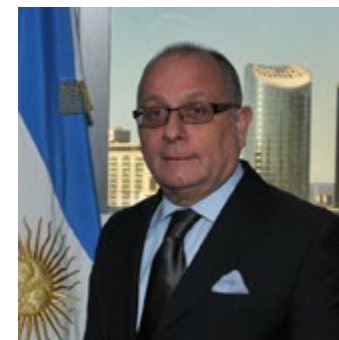
In many regions attacks on education occurs regularly. Armed groups intentionally target schools, teachers, and students and occupy educational facilities for military use. These actions are not only a flagrant violation of international humanitarian law and international human rights law, but they represent a direct challenge to education and all that it entitles: hope, development, progress, and liberty. Protecting education from attacks is not only a moral imperative but it is a strategic choice, as only through education is possible to enhance the full potential of the human capital.

In an environment of violence and fear, the quality of children's education is severely diminished. The situation demands a collective action based on the collaboration of governments, multilateral organizations, non-governmental organizations and civil society. With this spirit, Argentina reiterates its commitment to the protection of education and the promotion of the Safe School Declaration.

The Argentine Republic will continue believing in education and advocating for the respect of international humanitarian law and the defense of schools and education's integrity. In particular, the shifting nature of armed conflict presents new risks and challenges that require our unwavering attention and commitment.

Our present and future efforts are directed to echoing and reinforcing the message that education must be guaranteed and protected through a collective effort of the international community as a whole.

Since its beginning, the Safe Schools Declaration has come a long way. Led by Argentina and Norway throughout the first half of 2015, the declaration has passed from 37 States to 71. We are ready to keep leading the way of the initiative with the objective of reaching its universalization, bearing in mind that only through education is possible to build a better, fairer and more peaceful future.



**Minister of Foreign Affairs and Worship (Jun.2017-In office), Mr. Jorge Marcelo Faurie**

Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Worship

Argentine Republic

# FOREWORD

## CONFERENCE HOST & EX-MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND WORSHIP

Protecting schools from attack is a major commitment that we all need to make. In times of peace, schools represent education, a future for our children, a place to learn, to play, to socialize and to develop their skills, among many other activities. But in times of conflict, schools represent much more than that to children. Access to a safe school in the context of the chaos of war can give not only the hope of a better future but also a sense of routine, peace, and stability that they cannot find anywhere else.

When schools are used as bases, barracks, detention centers, weapon depots or sniper posts, we are depriving those children not only of the fundamental human right to education but also of a safe haven where they can prepare themselves to rebuild their own lives away from the confusion generated by conflict. Furthermore, the military use of schools exposes those children and their teachers to a dangerous environment, to the risk of violence, sexual assault, human trafficking, child recruitment, injury, and death.

Argentina is not among those countries that have to face this scourge. Nevertheless, we are convinced that we all have a role to play in the fight for safer schools in the world. In this context, Argentina decided to host the Second International Conference on Safe Schools, which contributed to help create a global consciousness to protect schools from attack, by exposing this problem.

We need to work together to delegitimize the use of schools for military purposes. And one way to achieve that goal is to endorse the Safe Schools Declaration that was presented during the Oslo Conference on Safe Schools in May 2015. I hope you can join us on this journey that will end when schools in all corners of the world are safe, and children in situations of conflict are able to enjoy their right to be safe while preparing themselves for their future.



**Ex-Minister of Foreign Affairs and Worship (Dec.2015 - Jun.2017), Ms. Susana Malcorra**

Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Worship

Argentine Republic

## FOREWORD

### PRESIDENT OF THE CONFERENCE & EX-SECRETARY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Argentina had the privilege to host in Buenos Aires the Second International Conference on Safe Schools as a follow up to the First Conference organized by Norway in 2015. It provided a platform to reinforce the commitments of the Safe Schools Declaration endorsed in Oslo and the share examples of effective application of the *Guidelines for Protecting Schools and Universities from Military Use during Armed Conflict*. The complex international situation calls on all of us to reflect on how to better engage in the prevention of deep political and humanitarian crises and to reduce their negative impact on the well-being and future of humanity. It also urges us not to remain indifferent to the situation of vulnerability suffered today by the civilian population, especially children, adolescents and young people, who are the main victims of armed conflicts.



Having those concerns in mind, Argentina, with the invaluable support and active participation of Norway, successfully hosted the Second International Conference on Safe Schools which was attended by delegates from more than 80 countries and numerous representatives of civil society. Their active participation contributed to a deeper understanding of the need for greater protection of children, students, teachers, and educational facilities during armed conflict. The event also provided an occasion for participants to share examples of good practice at national and international levels, and to discuss opportunities for future cooperation in the implementation of the Declaration.

We would like to express our gratitude to all the participants for their engagement during the discussions and to invite them to continue their commitment to devote further efforts to the protection of education during armed conflicts, bearing in mind that the education of our children is the only way to prevent future conflicts and to build a better and peaceful world.

**President of the Conference & Ex-Secretary of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Pedro Villagra Delgado**

Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Worship

Argentine Republic

## FOREWORD

### EX-SECRETARY OF STRATEGY & MILITARY AFFAIRS

In the field of development, armed conflicts are one of the main challenges faced by the international community. Besides the suffering they cause, they are a source of poverty, inequality and economic stagnation. From a humanitarian perspective, the indiscriminate use of force and deliberate attacks against civilians are two distinctive features of the armed conflicts of the 21st century. In fact, most of them are much more dangerous to civilians than to combatants.

Abuses against protected persons and the destruction of civilian and cultural property went from being merely a collateral consequence of war to being used as specific tactics to inflict greater harm and cause a greater impact. Armed conflicts have placed children directly at risk with alarming figures. It is essential that, in line with humanitarian law, the parties to an armed conflict, States and armed groups, comply with the applicable rules of protection of civilians. Moreover, to further protect children, students, and teachers, parties to armed conflict should not use schools or universities for military purposes.

The Oslo Conference marked the point of departure of a coordinated global effort to ensure a protected education for children and youth in conflict-affected countries. During the Second International Conference in Buenos Aires, challenges were set out and lessons learned were analyzed from different perspectives.

There is an urgent need for clear guidance on the Armed Forces' obligation to protect the safety of students and teachers, as well as the right to education in times of conflict. The most immediate task for the international community is to strengthen protection and maintain access to education for those trapped in conflict or those displaced from their homes. The political commitments contained in the Safe Schools Declaration and the clear and simple rules incorporated in the *Guidelines for Protecting Schools and Universities from Military Use during Armed Conflict* provide guidance to State officials and, in particular, provide tools to guide soldiers when they are required to make decisions in battle situations or in other military operations.



**Ex-Secretary of Strategy and Military Affairs, Mr. Ángel Tello**

Ministry of Defense  
Argentine Republic

## Acknowledgements

The Second International Conference on Safe Schools allowed participants to review progress in implementing the Safe Schools Declaration, to take stock of the implementation of the commitments contained therein and to share concrete examples of good practice at national and international levels. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Worship of Argentina would like to express its sincere gratitude to the government delegations and representatives from the international organizations and civil society that were instrumental in achieving these successful results and sending a strong political message to the world. By engaging in constructive discussions, participants contributed to raising awareness of the need to protect education from attack.



The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Worship of Argentina wishes to convey its deep appreciation for the valuable support of the Government of Norway as our partner in the Safe Schools process. Norway's close engagement in these collective efforts is fundamental for achieving real change to safeguard education during armed conflict.



The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Worship of Argentina also appreciates the cooperation of the Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack and several of its member organizations, Save the Children, Human Rights Watch, and Article 36. Our close cooperation is a clear example of the positive results that can be achieved when governments and civil society work together for a humanitarian cause.

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### Special thanks to...

The local teams' efforts are also acknowledged warmly. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Worship of Argentina extend its grateful thanks to the General Division of Human Rights, and to the Permanent Mission of Argentina to the International Organizations in Geneva of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Worship, and to the Division of International Humanitarian Law and Human Rights of the Ministry of Defense of Argentina and to their administrative and technical services, for their work in managing and organizing the Second International Conference.

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# Introduction

The Second International Conference on Safe Schools took place in Buenos Aires on 28 and 29 March 2017. The Conference was organized by the Government of Argentina with the support of the Government of Norway. The conference reviewed States' efforts to protect education from attack, taking stock of the implementation of the commitments contained in the Safe Schools Declaration which include continuing education during armed conflict and using the *Guidelines for Protecting Schools and Universities from Military Use*. It contributed to a deeper understanding of the need for greater protection of children, students, teachers and educational facilities during armed conflict and provided an occasion for participants to share examples of good practice at national and international levels, and to discuss opportunities for future cooperation in the implementation of the Declaration.

Delegations from more than 80 States, the United Nations system, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack (GCPEA), other civil society organizations, and academic institutions, participated in the conference.

## BUENOS AIRES CONFERENCE PARTICIPANTS



Participants at the conference expressed deep concern over continued attacks on, and military use of, educational facilities, which put children, students, and teachers at risk of harm and disrupt the provision of education in armed conflict. **States reaffirmed their commitment to strengthen the protection of education from attack** to enable the safe continued education of children and youth, no matter where in the world they live, and to protect educational facilities from military use.



## States that have endorsed the Safe Schools Declaration



Afghanistan, Albania, Andorra, Angola, Argentina, Armenia, Austria, Belgium, Botswana, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Canada, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic Republic of Congo, Denmark, Ecuador, El Salvador, Finland, France, Georgia, Greece, Honduras, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Lebanon, Liberia, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malaysia, Malta, Montenegro, Mozambique, Netherlands, New Zealand, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Palestine, Panama, Paraguay, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Romania, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Slovakia, Slovenia, Somalia, South Africa, South Sudan, Spain, Sudan, Sweden, Switzerland, Uruguay, Yemen, and Zambia.

(November 2017 - For updated information, check the following link: <https://www.regjeringen.no/en/topics/foreign-affairs/development-cooperation/protecting-education-endorsed/id2460245/>.)



## 1. The Safe Schools Declaration

The Process

Objectives



## The Safe Schools Process - Protecting education from attack

To increase the protection of education during armed conflict and reduce the harm caused by attacks on education, Argentina and Norway led the state process of developing the Safe Schools Declaration. The Declaration was adopted at the First International Conference on Safe Schools in Oslo, Norway, in May 2015, and has been endorsed by 71 countries as of November 2017, exceeding one-third of the United Nations' membership.

The specific purpose of the initiative is to contribute to a sense of normalcy in the lives of affected children and adolescents, to continue their education, to preserve their physical integrity, to prevent child recruitment and to prepare them to face the post-conflict period in the best possible way.

### ENDORSEMENT OF THE DECLARATION

States can announce their endorsement at any time by making a public statement and/or sending an endorsement letter (sample letter available at the following link: [http://www.protectingeducation.org/sites/default/files/documents/template\\_endorsement\\_letter.pdf](http://www.protectingeducation.org/sites/default/files/documents/template_endorsement_letter.pdf)) to the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs via its embassies or permanent missions or directly at: Seksjon.for.humanitaere.sporsmal@mfa.no

# The Safe Schools Declaration

By endorsing the Declaration, States make a commitment to work together to:



Implement the *Guidelines on Protecting Schools and Universities from Military Use during Armed Conflict*;



Investigate allegations of violations of national and international law and prosecute perpetrators;



Improve reporting on attacks on schools and universities;



Develop and promote conflict-sensitive approaches to education;



Collect reliable data on attacks and military use of schools and universities;



Pursue strategies to continue education during armed conflict and restore access to education after attack;



Provide assistance to victims of attacks;



Support the work of the United Nations on the children and armed conflict agenda.



## 2. Buenos Aires Conference



II Conferencia Internacional sobre  
**ESCUELAS SEGURAS**  
PROTEGIENDO LA EDUCACIÓN DE ATAQUES

II International Conference on  
**SAFE SCHOOLS**  
PROTECTING EDUCATION FROM ATTACK

BUENOS AIRES, ARGENTINA | 28-29 MARCH 2017

## Summary of the Conference

The Second International Conference on Safe Schools provided an opportunity to draw the attention of the international community to the gravity of attacks against students, teachers, schools and universities and of the military use of education facilities. Furthermore, it offered a forum for the participants to share experiences, raise awareness and increase the visibility of the Safe Schools Declaration and *Guidelines*.



Edificio Libertador. Ministry of Defense of the Argentine Republic.

A photograph of the Ministry of Defense building in Buenos Aires, Argentina. The building is a large, multi-story structure with a classical architectural style, featuring a prominent entrance with columns and a flagpole in front. A tall palm tree stands to the right of the building. The sky is clear and blue.

## Day One: Key Findings

### Panel discussion 1: Attacks on education

The aim of the first panel was to focus on the global issue of attacks on education, highlighting the scale and frequency of these attacks. It was followed by the General Debate with updates from States and organizations on measures they are taking to prevent and respond to attacks on education.

Panelists referred to evidence that demonstrated that a series of attacks\* on education had occurred in at least 21 countries since 2013. These attacks, too often deliberately targeted, include the bombing, burning and destruction of educational facilities, and result in horrific consequences, such as the death and injury of children, students and teachers; the risk of abduction, violence and abuse; the disruption of learning opportunities and the deprivation of access to schools for fear of being attacked. Furthermore, experiences from affected countries show that attacks often force schools to close, and those that continue to operate, do so at great risk. Girls are often disproportionately impacted by attacks and military use, including because parents are particularly wary of sending their daughters to school when there is the risk of violence.

\* A series of attacks means 10 attacks or more.

During the opening session of the conference, **Ms. Patricia Erb, CEO of Save the Children Canada**, highlighted the importance of this issue from the child's perspective, sharing the words of Maha, a ten-year-old girl from Syria:

***"We ran downstairs and we heard the explosion. We knew it had hit the school again because the explosion was very close. It was the second time the school had been hit in a month. I believe that I will never be able to go school again after this. I feel very bad because if I cannot finish school then I will not be able to go to university to become a doctor."***

This harrowing testimony represents the voices of many children and young people across the globe who daily suffer the consequences of armed conflicts. As Eglantyne Jebb (founder of Save the Children) once said, that "All wars, whether just or unjust, disastrous or victorious, are waged against the child."

## What is the impact of attacks on education?

- Increased **vulnerability**: Students, teachers, and academics are exposed to violence, recruitment, sexual harassment, or even death.
- **Schools are destroyed** or forced to close and can take many years to reopen. The whole community and even future generations suffer the consequences.
- **Girls** can be disproportionately affected as parents are particularly wary of sending their daughters to schools if schools are used by soldiers or there is a perceived risk of sexual violence at or on the way to school.
- The **financial cost** is significant, laying to waste the millions of dollars spent on supporting education in countries affected by conflict.

## Why are schools attacked?

Attacks on school buildings, students, and teachers happen for a variety of reasons, depending on the context.

- Schools can be targeted because they are **state institutions** with teachers who are state employees – in rural areas sometimes the only symbol of government around. Schools may be attacked specifically to undermine confidence in government control.
- Many attacks are **ideological** – some armed groups view education as Western or they oppose girls' education.
- Some attacks are intended to restrict **teacher trade union activity** and academic freedom.
- **Uneven access** to education can be a trigger for violence. Sometimes, school curricula are perceived to exclude certain groups.
- Schools are also easy sites for **recruitment** and **sexual violence**.

## Recent developments...

- During the Buenos Aires conference, the government of **Belgium** announced its endorsement of the Safe Schools Declaration, in line with its strong commitment to improve protection of children during armed conflict, and responding to the call in UN Security Council Resolution 2225 (2015). The government of **Andorra** also endorsed the Declaration to coincide with the Buenos Aires conference.
- Since endorsing the Declaration and committing to implement the *Guidelines*, **Somalia's Ministry of Defense** has expanded its Child Protection Department, which addresses the Safe Schools agenda. In addition, communities, education authorities, UN agencies, and NGOs are advocating with parties to conflict to vacate schools on a case-by-case basis.



## Panel discussion 2: Protecting schools and universities from military use

In this panel, presentations on the strongest examples of good practice in implementation of the *Guidelines for Protecting Schools and Universities from Military Use during Armed Conflict* were made.

The panel showed that the use of schools by armed actors exposes children to the risk of interrupted education, recruitment, trafficking, sexual violence, and attack by opposing parties. This practice presents a major impediment to efforts to make schools safe for all. Participants were told that military use of educational facilities had been documented in at least 24 States in all regions of the world since 2013. Since the Declaration was opened for endorsement in Oslo, an increasing number of States have incorporated the *Guidelines* not only into domestic policy, but also into military training and frameworks for national and international operations. Representatives from the United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations highlighted their prohibition on the military use of schools and shared examples of their efforts to vacate schools occupied by armed groups.

Mr. Darin Reeves, Head of Training, Roméo Dallaire Child Soldiers Initiative, launched the toolkit to guide understanding and implementation of the *Guidelines*, developed through a partnership between GCPEA and the Dallaire Initiative. The toolkit is available on the GCPEA website in English, French, and Spanish, and aims to assist those involved in the planning and execution of military operations in relation to decisions about the use and targeting of institutions dedicated to education. The toolkit comprises practical tools and guidance for militaries and non-state armed groups to protect educational facilities from attack and military use.

## GOOD PRACTICES AROUND THE WORLD

For the government of **Afghanistan**, the safety of schools is an utmost priority and efforts have been further strengthened since the endorsement of the Safe Schools Declaration. In this regard, the Ministry of Education has requested parties to the conflict to refrain from using schools for military purposes. Unfortunately, armed opposition groups such as Taliban, Daesh and other terrorist networks continue to use schools for military purposes.

**Switzerland** is in the process of amending its Armed Forces' manual of the law of armed conflict. The current draft mentions civilian education facilities explicitly as protected objects. Recognizing that the destruction of educational institutions may result in particularly grave disadvantages for the community, that children are present in schools, and that universities and other higher education institutions often constitute or host significant cultural objects, the Swiss armed forces would be instructed to avoid the military use of schools and universities.

## GOOD PRACTICES AROUND THE WORLD ►

**Italy** reiterated its commitment to implement domestic legislation to prohibit/limit the use of schools and places of worship for military purpose and to support the inclusion of the *Guidelines* into military manuals, doctrine and other means of dissemination.

The government of **Slovenia** has incorporated the Guidelines into the training materials for international operations and missions. In addition, the Law Faculty of the University of Ljubljana included the Safe Schools Declaration and Guidelines as a case study concerning the military use of schools in an international competition for students on humanitarian and refugee law, the All European International Humanitarian and Refugee Law Moot Court Competition.

The government of **Ecuador** announced that it is currently revising the training curriculum for members of the armed forces to incorporate stronger protections for schools and other educational infrastructure.

**Nigeria** announced the government's plans to formulate a national policy on Safe Schools so as to bring all stakeholders on board for the implementation of the *Guidelines*.

Nigeria is carrying out a relocation procedure of students and teachers from high-risk zones to safe zones.

**Spain** outlined how its peacekeeping forces avoid the military use of educational infrastructure through effective operational planning.

The government of **New Zealand** has amended its Law of Armed Conflict Manual to include explicit protection of education institutions.

The government of **Palestine**, working together with Save the Children has implemented different plans to protect the education:

- The establishment of National Committee for International Humanitarian Law to enforce IHL.
  - Directives from the President of the State of Palestine to security forces calling on them to abide by the rules of IHL and international human rights law.
  - The creation of training guidelines for security forces.
  - The dissemination of reports outlining how key actors (schools, directorates, the central ministry, stakeholders) should respond in case of attack.
  - The Ministry of Education and Higher Education also developed an online module on the UN Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism.
- Save the Children provides training and communication materials.

In **South Sudan**, according to a 2014 Order of the Army Chief of Staff, all soldiers are prohibited from occupying or using schools in any manner.

### Panel discussion 3: Working with non-state armed actors for the protection of the education from attack

The objective of the third panel was to discuss efforts to engage with armed non-state actors to encourage them to protect education from attack and refrain from military use of schools and universities. Panelists referred to the importance of working with armed non-state actors and signaled how the Declaration serves as a tool for raising awareness. Although there are significant challenges in this area, both the Declaration and the *Guidelines* can and indeed are used as a tool to increase respect for schools as zones of peace, also by armed non-state actors.



Panel discussion 1: Attacks on education

## Day Two: Key Findings

### Panel discussion 4: Monitoring and reporting on attacks on education

The purpose of this panel was to discuss methods and tools for data gathering at the national, regional and international level.

Reliable and relevant data on attacks on educational facilities, victims of attacks, and military use of schools and universities during armed conflict was highlighted as necessary in order to mount an effective humanitarian response and provide assistance to victims of attacks on education. Examples of tools to collect, analyze and disseminate data, such as the UN-led Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism, national education clusters and the GOPEA-led Education Under Attack reports, were presented. Participants further underscored the role of national armed forces and UN peacekeeping missions in collecting and ensuring access to accurate and reliable information on attacks on education.

### THE IMPACT OF ARMED CONFLICT ON CHILDREN



MORE THAN  
**2 MILLION**  
DIED



APPROXIMATELY  
**6 MILLION**  
WERE DISABLE



**20 MILLION**  
BECOME  
REFUGEES

Secretary Ángel Tello of the Ministry of Defense of Argentina highlighted how, according to UNICEF data, armed conflicts have placed children directly at risk with truly alarming figures. It is estimated that, between 1998 and 2008, more than two million children died as a result of armed conflict and approximately six million were disabled. Approximately 300,000 children were recruited as soldiers and sent to the fighting front by the parties to the conflict. Some 20 million children have had to leave their homes, becoming refugees or internally displaced persons.

## Panel discussion 5: Seeking accountability for attacks on education

This panel discussed existing accountability mechanisms and how they can be used to seek accountability for attacks on education. Holding government armed forces and non-state armed groups accountable for attacking schools is essential in deterring attacks on education and military use of schools. Using existing mechanisms, including the International Criminal Court and the International Humanitarian Fact Finding Commission, to investigate allegations of violations and identify and prosecute perpetrators, is essential for justice and reconciliation, and to prevent future unlawful attacks. The Declaration and the Guidelines are useful tools to promote compliance with applicable international and national legal frameworks, whose effectiveness is crucial for achieving accountability.

During the Conference, the Global Education Cluster presented the booklet on legal accountability, which was published in 2012. The publication notes that attacks on education might violate norms of international human rights law, international humanitarian law and/or international criminal law. More recently, in 2016, GEC published a guidance note on monitoring, reporting, and responding to attacks on education, available at this link:

<http://educationcluster.net/resources/monitoring-reporting-responding-attacks-education/>

### Protecting Education Booklets:

Download the full set clicking here: <http://educationcluster.net/resources/>

## Panel discussion 6: Conflict-sensitive education policy, and continuing education during armed conflict



Panel discussion 6: Panel discussion 6: Conflict-sensitive education policy, and continuing education during armed conflict.

States and organizations shared their experience of developing, adopting and promoting conflict-sensitive approaches to education in international humanitarian and development programs and efforts to support the re-establishment of educational facilities.

Disruption to schooling severely affects children's education, future opportunities, and psychological well-being. The closure of educational facilities, even for a limited period of time, has a severe and long-lasting impact on learning and prevents children from returning to education, impacting entire generations in some situations. Continuing education in a safe place during armed conflict is essential to provide quality learning opportunities and a sense of normality, safety, and routine for children experiencing armed conflict whilst building foundations for peace among future generations. Failure to do so not only impacts individual students, it affects families, communities and sometimes entire regions. Ensuring a rapid return to education is critical, including undertaking provisional measures, such as building temporary structures, providing culturally appropriate learning materials in the relevant languages, and teacher training. Measures must be undertaken to guarantee safe access to schools including ensuring that school grounds are free from weapons and explosive remnants of war, that routes to schools are safe, and that buildings are adequately reinforced and protected to ensure they are safe places for learning.

**Nigeria** implements several measures to enhance school security, such as: constructing ditches around school perimeter fences; installing security lighting throughout school compounds; using sand bags to deter intruders; deploying armed military personnel to carry out vehicular and foot patrols; stationing security personnel at school gates, and setting up roadblocks on access roads. The government also employs several communications measures to improve school security: phone numbers of key staff members are displayed and distributed; schools provide walkie-talkie radios to key staff to facilitate prompt communication; and the government is installing closed-circuit cameras to monitor people moving in and around schools. Students and staff are provided with personal security training to equip them with the skills to respond to a kidnapping attempt, suspicious objects on school grounds, or the impact of a bomb or arson attack on the school.

**Niger** outlined how school directors in insecure areas of Niger have a direct contact line with a local military and can make a straight appeal for action if a threat develops. A strict record of attendance and control of visitants is maintained in schools. Joint education and child protection activities have been developed, with awareness-raising among teachers on protection themes, such as the recruitment of children by armed groups, family reunification, and risks linked to explosive devices. Alternative education is delivered via a radio program for children who cannot travel to school due to insecurity. In 2016, 17,825 children were accommodated in temporary or permanent classrooms in 2016 as part of the humanitarian response. For the school year 2016-2017, approximately 137,374 children will benefit from relocation to temporary classrooms.



## Panel discussion 7: Cooperation and international assistance to support the prevention of attacks against education

This panel discussed cooperative efforts to prevent attacks on education, including implementation of global initiatives, actions taken at regional and international fora, such as the United Nations, and financial support to relevant agencies and organizations.

The Safe Schools Declaration is a point of convergence, exchange, and collaboration amongst States, international organizations and civil society actors that seek to share a common commitment to the protection of education during armed conflict. The Declaration creates a community of practice and a forum for mobilization of funds and political will.

Vice-Minister Villagra Delgado of Argentina highlighted how implementation of the commitments contained in the Safe Schools Declaration contributes positively to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, specifically those related to Quality Education (SDG4), Gender Equality (SDG5) and Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions (SDG16).



Palacio San Martín, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Worship of the Argentine Republic



# Agenda

## DAY ONE - TUESDAY 28 MARCH 2017

Venue: Edificio Libertador. Ministry of Defense of the Argentine Republic

### 9.00 AM | Registration

### 9.30 AM | Opening ceremony: Summary of the theme and recent developments

- Save the Children Norway video with voices of children.
- Mr. Ángel Tello, Secretary for Strategic and Military Affairs, Vice Minister of Defense of the Argentine Republic.
- Amb. Pedro Villagra Delgado, Secretary of Foreign Affairs, Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Argentine Republic, and President of the Conference.
- Ms. Laila Bokhari, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Norway.
- Ms. Patricia Erb, Save the Children Canada.
- Video message from H.E. Mr. Jean-Marc Ayrault, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Development, France.

### 10.00 AM | Panel discussion 1: Attacks on education

- Mr. Jorge Szeinfeld, Ministry of Defense of the Argentine Republic.
- Ms. Kahraman Arafa, Directorate General for Field Follow-Up, Ministry of Education and Higher Education, State of Palestine.
- Ms. Aisha Yesufu, President, Bring Back our Girls.
- Ms. Zama Coursen-Neff, Co-Chair, Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack.

### 11.00 AM | Coffee break

### 11.15 AM | General Debate

Continuation of the discussion focused on the global issue of attacks on education, highlighting the scale and frequency of these attacks, with updates from States and organizations on measures they are taking to prevent and respond to attacks on education.



## DAY ONE - TUESDAY 28 MARCH 2017

### 12.30 PM | Lunch

### 14.00 PM | Implementing the *Guidelines*

Launch of “Implementing the *Guidelines*: A Tool-kit to Guide Understanding and Implementation of the *Guidelines for Protecting Schools and Universities from Military Use during Armed Conflict*”.

- Mr. Darin Reeves, Head of Training, Roméo Dallaire Child Soldiers Initiative

### 14.30 PM | Panel discussion 2: Protecting schools and universities from military use

- Human Rights Watch video with voices of the military.
- Mr. Mark Allen, Executive Director, Office of Human Rights and Indigenous Affairs Policy, Global Affairs Canada.
- Major Zabrina Yominique Hoggard, USAF, Future Plans Officer, United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA), Department of Peacekeeping Operations.
- Professor Stephen Haines, Professor of Public International Law, University of Greenwich
- Mr. Bede Sheppard, Deputy Director, Child Right's Division, Human Rights Watch

### 16.00 PM | Coffee break

### 16.30 PM | Panel discussion 3: Working with non-state armed actors for the protection of the education

- Mr. Marcelo Viegas, Minister Counsellor, Embassy of the Federative Republic of Brazil to the Argentine Republic.
- Mr. Hanspeter Mock, Ambassador of Switzerland to the Argentine Republic.
- Ms. Elisabeth Decrey Warner, Executive President, Geneva Call.
- Mr. Pierre Gentile, Head of Protection, International Committee of the Red Cross.

A vertical image on the left side of the page showing a white watercolor palette with various colored paints (red, orange, yellow, green, blue, purple) and several paintbrushes resting on a wooden surface.

# Agenda

## DAY TWO - WEDNESDAY 29 MARCH 2017

Venue: Palacio San Martín, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Worship of the Argentine Republic

### 9.00 AM | Registration

### 9.30 AM | Welcome remarks and Panel discussion 4

Welcome remarks by Amb. Pedro Villagra Delgado, Secretary of Foreign Affairs, Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Argentine Republic and President of the Conference.

#### Panel discussion 4: Monitoring and reporting on attacks on education

- Video message by Ms. Leila Zerrougui, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict.
- Moderator: Brig. Gen. Gertrude Mwale, Defense Attaché to the African Union, Zambia.
- Mr. Mirwais Qaderi, Third Secretary, Permanent Mission of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan to the United Nations Office in Geneva.
- Ms. Marie-Louise Kjellstrom, Child Protection in Emergencies Specialist, UNICEF.
- Mr. Tyler Amot, Coordinator, Global Education Cluster.

### 11.00 AM | Coffee break

### 11.15 AM | Panel discussion 5: Seeking accountability for attacks on education

- Moderator: Ms. Gioconda Ubeda Rivera, Ambassador of Costa Rica to the Argentine Republic.
- Ms. Gabriela Quinteros, Director for Human Rights, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Worship of the Argentine Republic.
- Mr. Peter Klanduch, Senior Program Manager for Law and Education.
- Mr. Mario J.A. Oyarzabal, International Humanitarian Fact-Finding Commission.

## DAY TWO - WEDNESDAY 29 MARCH 2017

### 12.30 PM | Lunch

### 14.00 PM | Panel discussion 6: Conflict-sensitive education policy, and continuing education during armed conflict

- Video message by Ms. Irina Bokova, Director General, UNESCO.
- H.E. Mr. François Croquette, Ambassador for Human Rights, France.
- Mrs. Hadiza Dia, Technical advisor in Education, First Minister's Office Niger.
- Ms. Kerstin Holst, Chief, Education in Emergencies Desk, UNESCO.
- Dr. Beatrice Njenga, Head of Education Division, Human Resources, Science and Technology Department, African Union Commission.
- Mr. Pierre Gentile, Head of Protection, International Committee of the Red Cross.
- Mr. Christian Visnes, Country Director for Colombia, Norwegian Refugee Council.

### 15.30 PM | Panel discussion 7: Cooperation and international assistance to support the prevention of attacks against education

- Amb. Yvette Stevens, Permanent Representative of Sierra Leone to the United Nations Office in Geneva.
- Ms. Laila Bokhari, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Norway.
- Mrs. Barbro Elm, Ambassador of Sweden to the Argentine Republic.

### 17.00 PM | Closing ceremony – Presentation of Chair's Summary

- Amb. Pedro Villagra Delgado, Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Argentine Republic
- Mr. Ángel Tello, Secretary for Strategic and Military Affairs, Vice Minister of Defense of the Argentine Republic.

### 17.30 PM | Reception

# List of participants



93 STATES

1. Afghanistan	17. China	33. Guinea	49. Madagascar	65. Philippines	81. Switzerland
2. Albania	18. Colombia	34. Holy See	50. Malaysia	66. Poland	82. Syria
3. Algeria	19. Costa Rica	35. Honduras	51. Mexico	67. Qatar	83. Thailand
4. Argentina	20. Czech Republic	36. Hungary	52. Montenegro	68. Republic of Korea	84. Tunisia
5. Armenia	21. Croatia	37. India	53. Morocco	69. Romania	85. Turkey
6. Australia	22. Djibouti	38. Indonesia	54. Netherlands	70. Russian Federation	86. Ukraine
7. Austria	23. Ecuador	39. Iraq	55. New Zealand	71. Saudi Arabia	87. United Kingdom
8. Azerbaijan	24. Egypt	40. Ireland	56. Nicaragua	72. Senegal	88. United States of America
9. Bangladesh	25. El Salvador	41. Italy	57. Niger	73. Serbia	89. Uruguay
10. Belgium	26. Ethiopia	42. Jamaica	58. Nigeria	74. Seychelles	90. Venezuela
11. Bolivia	27. Finland	43. Japan	59. Norway	75. Sierra Leone	91. Vietnam
12. Brazil	28. France	44. Jordan	60. Palau	76. Slovakia	92. Yemen
13. Bulgaria	29. Georgia	45. Kenya	61. Pakistan	77. Slovenia	93. Zambia
14. Cameroon	30. Germany	46. Kuwait	62. Palestine	78. Spain	
15. Canada	31. Greece	47. Lebanon	63. Panama	79. Sudan	
16. Chile	32. Guatemala	48. Macedonia	64. Peru	80. Sweden	



## CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS

1. Article 36
2. Bring Back Our Girls
3. Geneva Call
4. Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack (GCPEA)
5. Norwegian Refugee Council
6. Roméo Dallaire Child Soldiers Initiative
7. Save the Children
8. University of Greenwich



## INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

1. African Union
2. United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations
3. International Committee of the Red Cross
4. United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)
5. United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)
6. United Nations Development Program
7. United Nations system in Argentina

### 3. Conclusion

Closing Remarks

Outcome of the Buenos Aires Conference



## Closing Remarks

As shown during the Second International Conference on Safe Schools, protecting schools from attack is especially important in order to provide safety to the one of the most vulnerable groups of the civilian population during armed conflicts, the children. Protecting schools from attack ensures continuity between past and future, and is one of the best ways to prevent new conflicts, an urgent need in a time where humanitarian crisis are becoming more frequent and complex, and resources to face them are more and more scarce.

Norway and Argentina engaged in the Safe School process five years ago with the final objective of protecting education during armed conflicts. Fortunately, many countries and organizations in close collaboration have joined their efforts to make possible the spread of this initiative around the world.

With the premise that education is a right and a prerequisite for peace and development, the initiative invites States to endorse the Safe School Declaration, an inter-governmental political commitment that provides the opportunity to express support for protecting students, teachers, schools, and universities from attack during times of armed conflict; the importance of the continuation of education during armed conflict; and the implementation of concrete measures to deter the military use of schools. By joining the Safe Schools Declaration, States commit to implement the *Guidelines for Protecting Schools and Universities from Military Use during Armed Conflict*.

During this conference, we had the opportunity to exchange successful experiences which help to consolidate good practices at national level. During the panels, topics such as the importance of implementing accountability mechanisms, the different methods and tools for data gathering at the national, regional and international level, and how to achieve the strong engagement of all states, were presented.

Argentina was honored to host the Second International Conference on Safe School and would like to thank all the countries and organizations who participated and cooperated with deep engagement for the success of this meeting. This conference was a key global event to refocus attention on the issue of attacks on education, and prepare for working ahead on this issue to ensure further effective implementation of the commitments contained in the Declaration.

Education is a right and a prerequisite for peace and development. The governments of Argentina and Norway invite States to endorse and implement the Safe School Declaration.

# Outcome of the Buenos Aires Conference

## Chair's summary<sup>1</sup>

The Second International Conference on Safe Schools took place from 28 to 29 March 2017 in Buenos Aires. The Conference was organized by the Government of Argentina with the support of the Government of Norway. The conference reviewed states' efforts to protect education from attack, taking stock of the implementation of the commitments contained in the Safe Schools Declaration which include continuing education during armed conflict and using the Guidelines for Protecting Schools and Universities from Military Use. It contributed to a deeper understanding of the need for greater protection of children, students, teachers and educational facilities during armed conflict and provided an occasion for participants to share examples of good practice at national and international levels, and to discuss opportunities for future cooperation in the implementation of the Declaration.

Delegations from 80 States, the United Nations system, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack (GCPEA), other civil society organizations, and academic institutions, participated in the Conference.

The Second International Conference on Safe Schools built upon the outcomes of the Oslo international Conference on Safe Schools, hosted by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Norway in May 2015, where the Safe Schools Declaration was first opened for endorsement by states.

In the lead-up to the Conference, Slovakia, France, Canada, Armenia, and Malta endorsed the Declaration. Belgium announced its endorsement at the Conference, becoming the 62nd State to join the Declaration. Participants highlighted that the initiative concerns all states committed to the protection of education, whether they are directly affected by armed conflict or not. States that have not yet endorsed, were encouraged to do so.

Opening remarks were made by the Vice Minister of Defense of the Argentine Republic, Mr. Ángel Tello, the Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Argentine Republic, Ambassador Pedro Villagra Delgado, the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Norway, Ms. Laila Bokhari, and the President and CEO of Save the Children Canada, Ms. Patricia Erb.

Participants at the conference expressed deep concern over continued attacks on, and military use of, educational facilities, which put children, students, and teachers at risk of harm and disrupt the provision of education in armed conflict. States reaffirmed their commitment to strengthen the protection of education from attack to enable the safe continued education of children and youth, no matter where in the world they live, and to protect educational facilities from military use.

1. This document is presented under the responsibility of the President of the Conference. It draws on the comments advanced during the discussions, and summarizes the main ideas and conclusions. It is not intended to be exhaustive nor does it constitute a negotiated outcome.

# Outcome of the Buenos Aires Conference

Key conclusions from the substantive sessions

## Preventing attacks on education:

Panelists referred to evidence that demonstrates that attacks on schools have occurred in at least 21 countries since 2013. These attacks, too often deliberately targeted, include the bombing, burning and destruction of educational facilities, and result in horrific consequences, such as the death and injury of children, students and teachers; the risk of abduction, violence and abuse; the disruption of learning opportunities and the deprivation of access to schools for fear of being attacked. Furthermore, experiences from affected countries show that attacks often force schools to close, and those that continue to operate, do so at risk of impaired teaching, with girls being particularly affected.

## Protecting schools and universities from military use:

The use of schools by armed actors exposes children to the risk of interrupted education, recruitment, trafficking, sexual violence, and attack by opposing parties. This practice presents a major impediment in efforts to make schools safe for all. Evidence was shown of continued military use of educational facilities documented in 24 states in all regions of the world since 2013. Since the Declaration was opened for endorsement in Oslo, an increasing number of states have incorporated the guidelines not only into domestic policy, but also into military training and frameworks for national and international operations. Representatives from the United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations highlighted their prohibition on the military use of schools and shared examples of their efforts to vacate schools occupied by armed groups.

A toolkit to assist in the understanding and the implementation of the Guidelines, comprising practical tools and guidance for militaries and non-state armed groups to protect educational facilities from attack and military use, was launched at the Conference.

## Working with non-state armed actors for the protection of the education from attack

Panelists referred to the importance of working with non-state armed actors and signaled how the Declaration serves as a tool for raising awareness. Although there are significant challenges in this area, both the Declaration and the Guidelines can and indeed are used as a tool to increase respect for schools as zones of peace, also by non-state armed actors.

## Monitoring and reporting on attacks on education

Reliable and relevant data on attacks on educational facilities, victims of attacks, and military use of schools and universities during armed conflict was highlighted as necessary in order to mount an effective humanitarian response and provide assistance to victims of attacks on education. Examples of tools to collect, analyse and disseminate data, such as the UN-led Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism, national education clusters and the GCPEA-led Education Under Attack reports, were presented. Participants further underscored the role of national armed forces and UN peacekeeping missions in collecting and ensuring access to accurate and reliable information on attacks on education.



### Seeking accountability for attacks on education

Holding government armed forces and non-state armed groups accountable for attacking schools is essential in deterring attacks on education and military use of schools. Using existing mechanisms, including the International Criminal Court and the International Humanitarian Fact Finding Commission, to investigate allegations of violations, identify and prosecute perpetrators, is essential for justice and reconciliation, and to prevent future unlawful attacks. The Declaration and the Guidelines are useful tools to promote compliance with applicable international and national legal frameworks, whose effectiveness is crucial for achieving accountability.

### Conflict-sensitive education policy, and continuing education during armed conflict

Disruption to schooling severely affects children's education, future opportunities, and psychological well-being. The closure of educational facilities, even for a limited period of time, has a severe and long-lasting impact on learning and prevents children from returning to education, impacting entire generations in some situations. Continuing education in a safe place during armed conflict is essential to provide quality learning opportunities and a sense of normality, safety, and routine for children experiencing armed conflict whilst building foundations for peace among future generations. Failure to do so not only impacts individual students, it affects families, communities and sometimes entire regions. Ensuring a rapid return to education is critical, including undertaking provisional measures such as building temporary structures, providing language and culturally appropriate learning materials and teacher training. Measures must be undertaken to guarantee safe access to schools including ensuring that school grounds are free from weapons and explosive remnants of war, that routes to schools are safe, and that buildings are adequately reinforced and protected to ensure they are safe places for learning.

### Cooperation and international assistance to support the prevention of attacks against education

The Safe Schools Declaration is a point of convergence, exchange, and collaboration amongst States, international organizations and civil society actors that seek to share a common commitment to the protection of education during armed conflict. The Declaration creates a community of practice and a forum for mobilization of funds and political will.

In light of the commitment to meet on a regular basis to review the implementation of the Declaration and to promote its universalization, the Chair invites endorsing States to consider hosting a third Conference on Safe Schools.



## Annexes

Declaration & *Guidelines*

Relevant Websites





## Safe School Declaration

**The impact of armed conflict on education presents urgent humanitarian, development and wider social challenges. Worldwide, schools and universities have been bombed, shelled and burned, and children, students, teachers and academics have been killed, maimed, abducted or arbitrarily detained.** Educational facilities have been used by parties to armed conflict as, inter alia, bases, barracks or detention centers. Such actions expose students and education personnel to harm, deny large numbers of children and students their right to education and so deprive communities of the foundations on which to build their future. In many countries, armed conflict continues to destroy not just school infrastructure, but the hopes and ambitions of a whole generation of children.

Attacks on education include violence against educational facilities, students and education personnel. Attacks, and threats of attack, can cause severe and long lasting harm to individuals and societies. Access to education may be undermined; the functioning of educational facilities may be blocked, or education personnel and students may stay away, fearing for their safety. Attacks on schools and universities have been used to promote intolerance and exclusion – to further gender discrimination, for example by preventing the education of girls, to perpetuate conflict between certain communities, to restrict cultural diversity, and to deny academic freedom or the right of association. Where educational facilities are used for military purposes it can increase the risk of the recruitment and use of children by armed actors or may leave children and youth vulnerable to sexual abuse or exploitation. In particular, it may increase the likelihood that education institutions are attacked.

By contrast, education can help to protect children and youth from death, injury and exploitation; it can alleviate the psychological impact of armed conflict by offering routine and stability and can provide links to other vital services. Education that is ‘conflict sensitive’ avoids contributing to conflict and pursues a contribution to peace. Education is fundamental to development and to the full enjoyment of human rights and freedoms. We will do our utmost to see that places of education are places of safety.

We welcome initiatives by individual States to promote and protect the right to education and to facilitate the continuation of education in situations of armed conflict. Continuation of education can provide life-saving health information as well as advice on specific risks in societies facing armed conflict.

We commend the work of the United Nations Security Council on children and armed conflict and acknowledge the importance of the monitoring and reporting mechanism for grave violations against children in armed conflict. We emphasize the importance of Security Council resolution 1998 (2011), and 2143 (2014) which, inter alia, urges all parties to armed conflict to refrain from actions that impede children's access to education and encourages Member States to consider concrete measures to deter the use of schools by armed forces and armed non-State groups in contravention of applicable international law.

We welcome the development of the *Guidelines* for protecting schools and universities from military use during armed conflict. The *Guidelines* are non-legally binding, voluntary guidelines that do not affect existing international law. They draw on existing good practice and aim to provide guidance that will further reduce the impact of armed conflict on education. We welcome efforts to disseminate these *Guidelines* and to promote their implementation among armed forces, armed groups and other relevant actors.

We stress the importance, in all circumstances, of full respect for applicable international law, including the need to comply with the relevant obligations to end impunity.

Recognizing the right to education and the role of education in promoting understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations; determined progressively to strengthen in practice the protection of civilians in armed conflict, and of children and youth in particular; committed to working together towards safe schools for all; we endorse the *Guidelines* for protecting schools and universities from military use during armed conflict, and will:

- **Use the *Guidelines***, and bring them into domestic policy and operational frameworks as far as possible and appropriate;
- Make every effort at a national level to **collect reliable relevant data** on attacks on educational facilities, on the victims of attacks, and on military use of schools and universities during armed conflict, including through existing monitoring and reporting mechanisms; to facilitate such data collection; and to **provide assistance to victims**, in a non-discriminatory manner;
- **Investigate** allegations of violations of applicable national and international law and, where appropriate, duly prosecute perpetrators;
- **Develop, adopt and promote ‘conflict-sensitive’ approaches** to education in international humanitarian and development programmes, and at a national level where relevant;
- Seek to **ensure the continuation of education during armed conflict**, support the re- establishment of educational facilities and, where in a position to do so, provide and facilitate international cooperation and assistance to programmes working to prevent or respond to attacks on education, including for the implementation of this declaration;
- **Support the efforts of the UN Security Council** on children and armed conflict, and of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict and other relevant UN organs, entities and agencies; and
- **Meet on a regular basis**, inviting relevant international organisation and civil society, so as to review the implementation of this declaration and the use of the *Guidelines*.

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

Parties to armed conflict are urged not to use schools and universities for any purpose in support of their military effort. While it is acknowledged that certain uses would not be contrary to the law of armed conflict, all parties should endeavour to avoid impinging on students' safety and education, using the following as a guide to responsible practice:

## **GUIDELINE 1:**

Functioning schools and universities should not be used by the fighting forces of parties to armed conflict in any way in support of the military effort.

- a. This principle extends to schools and universities that are temporarily closed outside normal class hours, during weekends and holidays, and during vacation periods.
- b. Parties to armed conflict should neither use force nor offer incentives to education administrators to evacuate schools and universities in order that they can be made available for use in support of the military effort.

## **GUIDELINE 2:**

Schools and universities that have been abandoned or evacuated because of the dangers presented by armed conflict should not be used by the fighting forces of parties to armed conflict for any purpose in support of their military effort, except in extenuating circumstances when they are presented with no viable alternative, and only for as long as no choice is possible between such use of the school or university and another feasible method for obtaining a similar military advantage. Other buildings should be regarded as better options and used in preference to school and university buildings, even if they are not so conveniently placed or configured, except when such buildings are specially protected under International Humanitarian Law (e.g. hospitals), and keeping in mind that parties to armed conflict must always take all feasible precautions to protect all civilian objects from attack.

- a. Any such use of abandoned or evacuated schools and universities should be for the minimum time necessary.
- b. Abandoned or evacuated schools and universities that are used by the fighting forces of parties to armed conflict in support of the military effort should remain available to allow educational authorities to re-open them as soon as practicable after fighting forces have withdrawn from them, provided this would not risk endangering the security of students and staff.
- a. Any traces or indication of militarisation or fortification should be completely removed following the withdrawal of fighting forces, with every effort made to put right as soon as possible any damage caused to the infrastructure of the institution. In particular, all weapons, munitions and unexploded ordnance or remnants of war should be cleared from the site.

## **GUIDELINE 3:**

Schools and universities must never be destroyed as a measure intended to deprive the opposing parties to the armed conflict of the ability to use them in the future. Schools and universities – be they in session, closed for the day or for holidays, evacuated or abandoned – are ordinarily civilian objects.

#### GUIDELINE 4:

While the use of a school or university by the fighting forces of parties to armed conflict in support of their military effort may, depending on the circumstances, have the effect of turning it into a military objective subject to attack, parties to armed conflict should consider all feasible alternative measures before attacking them, including, unless circumstances do not permit, warning the enemy in advance that an attack will be forthcoming unless it ceases its use.

- a. Prior to any attack on a school that has become a military objective, the parties to armed conflict should take into consideration the fact that children are entitled to special respect and protection. An additional important consideration is the potential long-term negative effect on a community's access to education posed by damage to or the destruction of a school.
- a. The use of a school or university by the fighting forces of one party to a conflict in support of the military effort should not serve as justification for an opposing party that captures it to continue to use it in support of the military effort. As soon as feasible, any evidence or indication of militarisation or fortification should be removed and the facility returned to civilian authorities for the purpose of its educational function.

#### GUIDELINE 5:

The fighting forces of parties to armed conflict should not be employed to provide security for schools and universities, except when alternative means of providing essential security are not available. If possible, appropriately trained civilian personnel should be used to provide security for schools and universities. If necessary, consideration should also be given to evacuating children, students and staff to a safer location.

- a. If fighting forces are engaged in security tasks related to schools and universities, their presence within the grounds or buildings should be avoided if at all possible in order to avoid compromising the establishment's civilian status and disrupting the learning environment.

#### GUIDELINE 6:

All parties to armed conflict should, as far as possible and as appropriate, incorporate these *Guidelines* into, for example, their doctrine, military manuals, rules of engagement, operational orders, and other means of dissemination, to encourage appropriate practice throughout the chain of command. Parties to armed conflict should determine the most appropriate method of doing this.

## Relevant Websites

- General information on the Declaration, *Guidelines* and implementation: <http://www.protectingeducation.org/>
- Second International Conference on Safe Schools:
  - Full text in English: <https://mrecic.gov.ar/en/protection-schools-during-armed-conflicts-international-conference-safe-schools-held-buenos-aires>
  - Full text in Spanish: <https://mrecic.gov.ar/para-proteger-las-escuelas-en-los-conflictos-armados-conferencia-internacional-en-buenos-aires>
- Report of the Oslo Conference on Safe Schools: <https://www.regjeringen.no/en/dokumenter/report-safe-schools/id2456461/>
- Safe Schools Declaration:
  - Full text in English: [http://www.protectingeducation.org/sites/default/files/documents/safe\\_schools\\_declaration-final.pdf](http://www.protectingeducation.org/sites/default/files/documents/safe_schools_declaration-final.pdf)
  - Full text in Spanish: [http://www.protectingeducation.org/sites/default/files/documents/spa\\_safe\\_schools\\_declaration\\_21\\_05\\_2015.pdf](http://www.protectingeducation.org/sites/default/files/documents/spa_safe_schools_declaration_21_05_2015.pdf)
  - Full text in French: [http://www.protectingeducation.org/sites/default/files/documents/fr\\_safe\\_schools\\_declaration.pdf](http://www.protectingeducation.org/sites/default/files/documents/fr_safe_schools_declaration.pdf)
  - Sample letter of endorsement (to be sent to the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs via its embassies or permanent missions or directly at Seksjon.for.humanitaere.sporsmal@mfa.no and kjnn@mfa.no): [http://www.protectingeducation.org/sites/default/files/documents/template\\_endorsement\\_letter.pdf](http://www.protectingeducation.org/sites/default/files/documents/template_endorsement_letter.pdf)
- Questions and Answers on the Declaration:
  - Full text in English: [http://protectingeducation.org/sites/default/files/documents/questions\\_and\\_answers\\_on\\_the\\_safe\\_schools\\_declaration\\_en.pdf](http://protectingeducation.org/sites/default/files/documents/questions_and_answers_on_the_safe_schools_declaration_en.pdf)
  - Full text in Spanish: [http://protectingeducation.org/sites/default/files/documents/questions\\_and\\_answers\\_on\\_the\\_safe\\_schools\\_declaration\\_es.pdf](http://protectingeducation.org/sites/default/files/documents/questions_and_answers_on_the_safe_schools_declaration_es.pdf)
  - Full text in French: [http://protectingeducation.org/sites/default/files/documents/questions\\_and\\_answers\\_on\\_the\\_safe\\_schools\\_declaration\\_fr.pdf](http://protectingeducation.org/sites/default/files/documents/questions_and_answers_on_the_safe_schools_declaration_fr.pdf)
- *Guidelines for Protecting Schools and Universities from Military Use during Armed Conflict*:
  - Full text in English: [http://protectingeducation.org/sites/default/files/documents/guidelines\\_en.pdf](http://protectingeducation.org/sites/default/files/documents/guidelines_en.pdf)
  - Full text in Spanish: [http://protectingeducation.org/sites/default/files/documents/guidelines\\_es.pdf](http://protectingeducation.org/sites/default/files/documents/guidelines_es.pdf)
  - Full text in French: [http://protectingeducation.org/sites/default/files/documents/guidelines\\_fr.pdf](http://protectingeducation.org/sites/default/files/documents/guidelines_fr.pdf)
- Implementing the *Guidelines: A Toolkit to Guide Understanding and Implementation of the Guidelines for Protecting Schools and Universities from Military Use, GCPEA-Roméo Dallaire Child Soldiers Initiative: Questions and Answers on the Guidelines*:
  - Full text in English: <http://www.protectingeducation.org/sites/default/files/documents/toolkit.pdf>
  - Full text in Spanish: [http://www.protectingeducation.org/sites/default/files/documents/toolkit\\_sp.pdf](http://www.protectingeducation.org/sites/default/files/documents/toolkit_sp.pdf)
  - Full text in French: [http://protectingeducation.org/sites/default/files/documents/toolkit\\_fr.pdf](http://protectingeducation.org/sites/default/files/documents/toolkit_fr.pdf)
- Protecting Schools from Military Use: Law, Policy, and Military Doctrine: <https://www.hrw.org/report/2017/03/20/protecting-schools-military-use/law-policy-and-military-doctrine>



**Permanent Mission of Argentina**  
to the International  
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