

**Security Council**

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**Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict****Statement by the Chairman addressed to the leadership of the Tamil Makkal Viduthalai Puligal and its military wing, the Karuna faction**

At the 8th meeting of the Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict, held on 10 May 2007 in connection with the consideration of the report of the Secretary-General on children and armed conflict in Sri Lanka (S/2006/1006), the Chairman made the following statement on behalf of the Working Group:

The Working Group on Children and Armed Conflict

1. *Strongly condemns* the recent recruitment and use of child soldiers and all other violations and abuses committed against children by the Karuna faction;
2. *Urges* the Karuna faction:
  - (a) To immediately end the practice of abduction, use and recruitment of children under the age of 18, consistent with the commitment it made to the Special Representative and her Special Adviser;
  - (b) To engage with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), as a matter of priority, to release all children among its ranks, ensure a transparent verification process, including access to Karuna faction military camps, devise age-verification procedures with UNICEF and prevent further unlawful recruitment;
  - (c) To recognize and commit to maintaining the neutrality and security of schools, hospitals and religious institutions as safe zones in conflict-affected areas;
  - (d) To immediately provide humanitarian actors with unimpeded and safe access to all areas under its control.

